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HOUSE OF COMMONS

OFFICIAL REPORT

THIRD SESSION OF THE FIFTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT
OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND NORTHERN IRELAND
FIFTY-THIRD YEAR OF THE REIGN OF
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

SESSION 2003–04

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Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 10 May 2004

HOME DEPARTMENT

Race Equality Monitoring

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Fiona Mactaggart): I have today placed in the Library copies of the 2003 annual report on the Home Secretary's race equality employment targets and the 2002–03 employment monitoring report under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Humanitarian Mine Action

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): Following an internal review by the Department for International Development, I am announcing today a revision to the Department's management of its support to Humanitarian Mine Action. The review team consulted a wide range of stakeholders including the United Nations, Civil Society, mine action organisations and other Government Departments.

In 2000 DFID decided to channel the majority of its funds for mine action through the United Nations. The objectives of the review were to assess whether DFID's policy objectives of channelling most of its funds in this way were being met, and to consider DFID's resourcing of mine action and to look at future options.

The review concluded that the overall policy approach should remain unchanged. The four existing main pillars of support remain valid. These are to: support humanitarian mine action focused on the poorest countries; improve the effectiveness of the international mine action system to mine pollution; develop new technologies to improve mine clearance; and promote the globalisation of the mine can convention. Additionally DFID's commitment to spend at least £10 million per annum on humanitarian mine action will continue.

The policy in 2000 established Partnership arrangements with the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Geneva Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). This support has contributed to improved coordination in the international system. These partnerships will continue but with revised overall funding levels. UNMAS and UNDP will continue to receive similar levels of funding to assist in strengthening their capacity but will receive less towards country programme activity. Support to UNMAS will primarily be for its co-ordination role rather than its mine clearance operations, except in cases requiring short-term emergency response. In the case of UNICEF, DFID's ongoing three-year partnership for support to mine risk education will continue.

As a result of these changes, DFID will now consider other funding options including bilateral funding via non-Government organisations (NGOs) and commercial companies. NGOs have an important role to play in advocating and implementing mine action. The revised policy reflects this by ensuring that more bilateral resources will be available to fund mine clearance by NGOs. Within DFID, the conflict and humanitarian affairs Department (CHAD) will continue to be the central point for humanitarian mine action policy. However in view of the increasing mainstreaming of mine action into development programmes, DFID regional desks/offices also have an important role where mine action features in DFID country assistance plans. This creates an additional potential source of funding from within DFID.

DFID will continue to fund research and technology and the generation of knowledge. The Department expects to commit approximately 10 per cent. of its mine action funding in this area.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Planning Out Crime

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): This statement is to bring to the attention of the House the launch of good practice guidance on Wednesday 28 April, prepared jointly by The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Home Office, on how the planning system may play its part in tackling crime. This guide will support the updated policy advice on planning out crime, which is set out in the draft planning policy statement 1 "General policy and principles".

Through the sustainable communities plan the Government reaffirmed its commitment to delivering good quality villages towns and cities. Safety and security are essential to achieving his. Such places are well-designed, attractive environments where freedom from crime, and the fear of crime, improves the quality of life. Yet once a development has been completed the main opportunity to incorporate crime prevention measures will have been lost. The Government recognises that there are far too many examples of poor quality development because of insufficient attention to crime issues at the outset of the planning process.

The Government considers that this guide will help to provide practical advice as to effective methods of implementing crime prevention measures and securing community safety through the planning system. It challenges all those who influence the design and layout of developments, to think holistically about each development. In doing so the Government recognises

that there is no one solution that applies to every situation. That is why this guide stresses the importance of understanding the context and unique nature of the locality, and the importance of close co-operation between the many professional disciplines, if planning is to lay an effective role in preventing crime and the fear of crime.

The Government intends that those who read this guide will be inspired to use its suggestions and help to deliver the high quality and safe development that we all wish to see and from which all can benefit.

Copies of the document will be made available in the Libraries of the House.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 11 May 2004

WORK AND PENSIONS

Barking and Dagenham Council (Benefit Fraud Inspectorate)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) inspection report on London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Council was published today and copies of the report have been placed in the Library.

Following the housing Green Paper "Quality and Choice: A Decent Home for All", published in April 2000, the Department for Work and Pensions developed a performance framework for housing benefits. The performance standards for housing benefits allow local authorities to make a comprehensive self-assessment of whether they deliver benefit effectively and securely. They are the standards that the Department for Work and Pensions expect local authorities to aspire to and achieve in time.

In 2002–03, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Council administered some £65.4 million in housing benefits, about 16 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure.

BFI inspected London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Council against the performance standards for housing benefits, and concludes that the council's benefits service had not reached standard in any of the seven functional areas—strategic management, customer services, processing of claims, working with landlords, internal security, counter-fraud and overpayments.

The report finds that the council's benefits service, part of the revenues services, was embarking on a major programme of change that included improving its performance management, planning the replacement of its benefits IT system, planning the procurement of an electronic document management system, and reviewing its staffing structure.

There was no structured approach to staff training and development of staff, and there were no documented procedures to support staff and ensure consistency of approach. Managers had limited access to performance reports and did not make routine use of those that were available. The IT systems were inadequate and required high levels of manual intervention, hindering rather than supporting the benefits service.

The report finds that the average time taken to process new benefit claims was 43 days, compared to the performance standard of 36 days, and 90 per cent. of new claims were processed within 14 days of receiving all information. However, there were delays in dealing with changes of circumstances and appeals and there was no management checking of work.

The council's telephone service was poor with 54 per cent. of calls not being answered. Customers were often required to attend the offices on more than one occasion because they had not been asked to provide all the necessary information at the first point of contact. There were weaknesses in the management of documents with staff being unable to locate paperwork, resulting in further unnecessary contact with customers. The council's benefit claim forms and decision letters needed to improve to give clearer guidance and information to customers.

The report also finds that all areas of the council's counter-fraud activity were weak. The council had no management information concerning fraud referrals, and very limited investigation activity had been carried out. New investigation staff had been appointed in 2003 but there were inadequate systems in place to allow them to progress investigations promptly.

The council was unable to provide verifiable performance information relating to overpayments of benefit, and no single officer had overall control of overpayment recovery. Also the council did not use the full range of recovery methods available.

The report makes recommendations to help the council address weaknesses and to further improve the administration of housing benefit and council tax benefit, as well as counter-fraud activities.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is now considering the report and will be asking the council for its proposals in response to the BFI's findings and recommendations.

Vulnerable Customers (Payments by Cheque)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): Direct Payment is a modern, reliable, secure and efficient method of payment which is proving popular with those pensioners and benefit recipients who are using it. More customers now have their pensions and benefits paid into an account than by order book. We will be writing to the remainder before the end of the year inviting them to convert to direct payment.

Eighty seven per cent. of DWP customers already have access to an account suitable for direct payment (the figure rises to 91 per cent. for pensioners). The wide availability of new, easy to operate accounts (including basic bank accounts and the Post Office card account) means that there should only be a very small number of people that cannot genuinely open an account—including, for example, some homeless people and some people with an illness or disability. There will also be some people who cannot manage an account—some will never be able to manage one (again due to illness or disability), while others may be in this position for only a short period (perhaps due to the absence of a regular carer or a short period of mental illness).

Several meetings have been held with customer representative groups (including CAB, Help the Aged, Age Concern, MIND etc) to ensure there was a shared understanding of the needs of the customers who cannot be paid directly into an account. These meetings helped us develop a detailed list of requirements and played a key role in shaping the detailed design of the exceptions arrangements.

In assessing options for the ongoing method of payment for customers who are unable to open or manage an account a number of criteria were taken into account including; the ability to meet the needs of customers, timescales for delivery, reliability and cost. To meet customer needs and maintain a robust delivery service we have decided to continue with the existing system of cheques, with improvements to the security of the service.

Customers who will require a cheque payment are likely to include those who are least able to cope with change, but will already have had experience of, and be familiar with, cashing paper instruments of payment at the Post Office. The cheque solution replicates this process and will best suit these customers.

Cheques can be issued on a weekly basis to the customer's home address (less frequently for some people) and are cashable at Post Office branches (as well as payable into bank accounts). Very importantly, they offer the flexibility needed for those customers who have a series of different people collecting their money for them and will be a solution for those people who are unable to operate PIN-based or cheque based accounts.

Safeguards will be in place to ensure people get their money in the event that the cheque does not arrive on time.

Paying by cheque is a well-established method of payment. We will closely monitor the operation of cheque payments to ensure that they meet the needs of some of our most vulnerable customers. If this identifies significant problems with these arrangements then we will make the necessary improvements.

As we have made clear cheque payments are designed for those vulnerable people whose benefits or pensions we cannot pay into any type of account. In order that we can provide the necessary level of support to this group we will, in parallel, introduce measures to ensure the maximum number of people who can use an account understand the comparative benefits of direct payment.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme

The Minister for the Environment (Mr. Elliot Morley): My Department today published the outcome of the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme Consultation, which contains final details on the operation of the scheme. This is available on the DEFRA website www.Defra.gov.uk.

The aim of the scheme is to enable England to meet the targets set by the landfill directive for reducing the amount of biodegradable municipal waste sent to landfill in the most cost effective way. It will be launched on 1 April 2005.

The Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme is thought to be the first trading scheme in the world involving waste. The Government will allocate a decreasing number of allowances for each waste disposal authority in England for each year between 2005 and 2020. Authorities can then choose to trade these with other authorities, to borrow up to 5 per cent. of allowances from their next year's allocation or to bank unused allowances for use in future years. The scheme is designed to give waste disposal authorities as much flexibility as possible, whilst ensuring that the landfill directive targets are met. This is an innovative scheme that forms part of a comprehensive commitment to reduce waste in England.

DEFENCE

AFPRB 2004 Pay Award

The Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Geoffrey Hoon): The supplement to the 2004 report of the Armed Forces' Pay Review Body making recommendations on the pay of service medical and dental officers has been published today. Copies of the supplement are available in the Vote Office and the Library of the House.

The Review Body recommends an increase of 3.225 per cent. for all regular and reserve defence medical services medical and dental officers. The Review Body also recommends a pay increase of 3.225 per cent. for medical and dental cadets and an out-of-hours supplementary payment of £4,500 to junior doctors. In addition, the Review Body recommends that there should be an increase of 3.225 per cent. in the values of trainer pay and distinction awards.

The cost of these recommendations to the defence budget will be some £6.3 million. This will be met within existing Departmental expenditure limits.

The Review Body's final recommendations are to be accepted in full, with implementation effective from 1 April 2004.

TREASURY

Aggregates Levy Relief Scheme

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury (John Healey): The Government are extending the aggregates levy relief scheme in Northern Ireland. The relief, which will continue to cover aggregate in processed products, will be extended to cover virgin aggregate exploited in Northern Ireland. Instead of the relief reducing annually until it ended in April 2007, the level of relief will now be fixed at 80 per cent. of the full rate from 1 April 2004 and it will apply until 31 March 2011. The introduction of the new scheme follows notification from the European Commission on 7 May that the Government's proposals for extended relief have received state aid clearance.

Quarry operators in Northern Ireland will be able to claim the extended relief straight away, providing they enter into agreements that will commit them to making significant environmental improvements to the way their operations are run. Initially operators will need to satisfy the Department of the Environment in Northern Ireland (DoENI) that they hold or have applied for

relevant regulatory authorisations, and enter into an agreement with DoENI, which will commit businesses to arrange a site audit, agree site-specific targets and comply with the code of practice for the aggregates industry in Northern Ireland. Continued eligibility for relief will depend on businesses meeting their agreed environmental targets, which will be regularly monitored and reviewed.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 12 May 2004

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Higher Education Links Programme

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): Having reviewed the higher education links programme, I have decided to continue with a redesigned programme, maintaining current levels of annual investment (£3 million) but with some modifications to the existing scheme (which will end in March 2006). I expect the new scheme to commence in April 2005, with commitments being made over the following seven years (until March 2012).

The review report identified a number of strengths of the current scheme, but there were also some areas for improvement. The redesigned programme will tackle these issues.

The overall goal of the redesigned programme will be the reduction of poverty, the promotion of sustainable development in poor countries; and the building of human capital and skills. Only countries where DFID has bilateral country programmes will be eligible for funding; there will therefore be more emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa and low-income countries.

The revised programme should also support south-south links and links between southern partners and non-UK partners in the North, and it will also give more attention to science and technology. An independent evaluation will take place after five years.

DFID's Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State has written to Professor Robert Boucher, vice-chancellor of the University of Sheffield and Chair of the existing Higher Education Links Steering Committee, setting out the features of the new scheme. His letter is on DFID's website. Copies have been placed in the Library of the House.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Controls on Firearms

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Caroline Flint): The Home Office consultation paper on firearms controls is published today. Copies have been placed in the House Library. The paper invites a wide-ranging debate on the principles that should underpin firearms licensing and how the existing system might be improved. People will have until 31 August to respond.

United Kingdom Immigration Control

The Minister for Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Desmond Browne): The Government are firmly committed to maintaining effective immigration controls while at the same time ensuring that genuine passengers are able to pass through our ports with the least possible inconvenience.

The number of people arriving at UK airports who are found to be inadmissible is unacceptably high. Certain nationals, who are required to hold a valid visa to enter the UK, may transit this country for up to 24 hours without a visa. This provides a relatively easy and inexpensive way for those who are intent on circumventing our immigration controls to do so. Last year we introduced measures to tackle this problem with the introduction of a direct airside transit visa (DATV) requirement for 23 nationalities. For the three months following the introduction on 16 October of DATV regimes for Angola, Bangladesh, Cameroon, India, Lebanon and Pakistan, the number of asylum applications made at ports by those nationalities fell by 58 per cent. DATV requirements have been shown to work and we now need to take further action to strengthen the regime. Intelligence would suggest that some individuals travelling on Kenyan and Tanzanian documents to the United Kingdom are destroying these documents either en route or after gaining entry to the UK, and are then applying for asylum as Somalian nationals. Therefore from 00.01 hours on Thursday 13 May all nationals of Kenya and Tanzania wishing to transit the UK will require a visa to do so.

To avoid undue hardship for those who had already made their travel plans, we have agreed to operate a grace period. Until 23.59 hours on Wednesday 19 May, any transit passenger who bought their ticket on or before 12 May will not be refused entry solely on the basis of not holding a valid transit visa. Also, any person on the return leg of a journey they commenced before 13 May and who passed through the UK on the outward leg of their journey will be allowed to transit the UK without a visa until 23.59 on 9 June.

In parallel with those measures, we are introducing changes to the arrangements that allow certain groups of low risk passenger to be exempt from a transit visa requirement if they are in possession of specific documents. The exemption applying to those holding a valid visa for the United States of America or Canada has been widened to enable visa-free transit of the United Kingdom irrespective of the routing chosen to reach the USA or Canada. Similarly, a passenger returning from a trip to the USA or Canada will be able to transit the United Kingdom irrespective of the routing they choose providing they are in possession of an onward air ticket and they are not seeking to transit the UK more than six months since they last entered the USA or Canada with a valid visa.

We have also decided to introduce an exemption for holders of diplomatic or official passports issued by the Vietnamese Government, who will be exempt from the requirement to hold a visa when transiting the UK for up to 24 hours.

HEALTH

Cardiac Arrhythmias and Sudden Cardiac Death

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Miss Melanie Johnson): The national service framework for coronary heart disease, published in

March 2000, heralded a new era for the development of fast and modern services for the prevention and treatment of heart disease.

With significant progress now secured for patients with coronary artery disease, the national health service is now well placed to deliver similar improvements for patients with arrhythmia and with syndromes that can lead to sudden cardiac death.

Dr. Roger Boyle, the national director for heart disease, is today launching a consultation paper on a new national service framework chapter for these conditions. The views received will be considered by a new expert group that is being established by the Department of Health to take forward the task of writing the new national service framework chapter.

The Government have already shown their determination to tackle coronary heart disease through the publication of the national service framework. The prospect of a new the national service framework chapter setting out the standards and models of care for patients with arrhythmia marks a major step forwards for cardiac patients in England.

Copies of "New NSF Chapter on Arrhythmias and Sudden Cardiac Death: A Consultation Paper", have been placed in the Library.

New NSF Chapter on Arrhythmias and Sudden Cardiac Death

A Consultation Paper

Introduction

The national service framework for coronary heart disease, published in March 2000, heralded a new era for the development of fast and modern services for the prevention and treatment of heart disease. Four years on from its publication, the combination of a clear set of national standards, sustained levels of investment and reform and redesign of services has delivered real improvements for patients. Primary care has made extraordinary progress in ensuring that patients with heart disease are on the right combination of drugs to lengthen their lives. Waiting times for bypass surgery and angioplasty have fallen dramatically. Patients with a heart attack are treated quickly with life-saving clot busting drugs.

With significant progress now secured for patients with coronary artery disease, the NHS is now well placed to deliver similar improvements for patients with arrhythmia and with syndromes that can lead to sudden cardiac death. These patients have already benefited from the substantial growth in NHS staff, equipment and facilities. The Government have now agreed to drive further progress for these patients by working with patients, families and NHS professionals to develop new NSF standards or practice recommendations for these conditions.

The strength of the existing NSF has been that it is based on the views of clinicians, patients and their families. Its aims and approaches have credibility with those who deliver it and those who benefit from it. The aim of this consultation paper is to invite initial comments from everyone with an interest in these issues to ensure that we can build a similar consensus for this new NSF chapter.

The views received will be considered by a new expert group that is being established by the Department of Health to take forward the task of writing the new NSF chapter. Detailed membership of the group will be published shortly, but it will include patients, relatives of patients, patient organisations, professional bodies, experts in the field, health service managers and other Government Departments with an interest. The group will be chaired by Dr. Roger Boyle, national clinical director for heart disease, and is aiming to produce the new chapter within twelve months.

The attached paper sets out the proposed scope of the work and how we propose to take the work forward. In addition to your comments on this way forward, we would welcome specific views on:

- Whether the scope covers all the aspects of these conditions which the new NSF chapter should cover;
- Examples of existing good practice in the management of these conditions that might inform the work of the expert group;
- Views on the obstacles to progress on developing state of the art services for these patients, and suggestions on how these might be overcome;
- Areas where further research is needed to improve understanding of these conditions;
- Views on what the immediate, medium term and long term priorities should be for these services; and
- How best to ensure that the patient, family and carer perspective is at the forefront of policy and service development.

Details of how to respond to this consultation are included at the end of this document.

Expert Group

Membership

The group will be composed of external stakeholders similar to the expert external reference groups who helped create the national service framework for coronary heart disease with voluntary and professional organisations being invited to take part. Patients, cardiologists, GPs, nurses and members of voluntary and professional organisations (including CRY, the Ashley Jolly SAD Trust, Hearty Voices, the British Cardiac Society and the British Pacing and Electrophysiology Group) will be asked to join. Representatives from Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland will also be invited.

Other Stakeholders

We will be holding a stakeholders' event during the consultation period to raise awareness of the new group and invite wider consultation and participation. This will help to ensure that the key issues are covered and that the outcomes address the needs of all the interested parties. If you would be interested in attending this event, please e-mail your name and contact details to Jennifer.francis@doh.gsi.gov.uk

Proposed Workstreams

We propose four key workstreams for the expert group to manage its work, sudden cardiac death and screening; acute care; cardiac interventions; and patient involvement and support.

Sudden Cardiac Death and Screening

It is estimated that 200–400 young people die from sudden cardiac death syndrome each year. Dari Taylor MP's recent Private Members Bill highlighted a number of important issues that the new NSF chapter will need to address. These include:

- Raising awareness of signs and symptoms of conditions that may lead to sudden cardiac death;
- Support for those who have lost relatives or friends;
- Considering the feasibility of guidelines on how these deaths are certified;
- Setting standards or practice recommendations around how suspected cases are treated in primary care;
- Promoting models of good practice for local use; and
- Design of an evidence-based protocol that clarifies when it is recommended that patients and/or their relatives should ideally be invited for screening.

Acute Care

For many patients the first sign of their cardiac condition is an emergency admission to hospital. Those who know they have the condition but whose care is not well managed may also need urgent treatment. Arrhythmia is consistently in the top 10 reasons for hospital admission, using up significant A&E time and bed days. This workstream will cover:

- Design of a care pathway showing the ideal treatment of those who require emergency care for these conditions;
- Outlining what information patients require when in hospital to help them successfully manage their condition after discharge;
- Considering the feasibility of setting or practice recommendations around readmission rates for those with conditions which could be better managed; and
- Development of a set of audit indicators and suitable performance indicators that might be used locally around emergency care for those with arrhythmias and conditions which may lead to sudden cardiac death.

Cardiac Interventions

Since publication of the NSF there have been significant improvements in both the technology and the clinical capacity to intervene to treat arrhythmias and related conditions, giving more options for this group of patients in terms of both diagnosis and treatment. New emerging technologies such as the implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD) or more sophisticated pacing devices, with good medical evidence for their use, has given the cardiologist many more treatment options in 2004 compared to the 1990s. This workstream will cover:

- Design of a care pathway for the diagnosis, management and treatment of arrhythmias and conditions which may lead to sudden cardiac death (considering cardiomyopathies, atrial fibrillation and electrical conduction disorders);
- Identification of models which deliver the appropriate interventions reliably; and
- Development of audit measures and suitable performance indicators around the care and treatment of people with these conditions, which might be used locally.

Patient Involvement and Support

Patients with a lifelong or long term cardiac problem need continuing support to help them manage their condition and live as full a life as possible. Assistance also needs to be available for carers and family members where they wish it. Patients need to be involved in decisions about their own care and in helping to shape the planning of services. This workstream will include:

- Design of care pathway for management and control of specific conditions (for example, atrial fibrillation);
- Development of guidance on monitoring patients with chronic conditions;
- Identifying effective ways of providing emotional support to patients and their relatives where appropriate; and
- Identifying effective means of involving patients in their own care and in influencing the way that services are provided.

Next Steps

Ideas and proposals should reach the project team by 4 August 2004 at the latest.

The Department of Health would welcome contributions throughout the consultation. Emerging issues and contributions will be fed into the discussions of the expert group and used to develop the proposed new NSF chapter on arrhythmias and sudden cardiac death.

The information you send to us may need to be passed to colleagues within the Department of Health and/or published in a summary of responses to this consultation. We will assume that you are content for us to do this and, if you are replying by e-mail, that your consent overrides any confidentiality disclaimer that is generated by your organisation's IT system, unless you specifically include a request to the contrary in the main text of your submission to us.

Contact Details

New NSF Consultation
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Website: www.dh.gov.uk/consultations

Telephone: 0207 972 4513

Annex: Consultation Criteria

Code of Practice on Consultation

We will ensure that this consultation meets the following criteria:

- Consult widely throughout the process, allowing a minimum of twelve weeks for written consultation at least once during the development of the policy.
- Be clear about what your proposals are, who may be affected, what questions are being asked and the timescale for responses.
- Ensure that your consultation is clear, concise and widely accessible.
- Give feedback regarding the responses received and how the consultation process influenced the policy.
- Monitor your department's effectiveness at consultation, including through the use of a designated consultation coordinator.
- Ensure your consultation follows better regulation best practice, including carrying out a regulatory impact assessment if appropriate.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Fraud Inspectorate Report (Milton Keynes Council)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the benefit fraud inspectorate (BFI) inspection report on Milton Keynes Council was published today and copies of the report have been placed in the Library.

Following the housing Green Paper "Quality and Choice: A Decent Home for All", published in April 2000, the Department for Work and Pensions developed a performance framework for housing benefits. The performance standards for housing benefits allow local authorities to make a comprehensive self-assessment of whether they deliver benefit effectively and securely. They are the standards that the Department for Work and Pensions expects local authorities to aspire to and achieve in time.

In 2002–03, Milton Keynes council administered some £48.3 million in housing benefits, about 18.5 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure. BFI inspected Milton Keynes council against the performance standards for housing benefits, and concludes that the council's benefits service had not reached standard in any of the seven functional areas—strategic management, customer services, processing of claims, working with landlords, internal security, counter-fraud and overpayments.

The report finds that the benefits service had been given low priority within the council in the past and performance overall had been poor. However, several significant changes had taken place over the past two years, including a complete service restructure and the replacement of its benefits IT system.

The December 2002 comprehensive performance assessment classified the council as poor. Since then progress had been made across many areas of the performance standards. The claims backlog had reduced considerably since 2002 but it was still having an impact on claims processing times. Times taken to process new benefit claims and changes of circumstances were reducing but still did not meet the performance standards. Processing times for new claims had reduced to an average 49 days from 68 days compared with the performance standard of 36 days. The council processed changes of circumstances in 13 days, compared to the standard of nine days.

The council's counter-fraud performance was strong, with successful sanctions against benefit fraudsters and excellent relations with the Department's counter fraud investigation service. However, the council needs to develop procedural guidance for investigators and do more management checks.

The council did not have an overpayment policy or debt recovery strategy. However, actions plans, developed with the support of BFI's performance improvement action team, had been in place since March 2003 and these were having a positive impact on the recovery of overpaid benefits.

The council further demonstrated its commitment to improvement by entering into a public private partnership agreement, in January 2004, to deliver a number of its services, including benefits.

The major challenge for the council now is to continue to improve its benefits processing performance. This will be helped by a more systematic approach to planning, backed up by improvements to its management information and reporting systems.

The report makes recommendations to help the council address weaknesses and to further improve the administration of housing benefit and council tax benefit, as well as counter-fraud activities.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is now considering the report and will be asking the council for its proposals in response to the BFI's findings and recommendations.

Over 50s Outreach Pilot

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Andrew Smith): In December 2002, the Government published the Pensions Green Paper: "Simplicity, Security and Choice: Working and Saving for Retirement." Chapter 6: "Extending Opportunities for Older Workers" sets out a range of measures to increase employment among older workers, which is considered essential to address the pensions challenge.

The Over 50s Outreach pilot is one of these measures and supports PSA target 4c: In the three years to 2006, to increase the employment rate of people aged 50 and over, taking account of the economic cycle, and significantly reduce the difference between their employment rate and the overall rate.

Research has shown that contact from Jobcentre Plus can concern people aged over 50, particularly those on benefits such as incapacity benefit (IB), income support (IS), and severe disability allowance. Clients on these benefits may be concerned about Jobcentre Plus forcing them into work, or reducing their benefits, if queries about work are made, in spite of assurances from Jobcentre Plus to the contrary.

The pilot involves external organisations acting as an intermediary between the Jobcentre and the customer. These organisations will:

- contact people aged 50 and over who are not in work, and encourage their use of Jobcentre Plus services or volunteering opportunities;
- market the back to work help, employment and volunteering opportunities available and overcoming the concerns of some IB and IS clients that their benefits may be affected if they approach a Jobcentre Plus office with a work related enquiry; and
- promote the back to work help available through Jobcentre Plus to people aged 50 and over who may not be aware of this help or who do not normally have contact with Jobcentre Plus.

The evaluation of these pilots will demonstrate what methods of contact and awareness raising worked most successfully to encourage people who would not otherwise have asked about or taken up Jobcentre Plus services and work or volunteering opportunities to do so. The methods that are most successful can then be disseminated throughout Jobcentre Plus to be incorporated into the continuous improvement of their services.

The pilot will run in seven Jobcentre Plus regions for two years and commenced in April 2004. The organisations that successfully tendered for the pilot are as follows:

Region	*District*	*Partner Organisation*
Wales	Cardiff & Vale	Working Links
North East	Newcastle & North Tyneside	Age Concern North Tyneside
North West	Wigan	Adactus Housing Group
North West	Liverpool	Forty Plus
West Midlands	Dudley & Sandwell	Pertemps Employment Alliance
Scotland	Lanarkshire	South Lanarkshire Council
Scotland	Fife	Instep

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Design Coding (Pilot Programme)

The Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. John Prescott): The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is today launching the design coding pilots programme. Kate Barker in her review of housing supply identified significant levels of undersupply, and a lack of certainty and speed in the planning process. This programme aims to test the use of design coding as a means to accelerate the delivery of housing while maintaining the high level of design content required to ensure that new development contributes fully towards improving the quality of our villages, towns and cities.

A design code is a set of specific rules or requirements to guide the physical development of a site or a place. The aim of design coding is to provide clarity as to what constitutes acceptable design quality, and thereby a level of certainty for developers and the local community alike, that can help to accelerate the delivery of good quality new development.

Operating over a number of different development circumstances, the pilots will be carefully monitored over the coming year and will provide the means to evaluate various models and approaches for developing, adopting and implementing design codes. Depending on the outcome, the review may inform the development of future planning policy.

The Government wish to test the potential for design coding as a means of delivering higher quality development at greater speed through the planning process. The development projects which they have chosen to monitor and evaluate in order to assess the effectiveness of the coding approach are subject to approval through the planning system in the normal way. It is possible that some of these projects may, at a later stage, be referred to the Secretary of State for decision (for example on whether an application should be called in for his own determination or on an appeal against the decision of a local planning authority).

For the avoidance of doubt, partners involved in the design coding exercise should understand that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is encouraging the use of coding on these sites without prejudice to any decisions the Secretary of State may be required to take through his formal role in the planning process. The fact that development is proposed in accordance with a design code does not imply that the Secretary of State is content for any particular development proposal to proceed. Any decisions which fall to be made will be taken having regard to the facts and merits of the case, taking into consideration all relevant matters.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

US Naval Ships

The Minister for the Environment (Mr. Elliot Morley): Following the incident in 2003 in which four redundant US naval vessels were transferred from the USA to Hartlepool without the necessary authorisations for them to be dismantled there, I announced in the House on 3 November that

"We will require a full evaluation of the situation to set out why the problems have arisen and what lessons we can learn."—[*Official Report*, 3 November 2003; Vol. 412, c. 535–42.]

Subsequently, the Environment Agency has carried out its own internal Review of the events surrounding the incident. Similarly, DEFRA commissioned its own Review. Both Reviews' terms of reference were to identify lessons that could be learned from the incident.

The reports of each Review are available on my Department's website www.defra.gov.uk, and have today been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

The Government will carefully consider the conclusions and recommendations of both Reviews, which were broadly compatible, before issuing a further statement.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Commission for Equality and Human Rights

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Ms Patricia Hewitt): Creating a fair and more inclusive society is fundamental to building a prosperous country. Equality and human rights must be at the heart of modern Britain. Discrimination has no place in our society.

We need a step change in the fight against discrimination. We need to create a culture of respect based on equal value, the dignity and worth of every individual.

Extending opportunities to all means removing unfair barriers. Delivering prosperity for all means harnessing the skills and potential of every member of society, whatever their background. Equality and human rights matter to everyone—they are not minority concerns.

Last October, we announced the Government's plan for a single equality body to realise this vision of a fairer, more inclusive and prosperous Britain. Today we are setting out how we propose to deliver that vision. Our White Paper on: "Fairness for All: A New Commission for Equality and Human Rights", detailing our proposals has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

It is a bold and innovative plan. The new Commission will have a dual remit to challenge discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and human rights.

We believe there is an opportunity for it to create a strong, proactive relationship with private sector employers, both large and small, and service providers to maximise progress towards equality.

The Commission for Equality and Human Rights will bring together the work of three existing equality commissions—the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) and the Disability Rights Commission (DRC). It will also support new laws outlawing workplace and vocational training discrimination on grounds of religion or belief, sexual orientation and, in time, age.

We owe the existing Commissions a debt of gratitude for their work in changing attitudes and practice on disability, gender and racial equality and their hard work in bringing us to this point. Now we are ready to adopt fresh approaches to meet new challenges.

In making today's announcement, we have taken account of the responses to the Government's consultation document Equality and Diversity: "Making It Happen" and the Sixth report of the Joint Committee on Human Rights.

The White Paper owes much to the discussions of the CEHR Taskforce whose membership reflected the broad range of interests involved in this issue, including the existing Commissions. The Taskforce advised Government on a number of key issues for the new body through an innovative and open process.

We are grateful to all its members for so willingly sharing their depth of expertise. Their participation and contributions are an important aspect of our wider policy development, and have informed the White Paper significantly.

The White Paper sets out the proposed vision, functions, powers and governance arrangements for the CEHR. It outlines the work the body will be expected to carry out to support key stakeholders; it sets out the Scottish and Welsh dimensions of the new body and also maps out the road to implementation.

The Core Duties of the New Body

The proposed core duties of the CEHR set out in the document will be to:

Encourage awareness and good practice on equality and diversity.

Promote equality of opportunity between people in the different groups protected by discrimination law.

Promote awareness and understanding of human rights.

Work towards the elimination of unlawful discrimination and harassment.

Promote good relations among different communities and between these communities and wider society.

Additional responsibilities will include:

Keeping relevant legislation under review.

Acting as a centre of expertise on equality and human rights.

Key Issues in the White Paper

The increasing complexities of our diverse society require appropriate tools to challenge discrimination and enforce the law. Our proposals build on the existing Commissions' powers and create a selection of tools for the CEHR to enforce discrimination law effectively.

The White Paper sets out detailed proposals on the role of the CEHR in promoting a culture of respect for human rights and improving public service delivery. The human rights framework will also be used to help balance potentially conflicting rights.

The Government propose that the CEHR will have an obligation to consult stakeholders on its strategic plan. The CEHR will clearly set out how, when and with whom, it intends to consult.

To ensure experience and expertise is not lost from the existing Commissions, the CEHR Board will also, for a transitional period, have three additional reserved seats for a commissioner from the CRE, the DRC, and the EOC.

The White Paper recognises the distinctive issues that arise for disabled people in the establishment of the CEHR and the need to ensure effective transition from the DRC. The Government propose that the nominated transitional DRC commissioner is appointed to sit on the CEHR board until vesting day. After that date, we will ensure, via a statutory requirement, that at least one person who has, or has had, a disability is appointed to the CEHR Board.

The White Paper also proposes a Disability Committee, with disabled people making up the majority of its members. This Committee will have authority to set strategy, develop policy and monitor delivery for specific areas of the CEHR's disability work, and will be subject to a mandatory review after 5 years of the continuing case for the committee. This will give disabled people a clear voice in the CEHR's work.

We recognise the unique and important local racial equality work that has historically been supported by the CRE. The White Paper proposes a commitment to maintaining existing levels of support for local race work.

The White Paper also confirms that the Government will start detailed, preparatory work on the nature and shape of a new statutory duty on public bodies to promote gender equality in fulfilment of its longstanding commitment to introduce such a duty. This duty will oblige public bodies to ensure that their actions (either as employers or service providers) will promote equality of opportunity between women and men and make public services more responsive to their different needs. Part of the preparatory work will involve learning from the experiences of the public sector duty introduced for race through the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, and will be informed by the proposed public sector duty for disability. The Government will consult interested stakeholders and parties as this work develops.

Establishing the CEHR will require primary legislation. We intend to bring a Bill before Parliament as soon as Parliamentary time allows. The Commission will not be fully operational before the end of 2006 at the earliest. A planning phase, beginning shortly, will become progressively more detailed over the next 12–18 months. Plans for bringing in the "new strands" of equality, religion and belief, sexual orientation and age, are outlined in the White Paper.

The Government look forward to consulting and debating on all these issues, and particularly welcomes views responding to the White Paper's questions on regional and local issues and how the body should work with stakeholders. We welcome the eleventh report of the Joint Committee on Human Rights on the structures, functions and powers of the new body, and will consider this further alongside responses to the consultation.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Overseas Art Exhibitions

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Chris Mullin): The British Council, although not a Government Department, receives a substantial grant-in-aid from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The Council regularly organises or sponsors exhibitions overseas of works of art loaned from National Galleries and private collections in the United Kingdom. It provides certain assurances or guarantees in respect of loss or damage while these works are on loan.

In the year ended 31 March 2004, the British Council provided such assurances to six national lenders and undertakings to 206 private lenders. The value of the contingent liabilities that remained outstanding as at 31 March 2004 was £2,807,500 in respect of national lenders and £7,247,453 in respect of private lenders.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 13 May 2004

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Fraud Inspection (Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council)

The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Chris Pond): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the benefit fraud inspectorate (BFI) third inspection report on Sandwell metropolitan borough council was published today and copies of the report have been placed in the Library.

Following the housing Green Paper "Quality and Choice: A Decent Home for All", published in April 2000, the Department for Work and Pensions developed a performance framework for housing benefits. The performance standards for housing benefits allow local authorities to make a comprehensive self-assessment of whether they deliver benefit effectively and securely. They are the standards that the Department for Work and Pensions expects local authorities to aspire to and achieve in time.

In 2002–03, Sandwell metropolitan borough council administered some £106.3 million in housing benefits, about 12.5 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure.

BFI inspected Sandwell metropolitan borough council against the performance standards for housing benefits, and concludes that the council's benefits service had not reached Standard in any of the seven functional areas—strategic management, customer services, processing of claims, working with landlords, internal security, counter-fraud and overpayments.

This was the third BFI inspection of Sandwell metropolitan borough council, instigated because of a deterioration in the performance of the council's benefits service.

The report finds that the council's benefits service had failed to fully implement 54 per cent. of the recommendations made in the earlier follow-up inspection report, published in March 2001. This led to poor performance in key areas including customer services, processing of claims and overpayments.

Since the follow-up inspection in 2001, the council had embarked on an ambitious programme of change. There had been an improvement in the verification of supporting information before benefit was paid, following implementation of the verification framework. However, BFI has concerns about the council's speed of claims processing and its lack of quality checking. New claims were taking an average 86 days to clear compared with 61 days in 2001 and the performance standard of 36 days. Between January and September 2003, the council had failed to comply with regulations when it made awards of benefit in a significant number of cases when it did not have a claim for the period in question. And in early 2003 it decided to implement changes of circumstances from a current date instead of the date of change.

Customers experienced real difficulties in accessing the service, either through the council's call centre or in person at the enquiry counters. Limited performance monitoring of this area made it difficult to identify performance issues and target resources effectively.

There was insufficient training on overpayments and a lack of monitoring. The range of management information collected on overpayments was poor.

The report finds good practices in the council's counter-fraud work including a history of high levels of sanction activity against benefit fraudsters, publicising its counter-fraud policy and having accurate staff guidance.

The report makes recommendations to help the council address weaknesses and to further improve the administration of housing benefit and council tax Benefit, as well as counter-fraud activities.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is now considering the report and will be asking the council for its proposals in response to the BFI's findings and recommendations.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Health and Social Services Estates Agency (2004–05 Performance Targets)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Angela Smith): The targets, which have been set for 2004–05, are based on the strategic aims and objectives of the agency as set out in section 4 of its corporate and business plan. The targets are in line with the Department's policy of seeking to improve the service provided to the agency's clients in terms of both quality and value for money and I am satisfied that they present a demanding challenge for the agency. A copy of the corporate and business plan will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

The targets are as follows:

Quality

95 per cent. of the service provided by the Agency's Client Support staff to external clients to be regarded as satisfactory, of which 35 per cent. of the service to be regarded as either very good or excellent.

95 per cent. of the service provided by the Agency's Project Management staff to external clients to be regarded as satisfactory, of which 35 per cent. of the service to be regarded as either very good or excellent.

95 per cent. of the service provided by the Agency's Trust Consultancy Support staff to external clients to be regarded as satisfactory, of which 35 per cent. of the service to be regarded as either very good or excellent.

90 per cent. of the service provided by the Agency's Specialist Engineering staff to external clients to be regarded as satisfactory, of which 30 per cent. of the service to be regarded as either very good or excellent.

Throughput/Service Delivery

Complete eight Firecode audits on HSS bodies by 31 March 2005.

Complete testing against Health Service guidance and relevant British and European Standards and issue Test Reports to the Authorised Person in respect of 110 sterilizers and washer disinfectors by 31 March 2005, based on an estimate of 99 installed machines at April 2004 and eleven new machines installed in-year.

Respond to requests for Clinical Engineering support within 10 working days of receipt of a request.

Issue all Medical Device/Equipment Alerts with an "Immediate Action" level of urgency designation initiated by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) within three working days on receipt of final MHRA Alert (provided that no further consultation is involved).

Issue all Medical Device/Equipment Alerts with an "Action" level of urgency designation initiated by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) within five working days on receipt of final MHRA Alert (provided that no further consultation is involved).

Financial Management

Ensure that the Agency lives within its running cost allocation for the year.

Demonstrate that the full costs of the Agency are recouped, on a notional basis, through Service Level Agreements with its clients.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Public Guardianship Office (Performance)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. David Lammy): My hon. Friend, Lord Filkin, has today set the following key performance indicators and targets for the Public Guardianship Office (PGO) Executive Agency for 2004–05.

KPI 1: To increase the satisfaction of its customers in the delivery of its services.

Target:

To achieve an overall customer satisfaction rating, covering professional and lay receivers, of at least 75 per cent. as measured by its annual customer survey.

KPI 2: To increase the proportion of effective visits by the Lord Chancellor's visitors.

Targets:

To maintain a minimum of 6,000 visits per year to include all receivership division clients.

To achieve 80 per cent. effective visits over the year.

During 2004–05, to develop and implement a system to measure customer satisfaction in the visitor's service.

KPI 3: To maintain an effective system to collect and review accounts, and use this process to review the case management regime to ensure that it is meeting the needs of each customer and client.

Targets:

To collect 60 per cent. of accounts within two calendar months of the accounting end date, 85 per cent. within four calendar months of the accounting end date, and 100 per cent. within six calendar months of the accounting end date, referring cases to the Court of Protection where necessary or taking other steps to ensure proper accounts are produced on behalf of clients (applies to protection clients only i.e. those clients who have an external receiver).

To complete the review of, or to have requested further information for, 100 per cent. of accounts within 20 working days of receipt (to apply to both receivership and protection clients).

KPI 4: To deliver an improved service to clients.

Targets:

Correspondence

To respond to 20 per cent. of correspondence within five working days of receipt; 50 per cent. of correspondence within 10 working days of receipt; and 98 per cent. of correspondence within 15 working days of receipt.

Release of funds

Where access to a client's capital is requested, the PGO will give directions to the court funds office (CFO), or dispatch directions to an external receiver within five working days in 80 per cent. of cases and within 10 working days in 95 per cent. of cases; or explain why it cannot release funds.

Applications for receivership

Providing it has all the appropriate forms and information required in support of an application, PGO will list a case for hearing and notify the applicant within 10 working days in 95 per cent. of cases. The hearing date will be within 35 working days of the date the hearing was listed in 95 per cent. of cases.

After the hearing, PGO will notify applicants of the outcome of the hearing and request any further information the court requires within five working days in 95 per cent. of cases.

PGO will issue orders within 10 working days in 95 per cent. of cases where all information and documents have been received.

Closing cases

Where a client dies and PGO has a complete application for final directions, it will prepare and dispatch directions to transfer assets to personal representatives within 15 working days in 30 per cent. of cases, within 20 working days in 80 per cent. of cases, and within 25 working days in 100 per cent. of cases.

Enduring powers of attorney

To register and return 98 per cent. of correctly lodged EPAs, where there are no objections, within five working days of the end of the statutory waiting period.

Accuracy of orders

To reduce the level of orders returned with errors to 3 per cent.

KPI 5: To demonstrate improvements in efficiency by meeting a unit cost target.

Targets:

To meet a unit cost target of not more than £510 per case.

Written Ministerial Statements

Friday 14 May 2004

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

CBRN Decontamination Guidance

The Minister for Local and Regional Government (Mr. Nick Raynsford): The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has today published the "Strategic National Guidance for the Decontamination of Buildings and Infrastructure Exposed to Chemical, Biological, Radiological or Nuclear (CBRN) Substances or Material". The guidance is available on the ODPM website www.odpm.gov.uk and the UK Resilience website http://www.ukresilience.info/. The guidance may be downloaded from those sites. A copy of the guidance is also available in the Libraries of the House.

The guidance has been prepared to help everyone who may be involved in planning for and decontaminating buildings and infrastructure in the event of a deliberate or accidental release of CBRN material.

The guidance is part of a suite of CBRN guidance developed under the CBRN Resilience Programme led by the Home Office. This particularly complements the guidance my hon. Friend the Minister for the Environment and Agri-Environment published on 25 March 2004 on decontamination of the open environment.

The guidance will be updated periodically. These updates will be available on the ODPM and UK Resilience websites. We welcome feedback on the document. This can be sent to cbrnenquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk.

The strategic guidance is accompanied by publication today of separate guidance on "Precautions to Minimise Effects of a CBRN Event on Buildings and Infrastructure". This is available in hard copy and on the ODPM and UK Resilience websites. A copy of this guidance is also being made available in the Libraries of the House. Comments and queries can be sent to cbrnenquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk.

The guidance on precautions provides generic advice to building and infrastructure owners and managers on pre-planning measures to prevent contamination from CBRN events, to limit the extent of any contamination which does occur, and to facilitate the decontamination process itself.

DEFENCE

Tornado GR4A ZG710 (Accident Summary)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): The Ministry of Defence has today placed in the Library of the House copies of the military aircraft accident summary of the RAF Board of Inquiry into the accident to Tornado GR4A ZG710, which was shot down during Operation TELIC by a US Patriot battery on 22 March 2003.

The Board of Inquiry found that the immediate cause of the accident was that the Patriot battery, in following its self-defence rules of engagement, misidentified Tornado ZG710 as a hostile anti-radiation missile and engaged it. However, like most aircraft accidents, no single cause was to blame. There were several contributory factors. These included the failure of the Tornado's IFF (identification friend or Foe), the wide classification criteria for anti-radiation missiles programmed into Patriot system and the Patriot rules of engagement, which were not sufficiently robust to prevent a friendly aircraft without a functioning IFF system being classified as an anti-radiation missile.

The war in Iraq was completed in a highly efficient and effective manner, for which all those involved must take great credit. As part of that campaign, the crew of ZG710 conducted a dangerous and demanding combat mission in an exemplary manner yet did not return safely. ZG710 was the only Royal Air Force aircraft lost during the war. The Board of Inquiry has established the causes of this tragic accident and has highlighted the various factors that contributed to it. The Board's recommendations are now being implemented.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Communications Data Code of Practice

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Caroline Flint): The voluntary code of practice for retention of communications data under Part 11 of the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 came into force on 5 December 2003, pursuant to the retention of communications data (code of practice) order 2003 (SI 2003/No. 3175). Paragraph 33 of the code requires that its effectiveness would be assessed, against criteria identified in the code, three months from the date it received parliamentary approval. The review period, which began on 5 March 2004, will assess the code against the criteria:

- Has it improved investigative work;
- How many requests for data have been made;
- Is the voluntary scheme working;
- What percentage of the market is covered by communication service providers who have adopted the code of practice;
- Are sectors of the industry, which have not adopted the Code, enjoying an unfair commercial advantage.

The voluntary scheme is working in the sense that there are a number of communications service providers that have volunteered, or are volunteering, to retain communications data in line with the code. However most of these volunteers need to prepare themselves, in technical terms, to be able to do so. Consequently it is still premature to evaluate whether investigative work has been facilitated by the voluntary retention of communications data in line with the code or to determine what data has been acquired by investigators that was available only because of its voluntary retention in line with the code.

Although communications service providers are volunteering to retain data in order to support the important task of safeguarding of national security,

service providers are sensitive to any commercial impact from being identified as volunteers. The Government shall not be identifying providers that have volunteered or are indicating a likelihood of volunteering. Equally there are no indications that sectors of the industry that have not adopted the code of practice, are enjoying an unfair commercial advantage.

We do not believe, at this time, that identifying the volunteers' precise share of the communications service market is helpful, since it could enable deductions to be made, accurately or inaccurately, about which providers have volunteered. However the Government are confident that a significant proportion of communications data is being retained in line with the code.

Once the volunteers are able to indicate that they are retaining data in line with the code, it will be possible to conduct a more thorough evaluation of the effectiveness of the code.

The Government are keeping the issue of retention of communications data under review in the context of the recommendations of Lord Newton's Committee, who reviewed the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001, and the declaration of European Council on 25 March 2004 that proposals for establishing rules on the retention of communications traffic data be examined by the Council with a view to their adoption by June 2005.

In the meantime the voluntary code of practice remains in place and the Government are continuing to engage with service providers which are considering volunteering.

HEALTH

NHS (Overseas Visitors)

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Mr. John Hutton): We are publishing today a consultation paper on proposals to revise and clarify the rules on eligibility for free National Health Service primary medical services. Copies have been placed in the Library.

The consultation paper sets out proposals to strengthen the current system so that eligibility for primary medical services would be aligned as closely as possible with that for free hospital care. It sets out proposals for introducing a system of charges for those overseas visitors who would not be eligible for free treatment and seeks views on how such charges should operate.

Under the proposals overseas visitors would continue to be entitled to receive emergency or immediately necessary treatment free of charge. The paper also invites views on whether any other treatments should continue to be free for the protection of public health.

The proposed new rules are intended to allow general practice staff and primary care trusts to distinguish more easily between those eligible for free treatment and those not.

The consultation begins today and runs until 13 August 2004.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

EU Presidency 2005: European Council Dates

The Minister for Europe (Mr. Denis MacShane): The United Kingdom will hold the Presidency of the European Union from 1 July until 31 December 2005. During that period my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister will chair two meetings of the European Council: on 27–28 October 2005 and 15–16 December 2005. Both meetings will take place in Brussels.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Pensions

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Andrew Smith): The Pensions Bill introduces the pension protection fund that will ensure workers get a worthwhile pension when the sponsoring employer becomes insolvent and their scheme winds up underfunded. But the protection the fund gives is cover for the future, and cannot help those who have already lost out.

The severe losses that some individuals have already suffered in insolvent pension wind-ups has caused considerable hardship. The Government will therefore make available £400 million of public money to be paid in instalments over 20 years with the possibility of further contributions from industry, to provide assistance in such cases.

Details of the fund's operation will be worked out in consultation with stakeholders, and we will review the operation of the fund in three years' time.

The Government are tabling an amendment to the Pensions Bill today. A copy of this is set out below:

PENSIONS BILL, AS AMENDED

Financial assistance scheme for members of certain pension schemes

Mr Secretary Smith 1

To move the following Clause:—

'(1) The Secretary of State must make provision, by regulations, for a scheme for making payments to, or in respect of, qualifying members of qualifying pension schemes ("the financial assistance scheme").

(2) For the purposes of this section—

"qualifying member", in relation to a qualifying pension scheme, means a person—

(a) who, at such time as may be prescribed, is a member of the scheme in respect of whom the scheme's pension liabilities are unlikely to be satisfied in full because the scheme has insufficient assets, or

(b) who, at such time as may be prescribed, had ceased to be a member of the scheme and in respect of whom the scheme's pension liabilities were not satisfied in full, before he ceased to be such a member, because the scheme had insufficient assets,

and in respect of whom prescribed conditions are satisfied at such time as may be prescribed;

"qualifying pension scheme" means an occupational pension scheme (including such a scheme which has been fully wound up)—

(a) which, at such time as may be prescribed, is not—

(i) a money purchase scheme, or

(ii) a scheme of a prescribed description,

(b) the winding up of which began during such period as may be prescribed, and

(c) the employer in relation to which satisfies such conditions as may be prescribed at such time as may be prescribed;

"scheme's pension liabilities", in respect of a member of a qualifying pension scheme, means the liabilities of the scheme to, or in respect of, the member in respect of pensions or other benefits (including increases in pensions),

and a qualifying pension scheme has, or had, insufficient assets if the assets of the scheme are, or were, insufficient to satisfy in full the liabilities of the scheme calculated in the prescribed manner.

(3) Regulations under subsection (1) may, in particular, make provision—

(a) for the financial assistance scheme to be managed by the Secretary of State, a body established by or for the purposes of the regulations or such other person as may be prescribed;

(b) for the person who manages the financial assistance scheme ("the scheme manager") to hold (whether on trust or otherwise), manage and apply a fund in accordance with the regulations or, where the fund is held on trust, the deed of trust;

(c) for the property, rights and liabilities of qualifying pension schemes to be transferred to the scheme manager in prescribed circumstances and for the trustees or managers of a qualifying pension scheme in respect of which such a transfer has occurred to be discharged from prescribed liabilities;

(d) prescribing the circumstances in which payments are to be made by the scheme manager to, or in respect of, qualifying members of qualifying pension schemes and the manner in which the amount of any payment is to be determined, and, where the fund is held by the fund manager on trust, the circumstances and manner may be prescribed by reference to the deed of trust;

(e) authorising the Secretary of State—

(i) where he is not the scheme manager, to pay grants to the scheme manager;

(ii) where he is the scheme manager, to pay amounts into the fund held by him in accordance with the regulations;

(iii) to pay grants to other prescribed persons in connection with the financial assistance scheme;

(f) prescribing the circumstances in which amounts are to be paid into or out of the fund held by the scheme manager;

(g) conferring functions in relation to the financial assistance scheme on the Pensions Regulator or the Board of the Pension Protection Fund;

(h) providing for a person to exercise a discretion in dealing with any matter in relation to the financial assistance scheme;

(i) applying any provision of Part 1 or 2 with such modifications as may be prescribed;

and such regulations may make different provision for different cases or descriptions of case and include such incidental, supplementary, consequential or transitional provision as appears to the Secretary of State to be expedient.

(4) Any amount which, by virtue of subsection (3)(e), the Secretary of State pays under regulations under subsection (1) is to be to paid out of money provided by Parliament.

(5) A time or period prescribed under subsection (2) may fall (or, in the case of a period, wholly or partly fall) at a time before the passing of this Act.

(6) Nothing in this section prejudices the operation of section 272 (subordinate legislation (general provisions)).'.

Mr Secretary Smith 2

Page **192**, line **2** [*Clause 265*], leave out second 'and'.

Mr Secretary Smith 3

Page **192**, line **3** [*Clause 265*], at end insert ', and

( ) section [*Financial assistance scheme for members of certain pension schemes*] (financial assistance scheme for members of certain pension schemes).'.

Mr Secretary Smith 4

Page **196**, line **21** [*Clause 273*], at end insert—

'( ) regulations under section [*Financial assistance scheme for members of certain pension schemes*] (financial assistance scheme for members of certain pension schemes);'.

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 17 May 2004

HOME DEPARTMENT

Fraud Law Reform

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Paul Goggins): It is estimated that fraud currently costs the UK economy £14 billion a year. To equip law enforcement agencies to tackle the threat we face from fraud, the existing law needs to be modernised. The main problem is that the existing statutes focus on very specific types of fraudulent behaviour, so they do not effectively cover all the potential varieties of fraud and cannot keep pace with rapidly developing technology.

The Government is today publishing a consultation paper on fraud law reform. Its proposals are based on those made by the Law Commission in 2002, following a reference made to them in 1998 by the then Home Secretary. In particular he asked the Law Commission to consider whether a general offence of fraud would improve the criminal law. The Commission concluded that it would help to make the law simpler and more easily understandable for juries, defendants and the general public and make the prosecution process more efficient and effective.

The central proposal is that there should be a general offence of fraud which can be committed in three different ways: by false representation, by wrongfully failing to disclose information or by abuse of position. In each case the behaviour must be dishonest, and must intend to make a gain for the defendant or cause a loss to another. However the gain does not actually have to be obtained, as it does under the existing statutory offences.

We also propose a new offence of 'obtaining services dishonestly', to close a current loophole regarding fraudulent use of machines. The current offence of obtaining services by deception does not cover, for example, giving false details to access data from the internet for which a charge is made. This is because a machine has no mind and so cannot be deceived.

The consultation paper also seeks views on whether all behaviour which is currently prosecuted as conspiracy to defraud can be prosecuted under the proposed new law of fraud (or under other existing law) so that the common law offence of conspiracy to defraud can be repealed. It also seeks views on the possible extension of the existing offence of fraudulent trading, and on the creation of a new offence of possessing equipment to commit frauds. The proposals will cover England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

This legislative reform is only part of a wider set of current initiatives which will help tackle fraud. For its part the Government has:

set up the Assets Recovery Agency and implemented the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002. These will take the profit out of crime by increasing powers to find and recover money from those who benefit from and launder the proceeds of frauds and other crimes;

agreed extra resources for the Serious Fraud Office and City of London Police to tackle fraud;

included new procedures to deal with multiple offending in the current Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Bill;

included proposals to ensure effective incentives for criminals who give evidence against their associates, which will help in fraud cases, in the White Paper "One Step Ahead", published on 29 March 2004;

proposed new methods of tackling identity fraud in the White Paper on legislation on identity cards, published on 26 April 2004. The introduction of identity cards incorporating biometrics (such as finger or iris scans) will help people to identify themselves uniquely and protect their identity against fraud.

Combating fraud requires vigilance from all and we very much welcome the measures that financial institutions and the retail industry have taken to protect credit cards by a chip-and-PIN system. That step has been found to cut card fraud dramatically in other countries.

Cannabis Reclassification Campaign Evaluation

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Caroline Flint): On 1 April the Opposition spokesman for Home Affairs, the right hon. Member for Haltemprice and Howden asked a parliamentary question regarding the evaluation of the effectiveness of the advertising campaign on the reclassification of cannabis.

I replied that the report was being collated and it was expected to be placed in the Library. I can announce that the results of the evaluation are being placed in the Library today. I thought I would take this opportunity to summarise the findings and highlight the next steps the Government is taking with regard to emphasising the risks and harms of taking cannabis.

The document 'Tracking the effectiveness of Advertising/Publicity for Reclassifying Cannabis from Class B to Class C' was produced by an independent research company, LVQ Research. It evaluated the Home Office cannabis campaign target under 18s which comprised of:

Four weeks of radio advertising the message that cannabis remained illegal;

The distribution of two leaflets: (1) Cannabis and the law, which provided clear and simple information on reclassification; and (2) Drugs and the law, which provided more general information about the law and penalties for Class A, B and C drugs;

Press coverage in youth magazines.

LVQ was commissioned to survey a representative sample of 14–17 year olds both before and after the advertising to measure the effectiveness of the campaign. The results were very positive and show that 93 per cent. of respondents were aware that cannabis is illegal which is a significant increase on pre-reclassification levels (88 per cent.); 81 per cent of respondents agreed that smoking cannabis can be harmful—again a significant increase on pre-reclassification levels (74 per cent.).

It is certainly encouraging to note that most young people are aware of the illegal status of cannabis and this information will continue to be communicated through the FRANK campaign along with the health effects and risks of the drug. It is no less important to highlight the dangers to health of taking cannabis as well as the legal issues. We are now embarking on a targeted campaign to ensure that cannabis users are fully aware of the dangers to physical and mental health cannabis poses and to provide avenues where they can reduce intake and stop taking cannabis at all.

We will be producing information targeted at heavy and frequent users. Although that would traditionally be aimed at the 16–24 age group it could equally apply to older cannabis smokers in their thirties.

It is important that anyone can access this information and so we are also producing an all purpose FRANK leaflet in the next few months for light and less frequent smokers aimed mainly at 14–17 but could also be applicable to students in higher education and for parents of occasional users.

The final strand of the proposed education campaign is getting the message across about links with mental health. We are starting to work with relevant stakeholders to devise the appropriate messages and to agree the most effective means of getting them across, for example through mainstream mental health organisations and families of those with mental health problems.

The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs reported that there was no proven causal link between taking cannabis and developing mental health problems it is recognised that an existing mental health problem can certainly be worsened by taking the drug. So the Government message will be clear the only way to protect your physical and mental health from the damage of cannabis is not to smoke it.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Iraq: Export Licence Applications

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Bill Rammell): Following consultation with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Ministry of Defence, the Department of Trade and Industry recently approved a further licence to export military list goods to Iraq. The arms embargo against Iraq remains in place under United Nations Security Council resolution 1483 (2003), with the exception of arms and other related material required by the coalition provisional authority to serve the purposes of this and other related resolutions. As this includes promoting the development of free and fair media, Her Majesty's Government consider it appropriate to grant exemptions for the export of armoured vehicles for use by media organisations working in Iraq. Her Majesty's Government has included conditions for these licences, including a limit to the quantities. The export is consistent with the consolidated EU and national arms export licensing criteria. Future applications will continue to be assessed on a case by case basis against the UN embargo and consolidated criteria, taking into account the circumstances prevailing at the time.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Draft Criminal Defence Service Bill

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. David Lammy):): My noble Friend Lord Falconer of Thoroton, Secretary of State for the Department of Constitutional Affairs and Lord Chancellor, has today announced the publication of a draft Criminal Defence Service Bill and a consultation paper seeking views on a number of possible models for the delivery of a restructured criminal legal aid scheme. Copies have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

It has been the shared belief of this Government and previous Administrations that those found guilty of offences who can afford to pay their defence costs should be required to do so. This is right in principle and will ensure that a greater amount of finite legal aid funds can be targeted at the poor, the vulnerable and the victimised in line with the commitments set out in the DCA manifesto by the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs.

The draft Bill contains two key proposals:

- reintroduction of a financial eligibility (means) test; and
- transfer of the authority to grant the right to publicly funded representation away from the courts and into the scope of the Legal Services Commission.

My Department believes that, taken together, the two measures will bring a greater level of consistency and better control over grant as well as ensuring that those found guilty of offences pay where they are able to do so.

The accompanying consultation paper discusses in more detail, and invites comments on, the implications of these changes and outlines a number of ways in which they might work in practice. The paper will be sent to the key opinion formers within the legal community, including the professions and the judiciaries and will be published on the DCA's website at www.dca.gov.uk/. Responses are requested by the 6 August.

The Bill itself will also be simultaneously examined by the Constitutional Affairs Committee as part of the pre-legislative scrutiny procedure and interested parties will have an opportunity to comment as part of that process.

TREASURY

Customs and Excise

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury (John Healey): The Chief Secretary and I have today presented to Parliament this year's spring departmental report for HM Customs and Excise (Cm 6224).

The spring report provides an interim update on Customs' activities and sets out the department's priorities and expenditure plans for the coming year. This year it confirms strong growth in VAT receipts, which are more than £2.5 billion ahead of the Budget 2003 forecast—including an estimated £1 billion from our crackdown on "missing trader" VAT fraud. It reports continued success in tackling tobacco smuggling, and over £30 million of criminal assets seized. The spring report also outlines the major changes facing the department following the announcement of

plans to create a serious organised crime agency and a single revenue department—Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

Alongside this update, the spring report marks a change in policy in relation to the publication of statistics of Customs' seizures. I have decided that Customs will include in their annual and spring reports summary seizure data in relation to those prohibitions and restrictions that they enforce at the frontier but which are not already included in the reports as part of updates on PSA priorities. Customs have not published this information in their annual reports since reporting was streamlined after 1999, but will do so in each spring and annual report from now on.

There has been continuing interest in the number of seizures Customs make in the areas where they protect society, including particular interest in Customs' new anti-smuggling role on imported meat and other products of animal origin. Customs will therefore publish seizure information on:

meat and other products of animal origin;

articles seized under the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES);

plants and plant-based goods;

pornography and paedophilia;

firearms, offensive weapons and explosives;

various other prohibited and restricted goods.

The data published in this report show that, in the nine months from April to December 2003, Customs made 9,571 seizures of illegal meat and other animal products with a total weight in excess of 119 tonnes. In comparison, there were 2,053 seizures by all agencies involved in these controls in 2001–02, a figure that increased to 7,819 in 2002–03.

Customs will continue to consider requests for further information in accordance with the "Code of Practice on Access to Government Information". They will only withhold information under exemption 4 (law enforcement and legal proceedings) or exemption 7 (effective management and operations of public service) of that code where information would be of value to those who seek to circumvent customs controls or in the clearest cases of risk to the effective management of their operations.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Palestinian Authority

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): I am today announcing a £7 million initial UK contribution to the World Bank's public financial management reform trust fund to support the Palestinian Authority.

The Palestinian Authority has been in fiscal crisis since late 2000. Lack of revenues due to economic collapse prevents it from delivering services effectively to the Palestinian people. In 2004 its total budget is $1.45 billion. Revenues are expected to be $800 million, leaving a financing gap of about $650 million. Donor budget support in 2003 was $270 million, a sharp fall from 2001 and 2002. The PA has large and growing debts to the private sector and commercial banks. This is an unsustainable situation, and a continued fiscal crisis could lead to the termination of social and administrative services to the population, and poverty (already at over 60 per cent.) increasing further.

At a meeting of the ad hoc liaison committee in December 2003, attended by the Palestinian Authority (PA), Israel, major donors to the PA and other Arab countries, the PA asked the World Bank to create a new mechanism through which donors could provide pooled contributions to support the PA's budget. The public financial management reform trust fund was approved by the World Bank's board on 22 April and launched on 27 April. The objectives of the reform fund are to mobilise additional donor resources in support of the PA budget, to harmonise donor assistance in exchange for a commonly agreed reform programme and to simplify procedures for the PA. Use of direct budget support also reflects World Bank analysis that this is the most efficient of all the emergency assistance instruments currently employed by donors, with substantial macroeconomic and welfare benefits.

An important precondition for creation of the reform fund was a satisfactory assessment of the current financial management procedures of the PA. The World Bank has carried out a detailed country financial accountability assessment (CFAA), which found that major and highly creditable improvements in budgeting and fiscal transparency have been introduced during the tenure of the present Palestinian Finance Minister. Weaknesses in financial accountability remain, related in particular to the lack of adequate public financial statements, inadequate auditing and the undeveloped oversight role of the Palestinian Legislative Council. But the CFAA confirms that the current systems are adequate to justify World Bank budget support. It also identifies key actions needed to further improve the systems, and these have now been agreed with the PA as performance benchmarks for the reform fund. Disbursement of funding will be conditional on achievement of reform benchmarks. This is an approach successfully used by the EC in its recent bilateral provision of budget support to the PA.

The use of donor funds provided to the PA through the reform fund will be carefully monitored. Prior conditions for the first disbursement, such as passage of a 2004 Budget law, and the payment of all security personnel salaries by direct bank transfer, have already been met. Funding will be disbursed in six-month tranches depending on progress with further reforms, such as revised external audit arrangements, containment of the wage bill, maintaining a minimum level of social sector expenditure, and full control of the Ministry of Finance over all PA procurement. World Bank staff will monitor the implementation of the benchmarked actions on a regular basis. Every quarter, the PA will prepare a progress report. Using these reports, the bank will lead quarterly technical and fiduciary supervision missions to review compliance with agreed prior actions and benchmarks, budget implementation and general economic and social developments. DFED will participate in these missions.

In the event of the PA not meeting all benchmarks, the World Bank would assess the specific situation and consult contributing donors on whether a waiver were appropriate. Should no waiver be granted, the release of the next tranche of funding would be held back pending fulfilment of the benchmarks. The World Bank could

also, in consultation with contributing donors, suspend disbursements if the PA reversed already implemented policy actions, until remedial action were taken, donors have the option of bilaterally withdrawing their money from the reform fund at any time.

In addition to the PA's own external auditing arrangements, an external auditor contracted by the World Bank will perform annual audits of the reform fund's deposit account at the PA Ministry of Finance. These audits will verify the extent to which the World Bank's requirements under the grant agreement are being met, and whether the PA's procedures are adequate to achieve this result.

We expect several donors to contribute to the reform fund. Norway and Canada have already decided to do so. Other countries are considering contributions. The World Bank plans to contribute $20 million of its own alongside the fund. The EC has been providing budget support to the PA since 2000, and is likely to continue doing so. The IMF is involved in a technical capacity. The USA has been actively involved in the design of the fund, and will participate in its management. The G8 has urged the international community to increase and accelerate their assistance provided to the PA. We and other contributors will be urging other donors to give money to the reform fund. Arab states continue to be the biggest supporters of the PA's budget, although some may prefer to contribute outside the reform fund.

DFID has thoroughly appraised a UK contribution to the reform fund, in line with our published policy on the provision of direct budget support. This policy reflects our commitments under Government accounting that aid should be properly accounted for, used for the intended purposes and represent value for money. When appraising budget support, we ensure the following:

(i) a thorough evaluation of public financial management and accountability systems, and associated risks, has been carried out;

(ii) the recipient government has a credible programme to improve standards of these systems;

(iii) the potential developmental benefits justify the risk, taking account of any safeguards that can be put in place to buttress and develop these systems; and

(iv) these assessments are explicitly recorded as part of the decision-making process to provide assistance.

In the case of the Palestinian Authority, we share the World Bank's assessment that there is a significant fiduciary risk, but that a satisfactory programme of reforms is in place to reduce this risk. This level of risk is not unusual in countries where DFID provides budget support. I have judged that the developmental benefits of providing budget support, and the risks of not providing it, justify this fiduciary risk.

In making this judgment I have also looked at the impact on poverty of PA spending. The PA does not have an internationally recognised poverty reduction strategy. But it has started to develop short-term planning frameworks to guide its own prioritisation. I share the judgment made by the International Development Committee in its report in February that, although unusual, given the current state of the Palestinian economy, "wage payment maintained by budget support is an effective method of emergency poverty alleviation". The PA Ministry of Planning is beginning to develop a more comprehensive approach to poverty reduction. DFID will work with other donors to help them do this, alongside the provision of budget support.

I have, of course, considered the many allegations made against the PA about diversion of funds. In particular, there have been accusations that budget support previously provided by the European Commission was used to finance terrorist activities. A EU independent anti-fraud investigation into these allegations has been going on for over a year and has not yet concluded. An inquiry by a European Parliament Working Group on budgetary assistance to the Palestinian Authority reported in March 2004, after a one-year investigation. The majority report concluded that "there is no conclusive evidence, to date, that the EU non-targeted direct budgetary support was used to finance illegal activities, including the financing of terrorism", and that "there is no evidence that EU budget support has not been fully transferred into the PA budget or that it was used outside the budget". It further concluded that budget support had "contributed to bring about concrete changes in the PA financial system and impacted on the PA reform process towards more transparency, accountability and good governance". Recommendations from the report have largely been addressed in the design of the World Bank reform fund, notably that "future budget support should be accompanied by clear, specific conditionalities subject to strict monitoring", and that "such conditionalities should be established in full co-operation and in close co-ordination with the other international donors".

It has been suggested that aid to the PA should be conditional on progress with security sector reform, and other measures to reduce terrorism against Israeli citizens, such as action against incitement. We agree with the World Bank and other donors that at this stage it will be more effective to link disbursement of budget support to conditions related to financial management, budget allocation and accountability. The Government have made action on Palestinian security its highest diplomatic priority in our relations with the PA. We are also providing practical assistance to help them take this action. Particularly under current circumstances, we do not think an underfunded PA that risks not being able to pay salaries is in the interests of Israeli security. We have informed the Government of Israel of our decision to contribute. The Israeli Government have told us that they welcome international humanitarian and economic assistance to the Palestinians and support the World Bank reform fund, provided the money is properly spent and monitored.

Contributing to the PA's budget is in line with the Government's strategy for supporting Palestinians. Our new Palestinian country assistance plan says we will work with partners to help end conflict and create a viable Palestinian state that will reduce poverty. The strategy has three aims:

prospects for peace enhanced;

more effective, accountable and inclusive Palestinian institutions and governance systems;

and humanitarian and development assistance delivered more effectively.

Contributing to the reform fund will address all three outcomes. It will also address the Government's wider political objectives on the middle east peace process, by helping the PA to meet its roadmap commitments. Our initial contribution to the reform fund is for 2004. We will consider later this year, in light of monitoring of the PA's use of donor funds and their likely financing gap and spending plans for 2005, whether we should continue contributing.

I am placing in the Library of the House the World Bank's board paper describing the rationale for, and operational arrangements of, the reform fund, which includes as an annex the Palestinian Authority's statement of development policy and a matrix of further reform actions the PA is undertaking. I am also placing in the Library of the House copies of the finalised "Palestinian Country Assistance Plan".

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 18 May 2004

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

China

The Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. John Prescott): Following my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister's successful visit to the China in July last year, he asked me to head a short-term task force on China, to make recommendations for taking forward Sino-UK relations. Against the backdrop of our already extensive relationship with China, and considerable interaction across the range of Government business, the group was asked to come up with concrete proposals in four particular areas: trade and investment; science and technology; education and sustainable development and the environment.

I chaired three meetings of the task force, which generated an excellent range of proposals in the areas mentioned. I was delighted to report back to the Prime Minister on our progress, as scheduled, ahead of Premier Wen Jiabao's visit this week. I was also delighted to introduce Premier Wen to the members of the task force at our meeting on 10 May and to present him with a summary of our recommendations.

I have passed a copy of those recommendations to the Chair of the all party China group, and am today making copies available in the Libraries of the House. Details of the task force's composition, and the dates of their meetings, are contained therein. The recommendations will now be taken forward by the relevant departments, and I am grateful for the support of my right hon. Friends the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, in particular, in agreeing to help implement them. I intend to hold a further meeting of the task force in the autumn, to review progress to that point, and to visit China again myself as soon as possible thereafter.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Fraud Inspectorate Report (Bromley Council)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the benefit fraud inspectorate (BFI) follow-up inspection report on the London Borough of Bromley council was published today and copies of the report have been placed in the Library.

Following the housing Green Paper "Quality and Choice: A Decent Home for All", published in April 2000, the Department for Work and Pensions developed a performance framework for housing benefits. The 'performance standards for housing benefits' allow local authorities to make a comprehensive self-assessment of whether they deliver benefit effectively and securely. They are the standards that the Department for Work and Pensions expects local authorities to aspire to and achieve in time.

In 2002–03, London Borough of Bromley Council administered some £69.5 million in housing benefits, about 13.9 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure. BFI inspected London Borough of Bromley Council against the performance standards for housing benefits, and concludes that the council's benefits service had not reached standard in any of the seven functional areas—strategic management, customer services, processing of claims, working with landlords, internal security, counter-fraud and overpayments.

The report finds that the council's benefits service had improved its performance since the earlier inspection report, published in September 2001, implementing 72 per cent. of the recommendations from the earlier report. There was commitment and professionalism in the council's efforts to improve benefits administration and examples of innovation and good practice.

The backlog of work identified in the first inspection had been cleared and processing times for new benefit claims had reduced from 120 to 81 days. Challenging targets had been set for 2004–05 but there was still much to do to reach the 36-day performance standard. Although the verification framework, the national standard for verifying evidence supporting benefit claims, had not been implemented, the council planned to be fully compliant by May 2004. The introduction of an electronic benefit claim form was helping claims to be processed more effectively and BFI commends the council for the quality and level of management checking, providing assurance on accuracy.

The council's internal security controls were found to be inadequate but it quickly responded to BFI's recommendations to rectify these problems.

The council had made major improvements in its counter-fraud work by entering into a partnership with London Borough of Greenwich Council, and there had been substantial improvements in the number of administrative penalties and prosecutions undertaken.

The council had comprehensive plans to improve its benefits overpayment work and had good management information for this area of work. However, it accepted that more work was needed to improve its recovery of overpaid benefits. The report makes recommendations to help the council address weaknesses and to further improve the administration of housing benefit and council tax benefit, as well as counter-fraud activities.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is now considering the report and will be asking the council for its proposals in response to the BFI's findings and recommendations.

Employers Liability Compulsory Insurance

The Minister for Work (Jane Kennedy): Further to the written statement on 4 December 2003 by the Minister for Work, my hon. Friend the Member for Kilmarnock and Loudoun (Mr. Des Browne), *Official Report*, columns 68–70WS, when the Government gave a commitment to produce and publish a "Framework for Vocational Rehabilitation" by late summer 2004, I am pleased to announce the publication today of a

discussion paper on vocational rehabilitation. Comments on the discussion paper will feed into the development of the framework.

The discussion paper describes the scope of vocational rehabilitation, outlines why the Department is developing a framework for vocational rehabilitation and describes what the framework will look like. The discussion paper also gives stakeholders an opportunity to share their thoughts and experiences on vocational rehabilitation.

Copies of the discussion paper have been placed in the Library.

Pension Credit

The Minister for Pensions (Malcolm Wicks): I can now provide the latest monthly progress report on the take-up of pension credit, which became payable on 6 October 2003.

There are now 2.45 million pensioner households (2.96 million individuals) being paid pension credit, an increase of 44,000 households (54,000 individuals) during April. As at 30 April, there are 1.78 million households (2.15 million individuals) now receiving more money as a result of the introduction of pension credit. The pension credit application line, at our four sites across the country, has received 3.54 million calls since it became operational on 7 April 2003 and 94 per cent of calls have been answered within 30 seconds. The average pension credit award is £41.67 per week.

We have now written to every pensioner household in the country to tell them about pension credit. We are continuing to work with organisations such as Help The Aged, Age Concern and Citizens Advice, amongst others, both at a national and local level, to encourage eligible people to take up their entitlement. The current phase of the campaign is focusing on those customers who are less likely to take up their entitlement.

There is plenty of time for pensioners to apply for pension credit. To ensure that pensioners do not lose out there is a twelve-month backdating provision, as announced in the Budget statement. This will allow applications to be backdated for a year, or to the date entitlement begins if this is later.

I am placing in the Library a report showing progress so far, including regional breakdowns of the number of pension credit households and numbers of pension credit awards in parliamentary constituencies in Great Britain. Copies of the report are also available for hon. Members in the Vote Office.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 19 May 2004

HOME DEPARTMENT

Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Paul Goggins): I would like to inform the House that Ms Penelope Barrett and Mr. Alastair MacGregor have been appointed as members of the Criminal Cases Review Commission. Copies of the press release relating to these appointments are available in the House Library.

Community Cohesion and Race Equality Strategy

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Fiona Mactaggart): I am announcing today the launch of the consultation pamphlet, "Strength in Diversity: Towards a Community Cohesion and Race Equality Strategy". The pamphlet sets out the Government's analysis of the issues and challenges that we need to address in developing our community cohesion and race equality strategy, which we plan to publish in the autumn. Our aim in publishing the consultation pamphlet is to promote an honest and open debate on a range of issues that are profoundly important to us all.

Hard copies of the document, available today, have been placed in the Library of the House. It is also on the Home Office website, http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/comrace/

Immigration Review

The Minister for Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Desmond Browne): This is a further report to the House on the Government's comprehensive review of legal migration schemes, including details on lifting the suspension of visa restrictions in Bulgaria and Romania.

On 30 March, my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary announced that, as part of this wider review, Ken Sutton had been asked to investigate allegations of abuse of the European Community Association Agreements (ECAA) scheme by nationals from Bulgaria and Romania. At the same time, consideration of all visa and after-entry applications from these countries was suspended.

From 13 April, the suspension was lifted for the majority of visa applications in Bulgaria and Romania—for business and family visits, and low-risk categories such as official staff. Visa applications remained suspended for the ECAA scheme, which relates to the self-employed, and for the employment schemes which were being investigated as part of the wider migration review. After-entry applications remained suspended.

At the same time we were in contact with employers and operators who regularly employed Bulgarian and Romanian nationals under the temporary low-skill employment schemes. On 8 April we advised them that if they had pressing short-term labour needs, they should make alternative arrangements, since it could take several weeks before these schemes could be fully reviewed, and any necessary action taken, before they could be re-opened.

On 22 April my right hon. Friend announced that a series of taskforces had identified a number of measures which would be implemented to reduce abuse of migration schemes, across all countries. The first set of measures concerned people posing as students, people pretending to provide education or training, and people marrying for immigration purposes. He indicated also that he had ordered a review (again across all countries) of the temporary low-skill employment schemes.

Following that review, I am today announcing changes to the quotas that apply to two temporary low-skill employment schemes, the seasonal agricultural workers scheme (SAWS) and the sectors based scheme (SBS). I am also announcing measures which will ensure that these schemes are not open to abuse.

These schemes serve a valuable role in helping UK employers to recruit workers in sectors (agriculture, food processing and hospitality) where there are difficulties in meeting labour needs from the resident workforce. At the same time, it is important that these schemes should now reflect the fact that workers from the countries which joined the EEA on 1 May are now free to seek work in these sectors. Most important of all, it is important that these schemes are protected from abuse.

I am therefore announcing that the quota for 2005 for the seasonal agricultural workers scheme will be 16,250, a 35 per cent. reduction on the current quota; and from 1 June 2004, the existing overall quota for the sectors based scheme will be cut by 25 per cent. There will be a quota of 6,000 SBS permits for the food processing sector and 9,000 SBS permits for the hospitality sector. These quotas will be released in two half-yearly stages.

These reductions are based on the level of take-up of these schemes by Accession nationals, prior to accession on May 1.

I am also announcing that the Home Office will introduce measures intending to ensure that those participating in our temporary employment schemes leave the United Kingdom at the end of their stay. These measures will include applying country-specific quotas within the overall quotas. These country-specific quotas will only be made available where we are confident that the source country will accept their nationals back if they are found to be here illegally.

The Home Office will consult industry on the detail of how these quotas will be applied, and will have immediate discussions in particular with the SAWS operators about action to ensure that the students who come in under this scheme return home at the end of their assignment.

I intend also to change the immigration rules so that those admitted under the SBS will no longer be able to switch into permanent migration schemes, such as work permit employment. Those admitted under SAWS are

currently not allowed to switch into permanent migration schemes, and new guidance will be issued to ensure that these rules are being enforced consistently.

We are also issuing new guidance to ensure that applicants for SBS and SAWS are subject to rigorous checks, and to ensure that we act swiftly on the basis of intelligence of abuse, including the use of fraudulent documents.

With these additional controls in place on the temporary low-skill schemes, and in the light of our continuing review of abuse across all migration schemes, we are now in the position to take the next step in the progressive re-opening of visa applications from Bulgaria and Romania. With effect from today, I am announcing the lifting of the suspension on applications from Bulgaria and Romania for the temporary low-skill (SAWS and SBS) schemes, for the high-skill schemes (work permits and HSMP), and for all after-entry cases. The one exception is applications from the self-employed under the ECAA scheme, which will remain suspended in the light of the ongoing investigation by Ken Sutton.

Further announcements will be made in due course relating to other aspects of the managed migration review.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Housing Bill

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): The Housing Bill introduces measures to help create a fairer and more effective housing market, and will protect those that are most vulnerable in that market.

The Government have listened carefully during Commons consideration of the Bill and also to external stakeholders. It now plans to add two further measures to the Bill: provisions to tackle empty homes; and measures to protect tenancy deposits. These amendments will be tabled in due course.

Empty homes

The Government are committed to finding ways of bringing empty homes back into use. We have already encouraged voluntary measures wherever possible, but recognise that more is needed to reduce significantly the number of privately owned homes that remain vacant for long periods of time.

The Government therefore intend to enable local authorities to make management orders in respect of long-term empty homes. The legislation will contain the evidence a local authority would need to provide in support of an application to make a management order on an empty home. We will ensure intervention is proportionate, appropriately targeted and compliant with the Human Rights Act. Voluntary arrangements will continue to be appropriate in many circumstances.

Empty homes management orders would support measures to increase housing supply. We will set out the precise scope of intervention in legislation. Our intention is to apply this measure to genuine cases of housing vacancy. We do not consider it would be appropriate to apply it to property that is genuinely occupied, albeit not on a regular basis, or property subject to an action that will result in it coming back into use without the need for intervention.

A management order would enable a local authority to put in place arrangements to enable a property to be let. In the case of a dilapidated property, this might entail renovation. The legal estate would be retained by the owner who would be entitled to any rental income generated by the local authority after deduction of its relevant costs. The owner would be entitled to sell the property or request revocation of the management order.

Tenancy deposit protection

The Government also propose to add to the Housing Bill some provisions on tenancy deposits.

The Government remain of the view that providing a link between the safeguarding of tenancy deposits and a requirement for all tenants to have written agreements is a sensible objective. However it accepts that the Law Commission proposals on tenure reform will take time to put into effect and need careful consideration.

Our intention is to add provisions to the Housing Bill to require that tenancy deposits should be subject to safeguarding arrangements. The Government accept that they will need to sponsor a scheme to provide for the safeguarding of the deposits sought by the majority of landlords. But they also recognise that members of trade or professional bodies should be able to look to those bodies to provide their own schemes if these schemes provide sufficient protection and the Government are able to approve them.

The provisions will need to define the term "tenancy deposit" and provide that where such deposits are required by landlords or their agents they should be safeguarded by a scheme approved by the Government. There will need to be civil sanctions for non-compliance. There will need to be provisions for the timely return of deposits and for their repayment following dispute resolution.

These measures—on empty homes and tenancy deposits—follow extensive consultation with the key stakeholders, and there will be an opportunity for further debate when they are tabled for inclusion in the Housing Bill.

Co-ordinated On-line Register of Electors

The Minister for Local and Regional Government (Mr. Nick Raynsford): Today, I am pleased to announce to the House the launch of a consultation on modernising electoral registration. This follows on from my written statement on the 15 January 2004, *Official Report*, columns 42–43WS, when I announced the launch of the coordinated online register of electors (CORE) project. At that time I gave a commitment to consult with local government and others on the details for taking forward the project, including the proposed funding arrangements.

This project will contribute to the modernisation of the electoral registration process in Great Britain by, first, standardising local electoral registers and, secondly, allowing authorised users to access local registration data centrally. It will support the achievement of our aim to hold a multi-channelled e-enabled general election sometime after 2006.

Stakeholders will have until 13 August 2004 to send in their responses.

Copies of the consultation document are available in the Libraries of both Houses and will also be made available on the website of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Digital Switchover

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Tessa Jowell): The Government is continuing to work with the broadcasting industry and consumer representatives to facilitate the switch to digital television. Already over half of all households receive digital television services. In view of the progress to date switchover between 2006 and 2010 remains attainable. However it is apparent that more concerted action by broadcasters, retailers and manufacturers, supported by Government and Ofcom, is required if the full benefits of digital television are to be made available to the whole population within the desired period.

Completing the switch to digital will bring significant benefits to consumers, to broadcasters and to the UK economy as a whole:

- It will bring digital terrestrial television signals to the 25 per cent. of the population who live in areas that cannot currently receive them because of spectrum limitations;
- Increased quality and choice for viewers;
- Broadcasters will no longer have to incur the costs of transmitting signals in both formats, releasing resources for investment in programming and other services for consumers; and
- Spectrum will be released to allow the development of more television and other services for consumers.

The BBC and the commercial public service broadcasters have a lead role in achieving switchover. They have an established relationship with virtually all Britain's households and are therefore uniquely placed to ensure a smooth transition to digital broadcasting. They will also benefit from reduced costs and from the ability to offer consumers a wider range of services.

The Government have now written to the commercial terrestrial broadcasters and the BBC inviting them to engage with us and with Ofcom on how to achieve a complete switchover and to establish an appropriate timetable, in liaison with other stakeholders. The outcome of these discussions will be reflected in the digital licences which Ofcom will grant to ITV companies, Channel 4 and 5, and in the BBC's charter review.

Further stages in establishing the plan for switchover will be reported to the House in due course.

TREASURY

Financial Services and Europe

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Ruth Kelly): The Chancellor of the Exchequer is today publishing two documents on financial services and Europe, which have been prepared jointly by Her Majesty's Treasury, the Financial Services Authority and the Bank of England. Copies of The "EU Financial Services Action Plan: Delivering the FSAP in the UK" and "After the Financial Services Action Plan: A New Strategic Approach" are available in the Library of the House.

WORK AND PENSIONS

"Building on New Deal: Local Solutions Meeting Individuals' Needs"

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Andrew Smith): I have today published a paper "Building on New Deal: Local Solutions Meeting Individuals' Needs" which provides a summary of our strategy for building on the success of our employment programmes. A copy has been placed in the Library.

The UK employment rate is now the highest in the G7, and the unemployment rate the lowest. Employment has risen in every region of the UK5 and risen more in areas that previously had the lowest employment rates. The number of unemployed people has fallen by over 600,000 on both measures since 1997 to its lowest level for over a quarter of a century.

This success reflects the comprehensive economic strategy that the Government have put into place since 1997. At the heart of this success have been our welfare to work policies, such as the new deal programmes, which have helped well over a million people to find work.

We have achieved significant falls in unemployment and rises in the employment levels of lone parents and older workers. But we are determined to do even more for those who face the most difficult barriers to work. We will build upon the success of the new deal, strengthening the new deal's ability to help people who face particular difficulties in moving into employment. This requires a personalised approach where personal advisers, local managers and service providers are given sufficient flexibility to deliver solutions appropriate for individuals and local labour markets. This strategy builds on existing policies to secure social justice for those who too often have been left behind, and to enable them to realise their full potential, to the economic and social benefit of the whole community and to achieve the goal of full employment in every region and nation of the UK.

We are currently consulting on these proposals with a range of stakeholders, including the devolved administrations, Social Security Advisory Committee, the Disability Employment Advisory Committee, and the National Employment Panel. Once the views of stakeholders have been considered, a final paper setting out the full details of the proposals will be published.

Kerrier District Council (Benefit Fraud Inspectorate Report)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the benefit fraud inspectorate (BFI) follow-up inspection report on Kerrier district council was published today and copies of the report have been placed in the Library.

Following the housing Green Paper, "Quality and Choice: A Decent Home for All", published in April 2000, the Department for Work and Pensions developed a performance framework for housing benefits. The "performance standards for housing benefits" allow local authorities to make a comprehensive self-assessment of whether they deliver benefit effectively and securely. They are the standards that the Department for Work and Pensions expects local authorities to aspire to and achieve in time.

In 2002-03, Kerrier district council administered some £23.1 million in housing benefits, about 60 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure.

BFI inspected Kerrier district council against the performance standards for housing benefits, and concludes that the council's benefits service had not reached standard in any of the seven functional areas—strategic management, customer services, processing of claims, working with landlords, internal security, counter-fraud and overpayments.

In the first BFI inspection report, published in October 2001, BFI reported that claims processing was poor with a backlog of work, overpayment recovery was improving, and counter-fraud activity was working well.

The follow-up report finds that the council's benefits service had made progress in improving its performance, implementing 68 per cent. of the recommendations from the earlier report.

Kerrier district council had a clear vision, which was underpinned by policies, strategies and effective planning. Good progress had also been made in the area of overpayments, where sound practices were evident and recovery from benefit was strong.

Verification of evidence supporting benefit claims was good in the majority of areas and management checking was clearly evidenced and used to good effect. However, speed of claims processing remained poor, compounded by the continuing backlog of work, with the council taking an average 88 days to process new benefit claims compared to the Performance Standard of 36 days.

The council's three-year best value plan set local targets for new claims, reported changes of circumstances and renewal claims processing. Although these were realistic targets for the council to achieve, they did not meet the performance standards.

The council's counter-fraud policy and positive drive towards quality fraud investigations had prompted a number of successful and publicised sanctions and prosecutions. This demonstrated that the council is serious about tackling benefit fraud. However, the report finds weaknesses, which included inadequate management control and poor communications between benefits and investigation staff.

A comprehensive benefits overpayments policy and procedures manual was in place, high levels of management checks and controls were utilised, and most overpayment recovery methods were used.

The report makes recommendations to help the council address weaknesses and to further improve the administration of housing benefit and council tax benefit, as well as counter-fraud activities.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is now considering the report and will be asking the council for its proposals in response to the BFI's findings and recommendations.

Council of the Isles of Scilly (Benefit Fraud Inspectorate Report)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) inspection report on the Council of the Isles of Scilly was published today and copies of the report have been placed in the Library.

Following the housing Green Paper "Quality and Choice: A Decent Home for All", published in April 2000, the Department for Work and Pensions developed a performance framework for housing benefits. The performance standards for housing benefits allow local authorities to make a comprehensive self-assessment of whether they deliver benefit effectively and securely. They are the standards that the Department for Work and Pensions expects local authorities to aspire to and achieve in time.

In 2001-02, the Council of the Isles of Scilly administered some £96,000 in housing benefits, about 2.5 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure.

BFI inspected the Council of the Isles of Scilly against the performance standards for housing benefits, and concludes that the council's benefits service had not reached standard in any of the seven functional areas—strategic management, customer services, processing of claims, working with landlords, internal security, counter-fraud and overpayments.

The inspection was prompted by the council's failure, over several years, to provide its quarterly performance management information to the Department for Work and Pensions.

The council is the smallest in England with an average housing benefit and council tax benefit caseload of 60 cases. The report finds that although the council complied with some elements of the performance standards there were few formal policies and procedures in place, and no formal management checking was undertaken.

There was a strong commitment at all levels within the council to provide an efficient and effective benefits service and a high proportion of customers expressed satisfaction with the service provided. The council met the 36-days performance standard for processing new benefit claims.

At the time of the inspection, the council had just entered into a temporary partnership arrangement with the neighbouring Penwith district council to provide a more effective benefits service.

The report makes recommendations to help the council address weaknesses and to further improve the administration of housing benefit and council tax benefit, as well as counter-fraud activities.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is now considering the report and will be asking the council for its proposals in response to the BFI's findings and recommendations.

Social Security Advisory Committee

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Andrew Smith): Today I have published the Government response (Cm 6190) to the Work and Pensions Committee First Report of Session 2002–03 (HC 296) inquiry into the Social Security Advisory Committee. I have today also published my response to the report of the review of the Social Security Advisory Committee carried out by Professor Hazel Genn CBE as part of the internal review of SSAC (Cm 6189).

I am grateful to the Select Committee and to Professor Genn for their reports which are both detailed, comprehensive and helpful. It has been very helpful for the Select Committee to carry out its inquiry when it did and to be able to consider the two complementary reports together.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 20 May 2004

HOME DEPARTMENT

Firearms

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Caroline Flint): Following the Home Secretary's decision not to extend further the life of the Firearms Consultative Committee, we have been considering how best to establish a forum for consultation and to assist in the current review of legislation. We have decided to establish a broad-based Firearms Advisory Committee with around 21 members to be drawn in equal measure from shooting interests; law enforcement/regulation; and organisations and community groups with an interest in the social consequences of firearms use and misuse.

The committee's terms of reference will be:

> To advise the Home Secretary on the law and policy on firearms, having regard to the need to maintain public safety and prevent criminal misuse and taking into account the interests of legitimate shooters and the efficient, effective administration of controls.

It will be assisted in this task by a technical sub-committee with 12 to 15 members drawn principally from representatives of law enforcement bodies and shooting organisations with knowledge and experience of firearms matters. The sub-committee's terms of reference will be:

> To consider the technical and legal aspects of administering and enforcing firearms controls and to make recommendations to the Firearms Advisory Committee on these and such other matters as may be referred to them.

We will be approaching interested organisations and individuals to seek nominations to serve on one, or both, committees with a view to appointing members as soon as possible.

The committee will be asked to submit a report of its work after 12 months and copies will be placed in the Library.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Disability Discrimination Act

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Maria Eagle): I have today laid before both Houses, in draft, two codes of practice concerning the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) relating to employment and associated matters. The codes have been prepared by the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) under section 53A of the DDA.

The issue of the new codes is necessitated by changes to the legislation by virtue of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Amendment) Regulations 2003 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Pensions) Regulations 2003, which transpose requirements of European Council Directive 2000/78/EC concerning disability discrimination, and come into force on 1 October this year.

The draft code on employment and occupation covers the provisions of the DDA (as amended) relating to disabled employees, contract workers, police officers, partners in firms, barristers and advocates and persons undertaking practical work experience. The other draft code concerns the duties, under the amended Act, of Trade Organisations and Qualifications Bodies.

The new codes will replace the existing ones issued by the Secretary of State in 1996 and 1999, which deal only with employment and trade organisations, respectively. The codes are issued by the DRC, subject to approval by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and after laying them in draft before Parliament for 40 sitting days. The codes are intended to give practical guidance to those to whom the relevant provisions of the DDA apply.

Section 53A of the DDA provides that failure to observe any provision of a code of practice does not of itself make a person liable to any proceedings, but that any provision of a code which appears to a court or tribunal to be relevant to any question arising in any proceedings under the Act shall be taken into account in determining that question.

The draft codes have undergone public consultation, and a report of the process has been published by the DRC on its website.

The changes to the legislation from October will bring significant improvements in the rights of disabled people in employment and in vocational training. In particular, they will extend the employment provisions of the DDA to one million additional employers and seven million further jobs, including 600,000 in which disabled workers are already employed. Employers and others with new duties from 1 October have no need to be apprehensive about these new duties, as they will not be required to make unreasonable changes. The new codes of practice will help them to decide what is reasonable in particular circumstances.

The Commission will be publishing the codes in advance of the legislative changes coming into force, so that those with new duties under the DDA can consider what reasonable adjustments they may need to make.

The intended commencement date is 1 October 2004, to coincide with the date on which the changes to the legislation come into force.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Right to Buy (Homes for the Elderly)

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): The Government has today issued a consultation paper seeking the views of social landlords and tenant groups on its proposals to update guidance issued in 1993 on the exception from the right to buy scheme of homes that are particularly suitable for occupation by elderly persons.

From the inception of the right to buy in 1980, certain kinds of property have been excepted from the scheme. These are listed in paragraph 11 of schedule 5 to the Housing Act 1985. One of these exceptions is that a

landlord may deny a tenant the right to buy if his home is particularly suitable for occupation by elderly persons, having regard to its location, size, design, heating system and other features paragraph 11 also provides that a tenant denied the right to buy on these grounds may appeal to the Secretary of State. A joint Department of the Environment and Welsh Office circular, issued in 1993, provides guidance on the main points on which the Secretary of State will normally expect to be satisfied when determining such appeals.

The Government's Housing Bill proposes that such appeals by tenants living in England should, in future, be determined by a residential property tribunal rather than by the Secretary of State. This will provide administrative benefits but will make no substantive difference to landlords or to tenants who appeal under paragraph 11. Such appeals in Wales will continue to be determined by the National Assembly for Wales. The Government do not propose to change the terms of the exception in paragraph 11 in any way.

In support of this transfer of jurisdiction, the Government proposes to review and update the guidance in the 1993 circular. Clearer guidance will benefit both tenants and landlords by reducing ambiguities that have led to unnecessary work, disagreements, and disappointment. Among other things, the Government proposes that landlords should explain the effect of the paragraph 11 exclusion to their tenants, and that elderly tenants who are being rehoused should be advised if in their landlords' view the right to buy would be unlikely to apply to the properties that they are being offered.

The responses to the consultation paper will be taken into account in preparing the revised guidance. It is intended that the new circular will be issued by the end of 2004.

HEALTH

Bureaucracy

The Secretary of State for Health (Dr. John Reid): On 30 October, I announced to the Health Committee that the Department would be conducting a review of its arm's length bodies (ALBs). The first stage of this has now been completed. I wanted to update the House on the decisions that I have taken and how the review will move forward to the next stage.

In his Budget speech, my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer remarked on the importance the Government attach to improving public sector efficiency and reducing bureaucracy. In the Budget report, he set out that "the pursuit of efficiency also includes reducing bureaucracy, that both cuts headquarters' administration costs and frees up time of front line professionals to respond better to the needs of their customers". The Department's ALB review needs to be seen in this context and related to the work of Sir Peter Gershon in reviewing public sector efficiency. It is about putting the frontline first, and it is clear from the first stage of the ALB review that, although much good work continues to be done by ALBs, there is considerable scope for improving efficiency and reducing bureaucracy.

The review covers bodies undertaking national functions sponsored by the Department that were in existence or in the pipeline in 2003–04. The 42 ALBs included in the review are listed below. In a full year, ALBs spend more than £2.5 billion and employ more than 22,000 staff. If left unchanged, they would employ about 10 times the number of staff of the Department itself after completion of its change programme. It is clear from the analysis we have done during the first stage of the review that:

- there are overlapping and duplicated functions;
- there is scope for reducing unnecessary regulatory and policy activities;
- back-office functions such as human resources, finance, information technology and estates could be carried out more effectively;
- a considerable number of bodies could be merged, thereby reducing overheads and integrating like functions;
- some bodies could be moved to a more independent status with greater stakeholder control; and
- there is scope for significant efficiency and productivity gains particularly in the area of services acquired centrally for the National Health Service.

The ALB sector has grown over several decades and, as currently constituted, does not best meet the health and social care needs of today and tomorrow. I have therefore asked my Department to take forward with the sector a reform agenda that delivers the following objectives:

- maximum devolution of responsibility to front line NHS and social care;
- improved efficiency across the sector with minimal bureaucratic overhead;
- closer working across the boundaries between health and social care; and
- minimised burden of inspection and regulation on health and social care services without reduced effectiveness.

These objectives are aimed at putting the frontline first and improving services for the public while ensuring value for public money.

In light of preliminary findings of the first stage, I have set the parameters for the next stage of this review. These are, against a baseline year of 2003–4:

- a 50 per cent., reduction in the number of ALBs;
- a saving in expenditure by ALBs of £0.5 billion by 2007–08; and
- a reduction in posts of 25 per cent., in the same period.

Changes on this scale will enable considerable extra resources to be redeployed to the frontline. For example another £0.5 billion would provide for four new hospitals, or 20,000 more nurses, or 6,250 consultants, or 7,500 general practitioners.

I recognise that the changes in prospect will cause uncertainty and disruption but they are needed. I intend for the next stage of the review to be completed as quickly as possible, within my parameters, and taking into account the need for proper discussion with the ALBs concerned and the devolved administrations. The Department will be in touch with ALB chairs and chief executives shortly to discuss our ideas for change. We want to work with them on the detail of our proposals over the next two months. We are hoping to complete this next stage by the end of June so that decisions can be announced before the summer recess.

List of ALBs considered in the review ALBs in 2003-04

1. † CHI—Commission for Health Improvement
2. CPPIH—Commission for Patient & Public Involvement in Health
3. CRHP—Council for the Regulation of Health Care Professionals
4. † DPB—Dental Practice Board
5. DVTA—Dental Vocational Training Authority
6. FHSAA—Family Health Services Appeals Authority
7. GSCC—General Social Care Council
8. HDA—Health Development Agency
9. HFEA—Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority
10. HPA—Health Protection Agency
11. † MHAC—Mental Health Act Commission
12. MHRA—Medicines & Health Care Products Regulatory Authority
13. NBA—National Blood Authority
14. NBSB—National Biological Standards Board
15. † NCSC—National Care Standards Commission
16. NCAA—National Clinical Assessment Authority
17. NHS AC—NHS Appointments Commission
18. NHS CFSMS—NHS Counter Fraud & Security Management Service
19. NHS Direct
20. NHS Estates
21. NHS IA—NHS Information Authority
22. NHS LA—NHS Litigation Authority
23. NHS Logistics Authority
24. NHS Modernisation Agency
25. NHS PASA—NHS Purchasing & Supplies Authority
26. NHS PA—NHS Pensions Agency
27. NHS Professionals
28. NHSU
29. NICE—National Institute for Clinical Excellence
30. NPSA—National Patients Safety Agency
31. † NRPB—National Radiological Protection Board
32. NTA—National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse
33. OIR—Office of the Independent Regulator of NHS Foundation Trusts
34. † PHLS—Public Health Laboratory Service
35. PMETB—Postgraduate Medical Education & Training Board
36. PPA—Prescriptions Pricing Authority
37. † ROC—Retained Organs Commission
38. UKT-UK Transplant

† These separate organisations have now gone or are planned to go.

Others covered by the review

These are now operational:

39. CHAI—Commission for Health Care Audit & Inspection
40. CSCI—Commission for Social Care Inspection

These are planned but not yet operational:

41. Dental Special Health Authority
42. HTA—Human Tissue Authority

CABINET OFFICE

Regulatory Impact Assessments

The Minister for the Cabinet Office and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Douglas Alexander): The Government is committed to ensuring that regulations are necessary, give effective protection, balance cost and risk, are fair and command public confidence. In accordance with this, we require Departments to produce and publish regulatory impact assessments (RIAs) for all regulatory proposals likely to have an impact on business, charities or voluntary bodies.

I have today presented to Parliament a Command Paper listing RIAs published between 1 July and 31 December 2003. Copies of those RIAs listed are available in the Library. This is the twentieth such Command Paper.

Correspondence

The Minister for the Cabinet Office and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Douglas Alexander): I am today publishing a report on Departments' and Agencies' performance on handling Members' and Peers' correspondence for 2003. Details are shown in the table. Departmental figures are based on substantive replies unless otherwise indicated.

The footnotes on the table provide general background information on how the figures have been compiled.

Correspondence from MPs/Peers to Ministers and agency chief executives[1]

Department or Agency	*2002*			*2003*		
	Target set for reply (working days)	*Number of letters received*	*% of replies within target*	*Target set for reply (working days)*	*Number of letters received*	*% of replies within target*
Cabinet Office	15	475	73	15	443	90
Department for Constitutional Affairs[2]	20	2,577	54	20	2,746	49
Court Service	20	230	84	15	464	95
	15*	593	78	—	—	—
HM Land Registry	20	32	100	20	48	96
National Archives[3]	15	166	98	15	30	90
	10**	61	98	10**	34	100

Correspondence from MPs/Peers to Ministers and agency chief executives[1]

Department or Agency	*2002*			*2003*		
	Target set for reply (working days)	*Number of letters received*	*% of replies within target*	*Target set for reply (working days)*	*Number of letters received*	*% of replies within target*
Public Guardianship Office	15	261	31	15	95	88
* *Target for correspondence sent direct to Agency Chief Executive.*						
** *Target for correspondence sent direct to Agency Chief Executive.*						
Crown Prosecution Service	15	366	85	15	298	88
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	18	4,767	83	18	5,460	85
HM Customs and Excise[4]	18	1,616	59	18	2,040	62
Ministry of Defence[4]	15	5,381	83	15	5,565	76
Armed Forces Personnel	15	18	100	15	93	98
Administration Agency Army Personnel Centre	—	—	—	15	16	94
Defence Aviation Repair Agency	10	14	100	—	—	—
Defence Estates	—	—	—	15	24	88
Defence Housing Executive	—	—	—	15	14	79
Met Office	15	14	100	—	—	—
UK Hydrographic Office	—	—	—	15	14	100
Veterans Agency	15	265	99	15	251	94
Department for Education and Skills[4]	15	15,595	84	15	14,424	92
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	15	11,241	47	15	10,410	68
Food Standards Agency[5]	—	—	—	20	981	13
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	20	15,535	83	20	30,168	80
UK Visas[6]	15	10,322	98	15	16,964	86
Department of Health[7]	20	17,942	29	20	19,029	54
NHS Pensions Agency	15	65	95	10	63	84
Medicines Control Agency	15	36	89	—	—	—
Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency	—	—	—	10	26	85
Home Office[8]						
* *Non Prison Service correspondence*	15	26,053*	35	15	37,153	58
** *Prison Service correspondence*	20	1,267**		(20 days for IND)		
Criminal Records Bureau[9]	5	632	N/A	10	461	92
HM Prison Service	20	942	77	20	1,437	65
UK Passport Service	10	132	97	10	337	79
Inland Revenue[4, 10]	18	3,157	71	18	2,803	81
* *Local Tax Office delegated figures (where local tax offices have replied to direct to MPs)*	18	439*	80	18	1,795*	35
Valuation Office[4]	18	20	75	18	13	77
Department for International Development	15	2,612	96	15	3,676	88
Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Lord's Office	15	155	96	15	43	88
Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers	15	378	63	15	325	65
Northern Ireland Office	10	501	59	10	503	69
Northern Ireland Prison Service	10	33	91	10	44	68
National Savings and Investments[4]	15	44	66	15	24	70
National Statistics[4]	20	212	82	15	193	84
* *Letters where National Statistician replied on Minister's behalf*				10	104	84
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister	15	5,523	76	15	8,737	73
Planning Inspectorate	8	291	90	8	384	89
Office of the Leader of the House of Commons	15	488	95	15	385	96
Scotland Office	15	115	73	15	73	87
Department for Trade and Industry[11]	10	11,565	41	15	14,678	58
Companies House*	10	45	100	10	33	100
Employment Tribunals Service**	6	46	93	—	—	—
Insolvency Service	10	398	96	10	34	88
Patent Office	10	367	98	10	484	98
Radiocommunication Agency[12]	10	44	89	—	—	—
Small Business Service***	—	—	—	—	—	—
* *Letters sent direct to Agency Chief Executive.*						
** *Target date for letters sent direct to Agency = 15 working days.*						
*** *Figures included in main DTI return.*						
Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions	15	7,671	83	—	—	—

Correspondence from MPs/Peers to Ministers and agency chief executives[1]

Department or Agency	*2002*			*2003*		
	Target set for reply (working days)	*Number of letters received*	*% of replies within target*	*Target set for reply (working days)*	*Number of letters received*	*% of replies within target*
Department for Transport	15	6,505	84	15	10,196	88
Driving Standards Agency	15	56	98	15	108	90
DVLA	10	729	99	7	1,028	99
Highways Agency	15	273	96	15	263	85
Maritime and Coastguard Agency	15	27	100	10	33	97
Vehicle Inspectorate	15	27	100	—	—	—
Vehicle and Operator Services Agency	—	—	—	15	25	92
HM Treasury[4]	15	4,647	78	15	4,036	83
Treasury Solicitor's Department	10	26	100	10	34	100
Wales Office	15	118	97	15	120	82
Department for Work and Pensions	20	14,297	65	20	12,157	74
Appeals Service	15	52	88	15	84	88
Benefits Agency	20	504	87	—	—	—
Child Support Agency	20	3,194	51	20	3,521	87
Employment Service	15	72	95	—	—	—
Jobcentre Plus	15	1,103	57	15	1,052	69
The Pension Service	15	511	71	15	1,157	50
Disability and Carers Service	15	749	100	15	554	99
Debt Management	15	30	86	15	31	85
Child Benefit Centre[13]	20	20	95	20	11	91
Health and Safety Executive	—	—	—	10	195	91

[1] Departments and Agencies which received 10 MPs/Peers letters or less during 2003 are not shown in this table. Holding or interim replies are not included unless otherwise indicated.

[2] DCA is currently undertaking changes to its processes for handling correspondence. In the short term these have lead to delays in response time, but in the longer term will improve the quality of responses. These changes include quality control of all responses, and revising the DCA correspondence monitoring system.

[3] Formerly the Public Record Office.

[4] Includes all Ministerial correspondence.

[5] The statistics for the FSA are dominated by a single lobbying campaign which accounted for almost 70% of its total annual correspondence. The Agency is reviewing its procedures for handling peaks of work arising from such a campaign. Majority of replies are signed by Health Ministers.

[6] 2003 figures also include a small number of letters from members of the public.

[7] Department of Health improved its performance to just under 70% in the last quarter of 2003.

[8] Figures include a small number of interim replies relating to correspondence sent to HM Prison Service. 2003 performance figures also include 16,268 cases answered directly by the Director General of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate. Response times to these cases relate to drafting performance only. Figures based on final replies will be available for 2004. Immigration and Nationality Directorate response target was increased to 20 working days with effect from 1 April 2003 to account for the wide geographical spread of offices and the nature of the correspondence which is predominantly about specific cases rather than policy issues.

[9] The CRB target was raised from 5 to 10 working days at the beginning of 2003 to reflect the standard set out in the CRB's Corporate Plan.

[10] Performance suffered due to the exceptionally high volume of correspondence following the introduction of the Working and Child Tax Credits in April 2003 and because, early in 2003–04, the Revenue's priority was to get claimants into payment. Since the processing of tax credits claims has been stable, the Revenue has restored normal complaints-handling procedures and increased the resources on its complaints teams. As a result, performance should begin to improve.

[11] DTI increased its response target from 10 to 15 working days with effect from 1 January in line with other main Whitehall departments.

[12] 2003 data currently not available because of transfer to OFCOM.

[13] The Child Benefit Centre transferred to the Inland Revenue with effect from 1 April 2003. Figures quoted are for the period 1/1/03 to 31/3/03.

Written Ministerial Statements

Friday 21 May 2004

HOME DEPARTMENT

Animal Experiments

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Caroline Flint): The Government believe that current developments in science are providing significantly more opportunities to do work on the reduction of the number of animals used, the refinement of the procedures involved to minimise suffering, and the replacement of animal use (the 3Rs), and that to take advantage of these opportunities we should put more resources into this area and broaden the community of interest.

I am, therefore, pleased to inform the House that the Government are setting up a new national centre for research into the 3Rs and animal welfare. The Centre for Best Practice for Animals in Research (CBPAR), established by the Medical Research Council, will form the core of the new centre. The new centre will be called the National Centre for Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research, and will act as a focal point for research into the 3Rs.

This decision implements the recommendation by the House of Lords Select Committee on Animals in Scientific Procedures, in its report published in July 2002, that such a centre should be established, which we broadly accepted in the Government's reply in January 2003. The Government have today published a report prepared by the inter-departmental group on the 3Rs (IDG3Rs) on the implementation of the Select Committee recommendation and has accepted its recommendation that responsibility the new national centre should rest with the Office of Science and Technology, with its wider scientific remit, rather than with the Home Office, whose role is constrained by its regulatory function under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986. A copy of the inter-departmental group's report has been placed in the Library of the House.

Placing the lead responsibility with the Office of Science and Technology emphasises that the 3Rs, humane experimental techniques, and the development of advanced research methods are part of the mainstream United Kingdom science base. It also acknowledges that Department's leading role in signalling both the financial and scientific benefits of such developments. In the initial stages the Centre will need the wider support and structure that the MRC can offer.

A new board will be set up to direct the centre and I am delighted to announce that Lord Turnberg has agreed to chair this board, aided by Professor Paul Flecknell as vice-chair. The remaining membership of the board will be appointed shortly. It is envisaged that all major stakeholder groups will be represented, including academics, Government, industry and animal welfare groups.

The mission statement for the Centre will be:

> The National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research is dedicated to the 3Rs—replacing, refining and reducing the use of animals in research and testing licensed under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986.
>
> Replacement is the ultimate aim for the Centre, but for so long as the use of animals continues to be necessary, it is essential that every effort is made to minimise their use and improve welfare. Ensuring that laboratory welfare is optimised is critical for scientific, legal and ethical reasons.

The Centre's mission is to advance and promote the 3Rs in research and testing using animals. This will be progressed by:

> Developing a UK strategy for the implementation of the 3Rs;
>
> Supporting high-quality research that advances the 3Rs;
>
> Promoting a co-ordinated approach to 3Rs research;
>
> Providing advice and guidance on the 3Rs and animal welfare to the scientific community;
>
> Supporting the UK scientific community's commitment to best practice in all aspects of laboratory animal science and welfare;
>
> Working with regulators on the acceptance of alternative methods for regulatory toxicology.

The first task of the new board will be to develop the mission statement into a detailed action plan.

The Centre will require more funding than currently being made available to CBPAR. The Medical Research Council and the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council have both agreed to double the level of funding provided this year and the Home Office will transfer its budget for research into the 3Rs currently administered by the Animal Procedures Committee to the Centre once current commitments have been honoured. It is envisaged that funding for the centre will increase further in future years and Lord Turnberg will be discussing this with Government. He will also discuss funding commitments with other funders of research involving animals.

Fatalities in Emergencies

The Minister for Crime Reduction, Policing and Community Safety (Ms Hazel Blears): Guidance on dealing with fatalities in emergencies has been published today on the UK resilience website www.ukresilience.info. Copies have been placed in the Library of the House. The purpose of this guidance—which is directed primarily at local planners and responders—is to reaffirm, update and consolidate what emergency officers should consider when planning the response to an emergency involving fatalities. It is the product of consultation with a range of stakeholders—central and local government, and the emergency services amongst others—and builds on earlier guidance in "dealing with disaster", revised third edition.

Thankfully mass fatality incidents have not occurred frequently in the United Kingdom. The emphasis of any response will focus on saving lives—but we must be prepared should the worst happen.

But the guidance is by no means intended to be a stand-alone solution to ensure that there is sufficient

capacity across the country to deal with such incidents. Work is being taken forward by the Home Office, in collaboration with the regions, the devolved administrations, planners and responders to establish existing levels of national capability. This should inform the development of a framework for a national response.

The guidance will be revisited in light of developments stemming from the Civil Contingencies Bill, currently before Parliament, and a review of the coroner system, set out in the Home Office position paper "Reforming the Coroner and Death Certification Service". We will also update and revise the guidance as findings emerge from research and scientific projects, and lessons are learned from incidents both at home and abroad. Feedback on the guidance should be sent to: feedback.massfatalitiesguidance@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk. It would be helpful to have these by 30th June 2004.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Petroleum Act

The Minister for Energy, E-Commerce and Postal Services (Mr. Stephen Timms): I am pleased to announce to the House that I am today offering a petroleum exploration and development licence (PEDL 133) to Composite Energy plc to cover acreage in the counties of Falkirk and Clackmannanshire (Blocks NS88, NS89, NS97, NS98 and NS99).

The company will have a fixed period in which to decide whether or not to accept the offer.

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 24 May 2004

HOME DEPARTMENT

Fingerprinting (Asylum Applicants)

The Minister for Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Desmond Browne): I have today made an authorisation under section 19D of the Race Relations Act 1976 as amended which enables the Home Office to continue to implement measures targeting the top five nationalities in terms of third country/Dublin cases for additional examination on the grounds of nationality. This follows an authorisation made by my predecessor my right hon. Friend the Member for Stretford and Urmston (Beverley Hughes) on 24 February 2004 which enabled the Home Office to initiate these measures.

These authorisations enable my officials to compare the fingerprints of asylum seekers of these five nationalities against other Governments' fingerprint databases of asylum seekers, failed asylum seekers and those granted some form of leave to remain.

They also allow my officials to compare the details of asylum seekers from the five prioritised nationalities with the details of individuals originally from those countries but now holding a form of immigration status elsewhere who have been granted a visa to travel to the UK.

The purpose of these measures is to enable my officials to identify individuals who have claimed asylum, are failed asylum seekers or absconders, or enjoy some form of status in another country who subsequently claim asylum in the UK.

I have decided to continue these measures to allow further time to gather evidence to test our assumptions that significant numbers of asylum applicants from these five nationalities are entering the country on legitimate EU and other western countries' documents and subsequently claiming asylum as a refugee, and to acquire further information on this abuse in order to inform future Home Office policy. I have also decided to make this authorisation continuous, and I will review the operation of it at three monthly intervals to consider the implementation and outcome of the measures and the top five nationalities targeted.

Iraq, Turkey, Iran, Somalia and Sudan were the top five nationalities subject to third country/Dublin action in the last six months of 2003. These nationalities remain the top five over the previous six months from October 2003—March 2004. This means that other EU member states are properly responsible to consider the asylum claim of the individuals concerned.

Any individuals identified under these processes may be returned to the safe third country identified as responsible for them under existing immigration law.

Immigration

The Minister for Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Desmond Browne): I have today made an authorisation under section 19D of the Race Relations Act 1976, as amended, which will enable immigration officers to prioritise the examination of passengers of Somali national origin. For a period of three months this will allow such people to be examined more rigorously than would otherwise be the case.

The purpose of this measure is to enable the immigration service to obtain information on the number and profiles of Somali-born passengers entering the UK. The aim is to establish how many of in-country asylum applicants claiming to be a Somali, apparently without documentation, enter the UK.

This authorisation extends one that was made by my predecessor as Minister for Immigration on 24 February this year.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Legal Aid

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. David Lammy): The Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs has issued a direction that brings cases related to the running of a business, and brought under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, into the scope of legal aid. The standard criteria for receiving legal aid, as set out by the Access to Justice Act 1999, will still have to be met. The full text of the direction has been placed in the Library of the House.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 25 May 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Pesticides Safety Directorate

The Minister for Rural Affairs and Local Environmental Quality (Alun Michael): I have set the Pesticides Safety Directorate the following performance targets for 2004–05.

To evaluate pesticide approval applications and contribute to the EU review programme.

To develop policy initiatives to reduce the negative impact of pesticides and to encourage alternative control measures.

To ensure UK objectives are reflected in EU legislation and regulation.

To monitor actively pesticide use and limit illegal use by taking appropriate enforcement action.

To increase public awareness and understanding of safe use and regulation of pesticides.

To recover the full cost of our operations from the industry and DEFRA, and achieve efficiency savings.

Further details are given in the business plan, a copy of which has been provided to the Library of the House.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Vietnam Programme

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Development (Mr. Gareth Thomas): The Department for International Development (DFID) will be increasing its support to Vietnam to £40 million in 2004–05 and to £60 million in 2005–06 to help Vietnam meet its challenges. Our new Country Assistance Plan for Vietnam (copies of which I have placed in the Library) will support the Government of Vietnam's own strategies for growth and poverty reduction. It sets out three key objectives for our contribution to the collective development effort. First, we will promote fair, efficient and effective use of public financial resources. Second, we will seek to strengthen the Government of Vietnam's efforts to achieve social and economic development that includes all groups of society. Third, we will support Vietnam in its transition to market-based economy. A fourth pillar of our programme in Vietnam will be to help improve the effectiveness of the international development effort.

DFID intends to provide £20 million a year over the next three years in the form of poverty reduction budget support. This commitment will constitute the single largest element of our programme in Vietnam and will provide a significant boost to Vietnam's overall reform programme. I can also announce today a £500,000 project to help improve the quality of public investment in Vietnam by supporting the introduction of a modern and efficient inspection system in the Ministry of Planning and Investment.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Local Government Reviews (Boundary Committee's Final Recommendations)

The Minister for Local and Regional Government (Mr. Nick Raynsford): I have today received the independent boundary committee's final reports and recommendations on options for unitary local government for each of the existing two-tier county areas in the three northern regions. We welcome the completion of this significant step towards the holding of referendums for elected regional assemblies in the autumn.

We will now carefully consider the recommended options and any representations about them that are made to us before taking decisions about the options that will be included in a draft order. We do not intend to take decisions about the options until 6 July.

In the meantime, those who wish to make representations to us may do so. We will have regard to those before deciding what options we propose to put to electors. These options, together with the date of the referendums, will be contained in an order to be made following parliamentary approval.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Iran (Export Licence Application)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Bill Rammell): The Government have recently issued a licence for the BBC to export to Iran up to three civilian armoured vehicles which are of military specification. Although military rated, these vehicles are manufactured for civilian use and would provide essential protection for journalists working for the BBC. Her Majesty's Government believed that an exception to the UK unilateral arms embargo should be made to allow the free and secure movement of journalists throughout the region and that approval of the application was otherwise consistent with the consolidated EU and national arms export licensing criteria. Specific provisos about usage and disposal are attached and Her Majesty's Government are satisfied that there is minimal risk of diversion to a military end-use or for use in internal repression.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 26 May 2004

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

National Minimum Wage

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Employment Relations, Competition and Consumers (Gerry Sutcliffe): The Government have placed in the Libraries of the House the latest tables showing the estimated number of workers who have benefited directly from the National Minimum Wage between its introduction and the next uprating in October 2004. Members of Parliament wishing to know the number of beneficiaries in each area of the UK over this period are advised to consult this information. The information can also be found on the Department of Trade and Industry's website at www.dti.gov.uk/er/emar. The information will be updated every six months to take account of future increases to minimum wage rates and the release of new data from the Office for National Statistics.

I am also attaching below a regional breakdown of the number of people who are expected to receive a pay rise as a direct result of the forthcoming increase in minimum wage rates in October 2004.

Number of jobs that stand to benefit from the forthcoming October 2004 NMW up-rating by region

North East	*110,000–120,000*
North West	*210,000–240,000*
Yorkshire and Humberside	*180,000–210,000*
East Midlands	*150,000–180,000*
West Midlands	*150,000–190,000*
Eastern	*130,000–160,000*
London	*80,000–100,000*
South East	*150,000–170,000*
South West	*140,000–170,000*
Wales	*90,000–110,000*
Scotland	*160,000–190,000*
Northern Ireland	*40,000–50,000*
UK	*1,600,000–1,900,000*

Source: DTI estimates based on ONS's Spring 2003 central estimates of low pay, Labour Force Survey and New Earnings Survey

Note: These data are based on 10p pay bands from the ONS central estimates and take account of earnings and prices inflation between the period Spring 2003 and October 2004; uprating from £3.80 to £4.10 for 18–21 year olds and from £4.50 to £4.85 for those 22 and over.

The DTI and the ONS do not possess any information on the number of workers who have benefited from the National Minimum Wage by constituency.

Company Law

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Patricia Hewitt): I am today publishing a consultation document "Company Law: Flexibility and Accessibility", containing proposals designed to help ensure that company law remains up-to-date in future, and to make it clearer and more easily-accessible in particular for smaller firms.

The proposals are for the introduction of new types of legislative power enabling company law in future to be amended by a special form of secondary legislation, making it easier to keep the legislation updated over time. The powers would also be used to rewrite relevant parts of the law to make it simpler to understand for all its users, particularly smaller firms and their advisers.

The use of the powers would be governed by stringent requirements for public consultation and for Parliamentary scrutiny, and by criteria which would ensure that the needs of smaller users were at the heart of any reform proposals. Over time, I would look forward to being able to bring all the key operational provisions relating to smaller private companies together, clearly and logically, in one place.

The powers would be introduced as part of the major new Companies Bill which we are preparing for introduction as soon as parliamentary time allows. The Bill will implement the work of the independent Company Law Review, which provided an authoritative assessment of the guiding principles for future reform, and my proposals proceed very much in that spirit.

The consultation period will close on 24 September 2004 to allow full time for consideration of these important proposals, and I have placed copies of the consultation document in the Libraries of both Houses.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Rivers Agency

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Ian Pearson): The Rivers Agency is an Executive Agency of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for Northern Ireland. It acts on behalf of the Department as the statutory drainage and flood defence authority for Northern Ireland.

I have set the following key targets for the Agency for the 2004–05 business year:

Urban flood defences

To construct or refurbish 612 metres of urban flood defences.

Drainage infrastructure

To accommodate increased storm run-off from 91 hectares of development land.

To replace/refurbish 653 metres of dangerous culverts.

Maintenance watercourses

To complete identified maintenance works on 1235 of the 1585 designated open watercourses included in the Notice of Annual Maintenance as part of a six-year scheduled maintenance programme.

Replies to written enquiries

To issue substantive replies to 80 per cent. of written enquiries within 15 working days of receipt.

Schedule 6 applications

To respond to 98 per cent. of Schedule 6 applications within three months.

DEFENCE

Pay and Personnel Agency Targets 2004–05

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): The Key Targets that I have set the Chief Executive of the Pay & Personnel Agency for 2004–05 are as follows:

Customer Service and Satisfaction

Key Target 1. Achieve 99.0 per cent. average timeliness and 96.8 per cent. average accuracy for salary payments, expenses payments and pension awards.

Key Target 2. Achieve 90 per cent. average responsiveness against key service standards.

Key Target 3. Improve customer satisfaction index score from 72.6 per cent. in 2002–03 to 75 per cent.

Key Target 4. Achieve Charter Mark accreditation by December 2004.

Processes

Key Target 5. Achieve Main Gate approval for the future pay system by September 2004.

Efficiency

Key Target 6. Achieve unit costs of no more than: salary payments £10.60; expenses payments £4.50; pension awards £125.00.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Queen's Counsel

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. Christopher Leslie): My right hon. and Noble Friend the Secretary of State (Lord Falconer of Thoroton) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

"I have been considering the outcome of the consultation on the future of Queen's Counsel in England and Wales, and Northern Ireland. In July 2003 I published a consultation paper on the future of Queen's Counsel. 376 responses were received. I published a summary of these responses on 26 January 2004.

While the consultation did not produce a consensus as to whether the title of Queen's Counsel should continue to exist, it is clear to me that as Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State I should no longer play a part in assessing and selecting candidates to be appointed as QCs. None of the consultees could demonstrate that such involvement in the selection process is fundamental to the Silk mark's value; nor does it add value for consumers of legal services. I will, therefore, not continue that role.

Yet respondents from within the legal services market were equally clear about the value of maintaining a kitemark for advocacy services—both to recognise excellence, and to provide useful information for consumers. For this reason, the Government have invited the Bar Council and the Law Society, and their counterparts in Northern Ireland, to develop and implement new schemes for accrediting leading advocates, which will replace the existing arrangements. The professions are far better placed to fulfil this function than the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs. I do have a responsibility, however, for ensuring that the resultant scheme is fair and in the interests of the public and the consumers of legal services.

My intention is to work with the professions to ensure that the replacement schemes meet as many as possible of the objections that have been raised over the Silk appointments process. Kitemarking must be designed to serve the interests of consumers by identifying genuine excellence. It must provide fairness for members of the professions. I would also want it to encourage diversity within the professions, with a continually widening range of backgrounds and experience represented amongst those the professions recognise as leaders in advocacy. I have every confidence that the professions can deliver this aim. To achieve these goals, there must be rigorous selection against clearly defined objective criteria. There must also be provision for the kitemark to be removed where the holder has failed to meet the high standards required. The professional bodies have agreed to work together to achieve a single scheme for both branches of the profession, and are already collaborating with each other and my Department in working out the details of a joint approach to reform. I will set out these plans in a further statement.

The professions will be responsible for selection and will send a list of suitable candidates to the DCA. I will retain responsibility for recommending as a minister to Her Majesty that she appoint those on the list to the rank of Queen's Counsel. I will of course need to satisfy myself that the interim scheme meets the goals I have set for it, and consider whether the professions' recommendations are consistent with its terms and whether I should depart from them in exceptional circumstances.

The new arrangements should be ready to receive the first applications towards the end of this year. They will ensure, as the great majority of those who responded to the consultation asked, that there continue to be effective arrangements for recognising advocacy of outstanding quality in the higher courts. At the same time, those arrangements will have particular regard to the need for a competitive market.

The consultation process also demonstrated the need for a wider review not just of kitemarking, but of the information available to consumers in relation to the whole spectrum of legal services. That review will seek to establish what shortfalls there are in the information available, and what solutions can be implemented to serve better the interests of the consumer. An important part of this process will be establishing what types of accreditation scheme might be beneficial, and how they should be set up and administered. The evaluation will not be restricted to advocacy alone, but will cover all fields of legal practice in which there is a need for better consumer information. It will be based on the principles that we are already establishing for the advocacy scheme—fairness, diversity, and a stronger focus on consumer interests. In particular, it will take full account of the wider context of competition law and the free market. While we carry out this longer-term market study, we will be careful to keep the work consistent with the review of the regulation of legal services that Sir David Clementi is conducting. If the conclusion of the market study is that new ways are required to meet consumers' information needs, one of the essential questions will be who will best be able to meet these

needs. That will have to be decided in the light of the presentation of Sir David's conclusions that are due at the end of this year. Because of this linkage, and if any legislation is needed to implement the results of the market study, the Government expect that any scheme would be implemented at the same time as the conclusions on the wider review.

The reformed kitemark for higher court advocacy is an interim measure. We have adopted it to provide continuity and to maintain the advantages that the consultation process has identified, in the international market for example. It will be reviewed when the results of the long-term market study are available, to confirm first whether legal services customers need it, and—if they do—that it is still compatible with the principles that will be established in the study.

The interim scheme will retain the title of QC. The use of the QC title will be reviewed along with the other details of the scheme once the market study is complete. But I stress that although the title will not be changed in the interim scheme, the substance of the award will be different, since it will be based on improved criteria and selection processes.

The interim solution does not aim to remove the title of QC from existing holders. We are looking for ways to improve the current system, and at the wider picture. It makes sense to consider what, if anything, to do about the current titleholders only when that process is complete.

This decision affects only the jurisdictions for which I have responsibility: England and Wales, and Northern Ireland. It does not affect the position in Scotland, or the Crown Dependencies, or any of the Overseas Territories or Commonwealth countries where the rank of Queen's Counsel is in use."

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 27 May 2004

HOME DEPARTMENT

Assets Recovery Agency

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Caroline Flint): I am pleased to announce that the Assets Recovery Agency's annual report 2003–04 has been laid before Parliament today.

The Report covers the Agency's first full year of operation in the financial year 2003–04. The agency became operational on 24 February 2003. The report covers an assessment of the Agency's performance against its business plan 2003–04.

The agency is already making an impact. In its first year of operation it had 62 cases under investigation, with freezing orders, interim receiving orders and tax assessments made at a total value of £14.8 million. Where it has assisted law enforcement agencies in conducting confiscation investigations it has obtained restraint orders with a total value of over £4 million. The agency has also delivered an extensive training programme for financial investigators and successfully implemented a communications strategy to raise awareness of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.

I am also pleased to announce the agency's business plan 2004–05, which is annexed to the annual report. The plan has been prepared by the director of the agency and has been approved by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary after consultation with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. The plan focuses on the agency's aims, priorities and targets for the year ahead and sets out how the director intends to exercise her functions in Northern Ireland.

The establishment of the agency, with extensive powers to investigate and recover criminal assets, demonstrates the Government's commitment to taking the profit out of crime and to ensuring that crime does not pay.

Offender Management

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Paul Goggins): The 2004–05 targets for offender management—including agreed key performance indicators for the Prison Service (covering public prisons), targets for contracted prisons and service delivery agreement targets for the Probation Service—have been published together today in the leaflet "*Targets for Offender Management, 2004–05*". Copies have been placed in the Library.

Public Charitable Collections

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Fiona Mactaggart): The Government's consultation paper on proposals for a new local authority licensing scheme, "Public Collections for Charitable, Philanthropic and Benevolent Purposes", was published on 9 September 2003, with a closing date for responses of 2 December 2003. Over 250 responses were received. In addition, officials from my Department hosted a series of 12 consultation events across the English Regions and in Wales. I am extremely grateful to all those who contributed. A summary of the responses received has been placed in the Library and will also be available on the Home Office website at:
www.homeoffice.gov.uk/comrace/active/charitylaw/index.html.

The consultation exposed a wide range of views on the issues involved. Although there was a clear consensus on some of these issues, on others key stakeholders held different and sometimes opposing views. The Government do not wish to impose solutions and the proposals I am announcing today are accordingly intended as a basis for further discussion. Provisions giving effect to these proposals will be included in the draft Charities Bill which was announced in the Queen's Speech, and the Government will take account of comments on the draft Bill as well as any recommendations of the joint Committee before taking a final decision on the provisions to be included in the Bill when it is formally introduced.

Against this background the Government make the following proposals.

First, we propose that the scope of the licensing scheme should be extended to cover face-to-face as well as other forms of public collection: 222 respondents commented on this proposal and a clear majority (92 per cent.) agreed that face-to-face fundraising should be brought within the scope of the new scheme.

Secondly, we propose to extend the definition of a public place within which public charitable collections must be authorised to cover areas such as station concourses and supermarket forecourts. This proposal was also widely supported. As explained in the consultation document, part III of the 1992 Act would have covered collections in stations, airports, shopping precincts and other similar property, and we accordingly propose to implement the relevant provisions as part of the new scheme. There will be a new provision to ensure that organisations like the National Trust are able to organise public collections on their own land without needing to seek permission from the local authority.

Thirdly, we propose that the granting of a permit to collect would be subject to a two stage test. The first stage would require the organisation which wishes to collect to satisfy the appropriate local authority that they are fit to collect. Fitness would focus on whether the applicant had been convicted of a relevant offence; whether the person promoting the collection was duly authorised to do so; whether the applicant had taken steps to be satisfied that collectors were fit and proper persons; and whether appropriate steps had been taken to safeguard badges and other certificates of authority. The ratio of the costs of undertaking the collection to the total funds raised would not be a matter for the local authority to take into consideration. If satisfied, the authority would issue a certificate of fitness which would be valid for up to five years. In the case of a house to house collection, an organisation would have to obtain only a certificate of fitness and not satisfy the second

stage of the test. The organisation would, however, be under an obligation to notify the local authority of their intention to collect in the area. The reason for distinguishing between house to house and street collections in this way is that it is believed that house to house collections present fewer capacity problems (i.e. that the collection would inconvenience members of the public or that other collections had already been organised to take place in the same locations or at the same times. The second stage of the test would be to determine whether there was capacity in the area. If there was such capacity, the local authority would issue a permit to collect. No charge would be made for the issue of either the certificate or the permit.

Fourthly, we propose to discontinue exemption orders which are issued by the Home Office to large organisations conducting house to house collections in a significant area of England and Wales. Instead a "lead authority" concept would be introduced which would apply to both street and house to house collections. Organisations which propose to collect cash or direct debits in more than one local authority area would be required to apply to a lead authority for a certificate of fitness. In order to prevent organisations from making multiple applications for such a certificate to more than one authority, an organisation would be required to apply for a certificate to a designated local authority. In the case of a registered charity, it would be the authority in whose area the charity's address is. The address would be the one which appears on the Charity Commission's register. For all other organisations the application should be made to the authority within whose boundaries the promoter's principal address is. The holder of a certificate of fitness would still have to apply to each local authority for permission to undertake a street collection, but the local authority would be able to refuse permission only on grounds of capacity. In the case of house to house collections, organisations which have a certificate of fitness would be obliged to notify the relevant local authorities of their intention to collect. Although the lead authority proposals in the consultation paper were not widely supported, there is support for the principle that decisions on fitness should be separated from those on capacity, and we believe that the consultation paper proposals have been modified to meet most of the objections raised.

Fifthly, we propose that all collections, in a public place and by means of visits door to door, which are local and short-term in nature should not come within the licensing scheme, as is already the case for house to house collections of that nature under the legislation now in force. The organisers of any local, short-term collections would continue to be required to give advance notification, but the notification would be given to the local authority rather than, as is required at present, to the police.

Sixthly, in a significant measure of deregulation we propose that house to house collections of goods should also be completely removed from the scope of the licensing scheme; 84 per cent. of the 189 respondents who commented thought it was sensible to make separate arrangements for the collection of goods. Respondents argued that the collection of goods from house to house does not raise any significant issues of capacity or inconvenience to householders, and that the risk in terms of fraud and loss is significantly smaller than for cash collections. Organisers of house to house goods collections would accordingly be under an obligation only to notify the local authority of their intention to collect.

Seventhly, we propose that responsibility for authorising public charitable collections in London should pass from the Metropolitan Police to the London boroughs, except in the City of London where responsibility already rests with the Common Council. The 129 respondents who commented were almost evenly split on this: 47 per cent. thought that responsibility should be transferred to the boroughs, as Parliament agreed in 1992, and 48 per cent. thought it should stay with the police. London is the only place in England and Wales where responsibility for licensing public charitable collections rests with the police. The Government does not believe this is an appropriate function for the police service to take on, but we will discuss further with key stakeholders in London whether any arrangements are needed over and above the lead authority proposals described above for collections which take place in more than one London borough (including the City).

Eighthly, the right of appeal against a local authority decision to refuse either a certificate of fitness or a permit to collect will be to the magistrates' courts as proposed in 1992 rather than under the legislation now in force to my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary. It is not appropriate for decisions of this kind to be taken by central Government.

Finally, we propose to set up a group to include the local government associations, the police service, charities, charity sector umbrella organisations and the Charity Commission to oversee the preparation of regulations and guidance and ensure effective implementation and delivery of the proposed arrangements.

These proposals constitute, we believe, a balanced package which seeks to minimise the burdens on local authorities and charities whilst ensuring effective regulation. The overall impact in public expenditure terms is expected to be neutral. However, in the case of the London local authorities, funding would be made available to cover the new duties which would fall to them under these proposals. Similarly, the transfer of the responsibility for hearing appeals to the magistrates' court would call for a transfer of funding to the Department for Constitutional Affairs. A detailed regulatory impact assessment based on information provided through the consultation period has also been prepared. The regulatory impact assessment forms part of Command Paper Cm 6199—Draft Charities Bill. A copy has been placed in the Library and will be available on the Home Office website at

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/comrace/active/charitylaw/index.html.

The Government's underlying aim is to increase public confidence in charities and the charity sector by putting in place an up to date and effective regulatory framework. With these changes, the Government believe it should be possible to give effect to the provisions already passed by parliament into law as part III of the Charities Act 1992. The draft Bill will

accordingly proceed by way of amendment to the 1992 Act rather than the pre-war legislation still in force which the 1992 Act would have repealed.

Charities Bill

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Fiona Mactaggart): The Charities Bill has today been published in draft for pre-legislative scrutiny by a specially constituted joint Committee of both Houses. The remit of the Committee is to consider the draft Bill, and to report to both Houses by the end of September 2004.

Charities are active in every area of national endeavour, helping to transform people's lives and to build strong communities. They are a strong force for good in society. The Government believe that a vibrant and diverse charitable sector, independent of Government, is essential for the health of our democracy. The Government support the charitable sector in many different ways. One of the most important things we can do for the sector is to create a legal framework which will enable established and new charities to thrive and to achieve their full potential and which will sustain high levels of public confidence in charities through effective regulation.

The draft Charities Bill will deliver significant benefits both to the public and to the charitable sector itself. For the first time there will be a clear definition of charity containing all the purposes that are, or ought to be, recognised as charitable, with the requirement of public benefit. It introduces a range of law reforms designed to enable charities to be administered more efficiently and to be more effective in their work. It provides for better regulation of public collections by charities. It will put in the public domain an improved range and quality of information about charities and it will introduce improvements to the Charity Commission's objectives, functions and accountability to enable it to be an even more effective regulator.

Copies of the draft Bill have been placed in the Library and are available from the Stationery Office and from the Home Office website at:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/comrace/active/charitylaw/index.html/

WORK AND PENSIONS

Pension Service

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Andrew Smith): I am today able to announce the 2004–05 annual performance standards for The Pension Service, an executive agency of the Department for Work and Pensions. The standards I have agreed are set out below.

Further information on The Pension Service's plans for 2004–05 is contained in the annual business plan that has been published today. Copies have been placed in the Library.

The Pension Service in-year standards for 2004–05 are:

Ensure that 90 per cent. of telephone calls to The Pension Service Centres are answered by Customer Agents and that no more than 1 per cent. of attempted telephone calls receive the engaged tone or message;

Clear 95 per cent. of State Pension claims in 60 days;

Achieve a State Pension claims accuracy rate of 98 per cent.

Achieve a Pension Credit accuracy rate of 94 per cent;

Issue Winter Fuel Payments for 2004–05 (all automatic payments, and successful claims received before 25 September 2004) b, Christmas 2004;

Deal with State Pension Forecast requests in an average of 20 days;

Reduce the losses as a result of fraud and error to no more than 4 per cent. of benefit paid;

85 per cent. of customers to have their entitlements made by Direct Payments;

Reduce sick absence rates to 8.5 days per capita.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Nuclear Decommissioning Authority

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Patricia Hewitt): The Energy Bill currently before this House will enable radical changes to current arrangements for nuclear clean-up funded by the taxpayer. The Bill provides for the establishment of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority—the NDA—to deal with the nuclear "legacy" represented by the 20 nuclear sites currently operated by BNFL and the UKAEA and which were developed in the 1940s, 50s and 60s to support Government nuclear research programmes. The aim of the NDA will be to ensure those sites are cleaned-up and decommissioned more safely, securely, and cost-effectively, and in an environmentally-friendly manner. The NDA is to be fully operational from 1 April 2005. The total cost of the programme is some £50 billion over the next century and initially some £2 billion a year. US experience has shown that effective programmes can save of the order of 20 per cent. The Government want to make savings of a similar magnitude through the introduction of competitive practices in the nuclear clean up industry and by better management of nuclear sites. The NDA's headquarters will be in West Cumbria.

In order to establish the NDA on schedule, my Department proposes to undertake necessary preparatory work. Treasury approval has been given to this. This work relates principally to recruiting—subject to Royal Assent—the NDA Board and other personnel, to activities relating to IT and finance systems, to property searches, and to a definitive salary and benefits survey. My Department considers that making this expenditure prior to Royal Assent will provide a net benefit to the taxpayer, through savings to the public purse to be achieved by the early establishment of the NDA.

Parliamentary approval for additional resources for this new service will be sought in a Supplementary Estimate for the DTI. Pending that approval urgent expenditure estimated at £500,000 will be met by repayable cash advances from the Contingencies Fund.

DEFENCE

D-Day (60th Anniversary)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence and Minister for Veterans (Mr. Ivor Caplin): I am pleased to update the House on the events planned, both in France and in the United Kingdom, to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of D-Day.

The main events in Normandy on 5 June are the Normandy Veterans Association Parade and Homage to Field Marshal-Montgomery in Colleville-Montgomery; a Service held by the 3rd Parachute Brigade at Bavent-le-Mesnil; a Tree-Planting Ceremony at the Royal Naval and Royal Marine Memorial in Ouistreham organised by the RN/RM Landing Craft Association; the inauguration by HRH the Prince of Wales at the Pegasus Museum of a HORSA Replica Glider; a Parachute Drop by soldiers of 1st Battalion The Parachute Regiment; the inauguration of the British Garden of Remembrance at Caen; a Poppy Drop to The Royal British Legion's chartered vessel the MV Van Gogh; and a symbolic crossing of ships from Portsmouth to Ouistreham. Also travelling with veterans will be the winning school from our nationwide competition who will be collecting experiences from veterans before and after the events.

On 6 June, there will be a Service at Bayeux Cathedral organised by the Calvados Branch of The Royal British Legion; a Bi-National Ceremony at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Cemetery in Bayeux, attended by HM The Queen and President Chirac, a Landing Craft Exhibition on GOLD Beach at Asnelles; the International Event on the cliff top above Arromanches, attended by 17 Heads of State, including a Naval Review, March Past and Fly Past; the Normandy Veterans' Association Final Parade and March Past in Arromanches, attended by HM the Queen, the Duke of Gloucester, the Prime Minister, the Defence Secretary and myself; and a Commemorative Concert at the Abbaye Aux Hommes in Caen.

Several commemorative events will take place in the United Kingdom, including a full programme organised by the City of Portsmouth during the weekend, and on 6 June a Service at the National Memorial Arboretum near Lichfield reflecting the event being held at Bayeux Cemetery.

The Government recognise the huge significance of this anniversary to the D-Day veterans, around 8,000 of whom plan to travel to Normandy to play their part once again. We have experienced very constructive co-operation with the French authorities and the Normandy Veterans Association. There is extremely high level of interest in these events and limited space, especially in Arromanches Town Centre and Bayeux. We are working with the French authorities to alleviate any problems that may occur. Veterans, of course, will be given first priority.

There are several schemes in place to assist those veterans who wish to return to the areas where they saw active service during the Second World War. As I announced to the House on 9 February, the New Opportunities Fund has made available £10 million of national lottery funding to help with travel costs. The Home Office has provided free one-year passports to veterans travelling for the 60th anniversary commemorations scheme. P&O Ferries have generously offered a 50 per cent. reduction in ferry fares to Normandy.

The role of other Government departments, the Imperial War Museum and the National Lottery means that this important commemoration offers a real opportunity to pass on the baton of remembrance to future generations. A commemorative booklet (the third in a series) is being produced and will be sent to all members of the House early next week.

Despite heavy commitments in Iraq and elsewhere around 1,000 troops will be in Normandy. Our Armed Forces today are proud to be able to offer support to the Veterans and their associations of yesterday as they commemorate this important anniversary.

TREASURY

Child Trust Funds Regulations

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Ruth Kelly): The Government have today laid before Parliament the Child Trust Funds Regulations 2004.

The regulations set out further detail of how the Child Trust Fund scheme will work when accounts open in April next year. They also cover the period from January to March 2005 when the first CTF vouchers will be sent to parents. A draft of these regulations was published on 2 February. Many of the regulations are unaltered from those in the draft regulations.

Changes that have been made include the wording of the requirement for providers to offer a stakeholder account. This has been revised to allow more providers to enter the Child Trust Fund market. What is in and out of the charge cap for the stakeholder account has been clarified and the number of means of payment required for the account has been reduced in response to providers' feedback. Regulations relating to the content and timing of annual statements have been amended. The regulations now take into account the reduction in the age, from 18 to 16, at which a child can manage their CTF account.

The Government have decided to make early access to CTF accounts available to children under 18 years of age who meet the criteria for entitlement to Disability Living Allowance under the Special Rules arrangements for terminally ill people. Inland Revenue and DWP officials are taking forward work on the operational details. Regulations setting out the detail of access in these circumstances will be made after the summer, as will regulations providing for the Official Solicitor in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the Accountant of Court in Scotland to instruct on the management of CTF accounts for looked-after children for whom there is no-one with parental responsibility. Further regulations will also be made for CTF appeals and the corporation tax treatment of CTF insurance business.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Statement on Dealing with the Past

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Paul Murphy): The Prime Minister has highlighted the need for Northern Ireland to find ways of dealing with the past which recognise the pain, grief and anger associated with it, but which also enable it to build a better future for the next generation. I have reflected carefully on what role I might play.

This is a complex and profoundly sensitive subject. There are no ready-made solutions. Opinion is divided on some aspects of the way forward. And the pain of victims and their families remains very real. I want, therefore, to proceed in a way that respects the feelings of all concerned, and which takes nothing for granted.

Over the weeks ahead, I will be embarking on a programme of discussions with a wide range of people with relevant experiences and expertise. These discussions will initially take the form of private soundings, which will in due course lead to wider consultation. I will also be commissioning work on relevant international experience, which will cover the sort of processes that others have used in seeking to come to terms with the past.

My hon. Friend the Member for Basildon (Angela Smith), as victims' Minister, has already engaged in careful and detailed consultation about the needs of victims and the ways in which Government and society should respond. She has been speaking to victims and survivors, their representative groups, experts, academics and practitioners in the field. That work will continue, and be brought to fruition. I will take full account of it in the discussions that I am setting in train. I will also have regard to relevant initiatives in a number of related areas.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 10 May 2004

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Bribery

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Solicitor-General pursuant to the answer of 2 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 613W, on bribery, from which countries the request for mutual legal assistance to the Serious Fraud Office came where there was a suspicion of corruption offences involving a UK citizen or company. [168656]

The Solicitor-General: The request for mutual legal assistance referred to in this question came from the USA.

Harassment

Bob Spink: To ask the Solicitor-General if she will issue guidance to the police and Crown Prosecution Service on the issuing of first stage warnings under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997. [170016]

The Solicitor-General: The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 has been in force since June 1997. Guidance regarding the scope of this Act has been issued to all the criminal justice agencies, including the police and the Crown Prosecution Service, by way of Home Office Circulars 34/1997 and 28/2001. In addition, further guidance on the Act is provided to Crown prosecutors via the CPS Legal Guidance which can be accessed electronically through the Crown Prosecution Service's website.

The issue of warnings is a matter for the police rather than the Crown Prosecution Service. There is no obligation on the police to provide warnings before an arrest under this Act. However, guidance on the issuing of warnings in suitable cases was provided in the Home Office commissioned paper "Stalking and other forms of harassment—An investigators guide" published in 2001.

Iraq

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Solicitor-General what assessment she has made of whether prosecutions can be brought against those United Kingdom citizens whose names appear on the list of non-Iraqis who are alleged to have benefited from the United Nations oil for food programme for Iraq. [170743]

The Solicitor-General: To date the Crown Prosecution Service has not received a file from the police nor been consulted regarding matters relating to recent allegations concerning the United Nations oil for food programme in Iraq.

If a file or request for advice is received it will be considered against the relevant law and the tests set down in the Code for Crown Prosecutors.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Advisers/Consultants

Bob Spink: To ask the Leader of the House how much his Office spent on external consultants and advisers in each of the last three years. [171873]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Leader of the House of Commons was established in June 2003 and since then has spent £38,514.67 on external consultants and advisers. This expenditure was required for the development and hosting of the Office website (www.commonsleader.gov.uk).

Parliamentary Questions

John Thurso: To ask the Leader of the House (1) how many *(a)* Ordinary Written and *(b)* Named Day Questions his office received in (i) the 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary session up to the most recent date for which figures are available, broken down by month; [170770]

(2) what proportion of *(a)* Ordinary Written Questions to his office were answered within five sitting days of tabling and *(b)* Questions for a Named Day received a substantive answer on that day in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) the current parliamentary session up to the most recent date for which figures are available, broken down by month. [170771]

Mr. Hain: Ministers have an obligation to parliament to ensure that Members receive a substantive response to their named day question on the named day and to endeavour to answer an ordinary written question within a working week of it being tabled.

Ministers and their Departments should also make every effort to ensure that the live load of questions still awaiting a substantive reply should be kept to a minimum at all times.

During the 2002–03 session my office received 91 Ordinary Written and 46 Named Day Questions, of which 88 per cent. and 96 per cent. respectively were answered within the above targets.

So far this session my office has received 44 Ordinary Written and 19 Named Day Questions, of which 84 per cent. and 100 per cent. respectively were answered within the above targets.

The breakdown per month and the proportion of Questions answered are shown in the following tables:

2002–03	*Ordinary Written*	*Percentage answered within five sitting days*	*Named Day*[1]	*Percentage answered on Named Day*
November	3	67	7	100
December	5	80	2	100
January	10	90	5	100
February	8	75	5	60
March	7	86	8	100

2002-03	Ordinary Written	Percentage answered within five sitting days	Named Day[1]	Percentage answered on Named Day
April	23	96	10	100
May	10	80	3	100
June	5	60	2	—
July	9	100	0	—
August	0	—	0	100
September	5	100	1	100
October	1	100	3	100
November	5	100	0	—

2003-04	Ordinary Written	Percentage answered within five sitting days	Named Day[1]	Percentage answered on Named Day
November	5	80	0	—
December	2	100	5	100
January	2	100	3	100
February	12	83	4	100
March	19	42	3	100
April	4	100	4	100

[1] Named Day figures include Questions not answered orally.

Productivity

Bob Spink: To ask the Leader of the House what his policy is for *(a)* increasing the productivity and *(b)* cutting the costs of his Office. [172192]

Mr. Hain: I refer the hon. Member to the reply being given today by my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury.

My Office does, however, constantly look to achieve efficiency savings.

CABINET OFFICE

Contingency Planning

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office whether the formula used to calculate the civil defence grants include a weight towards coastal councils to mitigate for potential terrorist attack by sea. [170057]

Mr. Alexander: The formula used for the allocation of Civil Defence Grant starts with a flat-rate component that gives each of the 179 eligible local authorities £53,000. For shire counties carrying out emergency planning on behalf of their districts, an additional £12,000 per district is allocated. The remainder of the overall sum (approximately 35 per cent.) is distributed according to each authority's Bellwin threshold.

The formula does not recognise particular risks as the Grant represents a contribution to local authority emergency planning, sufficient to provide a core service. The formula was introduced following the Civil Defence (Grant) Act 2002, and after negotiations with the Local Government Association on its detail.

The Government separately commits substantial sums to counter terrorist activity by departments and front line responders such as the police.

Departmental Procurement

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what percentage of the *(a)* crockery, *(b)* cutlery and *(c)* glassware procured by his Department over the last five years is of British manufacture. [170793]

Mr. Alexander: The information is not held centrally.

The Cabinet Office bases all procurement decisions on value for money considerations and information on nationality of companies is recorded only for contracts subject to EU advertising procedures.

EU Directives

Mr. Alan Duncan: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if he will list the EU directives since May 1997 which have been incorporated into UK law by Parliament; and which items of UK legislation so incorporating an EU directive have subsequently been *(a)* revised and *(b)* repealed. [171163]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* The information requested is not available centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate costs.

Green Minister

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office (1) what work his Department's Green Minister has undertaken in the last three months in that capacity; [167738]

(2) what meetings his Department's Green Minister has attended in the last 12 months in that capacity. [167739]

Mr. Alexander: Work has mainly focused on how the Cabinet Office is working towards taking a more strategic approach in embedding sustainable development into work disseminated to other Government Departments including our internal policies and operations. This work includes discussions with Ministerial colleagues and their officials.

As regards discussions in Cabinet Committees it is established practice under Exemption 2 of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information not to disclose such information.

Recycled Paper

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what percentage of copying paper used by the Department in 2002–03 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained. [167732]

Mr. Alexander: Copying paper used by the Department in 2002–03 was from 'sustainably managed' sources.

Since May 2003 the majority of copying paper used by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum post consumer waste content of 100 per cent.

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what measures he has put in place to ensure that his Department meets the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

to ensure that all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content. [167734]

Mr. Alexander: The Cabinet Office has already implemented in full the quick win target for copying paper. Performance is monitored for the purpose of reporting progress in the annual Sustainable Development in Government report.

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what measures he has put in place to ensure that his Department meets the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste. [167735]

Mr. Alexander: The Cabinet Office has already implemented in full the quick win target for paper for printed publications. Performance is monitored for the purpose of reporting progress in the annual Sustainable Development in Government report.

Sustainable Development

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what progress has been made on his Department's Sustainable Development Strategy. [167742]

Mr. Alexander: The Cabinet Office's Sustainable Development Strategy is being reviewed in light of the "Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate" including looking at how best to consider the policy aspects in light of the principles of Sustainable development.

Cabinet Office progress towards meeting the commitments in the Framework is detailed in the Sustainable Development in Government's 2nd Annual Report published in November 2003. Copies of which are available in the Library.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Arts Council Visits (West Bromwich)

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many *(a)* board members and *(b)* head office based staff of the Arts Council for England have visited projects in West Bromwich East in each of the last five years. [171596]

Estelle Morris: Arts Council England do not hold records of visits by council members and national office staff to projects. In April 2004, five members of the Arts Council, including the chair, visited the site of pUBLIC in the centre of West Bromwich. National office based staff are in frequent contact with Sandwell Borough Council, Jubilee Arts and pUBLIC.

Digital Television

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what percentage of homes in each of the regions of the UK has switched to digital television in the last 12 months. [172066]

Estelle Morris: OFCOM estimated digital penetration by ITV region in mid-2003, as follows.

Region	*Percentage*
Wales	56
Channel Islands	55
South and South East	48
London	47
Central Scotland	47
North West	47
East	46
Midlands	44
North Scotland	44
West	44
North East	43
Yorkshire	42
Ulster	42
Border	40
South West	37

Libraries (Stockton, South)

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money has been spent on the digitisation of content in libraries in Stockton South since 1997. [171460]

Estelle Morris: This information is not held centrally.

The New Opportunities Fund £50 million Digitisation of Learning Materials Programme has delivered 150 projects across the UK to enable resources which support learning of all kinds held in libraries as well as museums, archives and other public-sector institutions, to be made available online through the People's Network and the National Grid for Learning. This initiative has created a body of material containing over two million images, tens of thousands of sound and video clips and documents and over 1,000 learning packages. All projects can be accessed via the EnrichUK portal at http://www.enrichuk.net.

Information on grants awarded to individual local authorities and their expenditure can be obtained from the relevant authority.

Licensing Act

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what her estimate is of the date for the first appointed day, as specified in the Licensing Act 2003; and if she will make a statement. [171396]

Mr. Caborn: The timetable for the first appointed day, when licensing authorities will be able to accept applications for the conversion of existing licences and club registration certificates, will be dependent on the date when, or if, Parliament approves the draft Guidance made under section 182 of the Act which has been laid before it.

Parliament will not be able to consider the draft Guidance until the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments have completed their scrutiny of it and reported to the Houses. We expect the first appointed day to be six months later than the date of Parliamentary approval. The timetable we hope for would see approval by Parliament at the end of this month which would therefore lead to a first appointed day in November.

National Lottery (Stockton, South)

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money from the New Opportunities Fund was allocated to Stockton, South in each year since 1997. [171462]

Estelle Morris: The New Opportunities Fund began making grants in 1999. The awards to Stockton, South are shown in the table.

Financial year	*Amount (£)*
1999–2000	267,764
2000–01	140,100
2001–02	461,842
2002–03	1,706,395
2003–04	1,185,453

The information is freely available from the Department's searchable Lottery award database at www.lottery.culture.gsi.gov.uk, which uses information supplied by the Lottery distributors.

New Opportunities Fund

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money from the New Opportunities Fund was allocated to Oldham West and Royton in each year since 1997. [170943]

Estelle Morris: The New Opportunities Fund began making grants in 1999. The awards to Oldham West and Royton are shown in the table, from the latest figures available.

Financial Year	*Amount (£)*
1999–2000	8,834
2000–01	205,919
2001–02	993,803
2002–03	798,785
2003–04	1,200,336
2004–05	525

The information is freely available from the Department's searchable Lottery award database at www.lottery.culture.gsi.gov.uk which uses information supplied by the Lottery distributors.

Tourism (Stockton, South)

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the work of regional development agencies in developing tourism in Stockton, South. [171461]

Mr. Caborn: One North East (ONE) has secured the work programme of the former Northumberland Tourist Board through funding of £2.3 million and has committed an additional £1 million for tourism in line with its Corporate Plan. The development of the Tees corridor has been identified as a key priority for ONE's resources and this will have significant benefits for Stockton, South. Tourism development will also benefit from the Regional Image Strategy and Marketing budgets. ONE is also supporting the sub-regions in developing their own destination management organisations.

TRANSPORT

A13

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what investigations he has *(a)* conducted and *(b)* planned into solutions to the congestion problem on the A13 in Hadleigh. [171087]

Mr. Jamieson: The A13 east of Tilbury is not a trunk road and so is the responsibility of Essex County Council as local highway authority. I understand that Essex CC has recently carried out work in High Street, Hadleigh (the A13) to update an earlier environmental scheme and that some carriageway widening works and the provision of a new pedestrian crossing have been undertaken in conjunction with a new superstore. The carriageway will be resurfaced later this year.

The council also plans to undertake a route management strategy for the A13/A127 which will address the problem of congestion amongst other issues.

Accountancy Services

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* nature and *(b)* value was of all contracts, consultancies or other services placed with the accountancy firms (i) Deloitte & Touche, (ii) Ernst & Young, (iii) KPMG and (iv) PricewaterhouseCoopers since 2000–01 by the Department and its agencies. [166094]

Mr. McNulty: The Department was formed in May 2002. The information for the central Department for financial years 2002–03 and 2003–04, and the agencies for the financial years 2000–01 to 2003–04 is set out in the following tables.

Contracts, consultancies and other services placed by DFT(C) during 2002–03

	Date	*Net value*	*Description*
Ernst & Young	21 August 2002	400	Consultancy service; Project management
Total		400	
Cap Gemini Ernst & Young	28 June 2002	14,747.53	Consultancy: Transport Direct Programme
	26 September 2002	6,120.00	Consultancy: Transport Direct Programme
Total		20,867.53	
KPMG	16 April 2002	193,756.50	Consultancy service; Project management
	1 May 2002	651.1	Consultancy service; Project management
	10 May 2002	37,542.00	Consultancy service; Computer strategy
	14 May 2002	181,228.90	DVO Strategy blueprint
	30 May 2002	2,563.40	Consultancy service; Project management

Contracts, consultancies and other services placed by DFT(C) during 2002–03

	Date	Net value	Description
	3 July 2002	1,177.00	Consultancy service; Project management
	4 July 2002	407,807.00	DVO Strategy blueprint
	9 July 2002	1,312.40	Consultancy service; Project management
	21 August 2002	112,533.10	Consultancy service; Project management
	9 September 2002	1,733.20	Consultancy service; Project management
	6 November 2002	1,297.10	BR privatisation (successor companies) Advice/negotiation on tax benefits
	19 November 2002	7,729.00	Consultancy service; Project management
	7 January 2003	3,847.00	BR privatisation (successor companies) Advice/negotiation on tax benefits
	10 February 2003	4,071.20	BR privatisation (successor companies) Advice/negotiation on tax benefits
	17 February 2003	3,842.60	BR privatisation (successor companies) Advice/negotiation on tax benefits
	11 March 2003	4,037.70	BR privatisation (successor companies) Advice/negotiation on tax benefits
Total		965,129.20	
PricewaterhouseCoopers	14 January 2003	5,000.00	Consultancy service; Finance and Accountancy
Total		5,000.00	

Contracts, consultancies and other services placed by DFT(C) during 2003–04

	Date	Net value	Description
Cap Gemini Ernst & Young	18 June 2003	55,302.00	Review of ICT services
	23 June 2003	303,161.15	Consultant service; Web services
	21 October 2003	32,205.00	Consultancy service: TransXchange review project
Total		390,668.15	
Deloitte & Touche	23 May 2003	7,864.00	Computer consultancy service
	17 July 2003	4,704.00	Training course
	14 April 2003	6,427.00	Computer consultancy service
	23 May 2003	216,683.00	Consultancy service; Project management
	17 August 2003	36,286.00	Computer consultancy service
	14 August 2003	2,641.00	Professional services
	27 October 2003	840	Consultancy service; Project management
	7 November 2003	417,286.00	Support for Programme and Project Management Centre of Excellence
	7 January 2004	156,753.00	Consultancy service; Project management
Total		849,484.00	
KPMG	11 April 2003	2,826.70	BR privatisation (successor companies) Advice/negotiation on tax benefits
	21 May 2003		BR privatisation (successor companies) Advice/negotiation on tax benefits
	12 June 2003		BR privatisation (successor companies) Advice/negotiation on tax benefits
	2 September 2003		BR privatisation (successor companies) Advice/negotiation on tax benefits
	2 September 2003		BR privatisation (successor companies) Advice/negotiation on tax benefits
	12 September 2003		BR privatisation (successor companies) Advice/negotiation on tax benefits
	14 October 2003		Consultancy service; Project management
	12 November 2003		BR privatisation (successor companies) Advice/negotiation on tax benefits
	17 December 2003		BR privatisation (successor companies) Advice/negotiation on tax benefits
	19 January 2004		BR privatisation (successor companies) Advice/negotiation on tax benefits
	11 February 2004		BR privatisation (successor companies) Advice/negotiation on tax benefits
	5 March 2004		Consultancy advice in connection with Rail Review
	9 March 2004		Accounting advice—CROSSRAIL
	9 March 2004		Accounting advice—CROSSRAIL
	10 March 2004		BR privatisation (successor companies) Advice/negotiation on tax benefits
	16 March 2004		Consultancy advice in connection with Rail Review
	18 March 2004		Consultancy advice in connection with Rail Review
Total		1,155,766.88	
PricewaterhouseCoopers	18 November 2003	425	Courses and Seminars
	5 March 2004	595	Training course
	23 March 2004	80,000.00	Identification and assessment of local authority expenditure
Total		81,020.00	

Contracts, consultancies or other services placed by DFT's agencies since 2000–01

Company	Nature	Value	Agency
Ernst & Young	General Consultancy Support under the S-Cat framework agreement between October 2000 and March 200 1	189,938	DVLA
	Advice on pay comparability 2001	80,310.88	MCA
Cap Gemini Ernst & Young	IT consultancy	11,907,982	Highways Agency
KPMG	Appointment of Financial Consultants under the S-Cat framework agreement between July 2000 and October 2002	227,000	DVLA
	Change Consultancy under the S-Cat framework agreement between June 2001 and June 2002	300,000	DVLA
	Review of Secure Document Handling under the S-Cat framework agreement between October 2002 and October 2003	85,000	DVLA
	MOT Project Consultancy	115,232.84	VOSA
PricewaterhouseCoopers	Feasibility Study for EOS Project under a former DETR framework contract between July 2001 and August 2001	16,000	DVLA
	General Management Consultancy	940,000	Highways Agency
	Training Services	980,000 (to date)	DSA
	Preparation and Support and Consultancy Highways	288,000	

Contracts, consultancies or other services placed by DFT's agencies since 2000–01

Company	*Nature*	*Value*	*Agency*
Deloitte & Touche	IT consultancy	2,587,350	Highways Agency
	Consultancy on non pay benefits (2004)	15,166.90	MCA
	Consultancy on joint helicopter harmonisation project with MOD—covering advice on business case, investment analysis, project management, pre PFI advice and consultation with industry. Contract let by MOD 2002–03	326,244.63	
	Auditing company accounts	Ad-hoc low value orders, below £15K	Highways Agency

Air Safety

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of rocket-assisted parachutes in improving aircraft safety. [170168]

Mr. McNulty: Since September 2003, responsibility for the safety regulation of most aircraft and aircraft products lies with the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) except for various smaller or specialist aircraft such as microlights which remain the responsibility of national aviation authorities.

The UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) recognises the potential safety benefits of ballistic parachutes in otherwise potentially catastrophic accident situations. The authority introduced an amendment to the UK Design Requirements for Microlights in 1999 allowing for the installation of ballistic parachutes in such aeroplanes. Approval was on the basis that this did not introduce any additional hazard during normal conditions of flight.

EASA will include an assessment of an installed ballistic parachute system when investigating aircraft for the issue of a type Certificate. We understand that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has approved the installation and use of a ballistic parachute in the Cirus SR20 light aeroplane and that this aircraft is now the subject of an application for approval in Europe.

Coastguard Station, Tynemouth

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has for the former coastguard station at Tynemouth. [170409]

Mr. Caborn: I have been asked to reply.

As part of a general audit of its property portfolio, English Heritage has been reviewing the operation of Tynemouth Priory. They will shortly be carrying out an options appraisal on the future use of the former coastguard station within the Priory grounds. The views of the local community will be taken into account in this appraisal.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his latest estimate is of the amount spent by his Department on official entertainment in each year from 1996–97 to 2004–05. [169104]

Mr. McNulty: The costs of entertainment incurred were:

	£000
1996–97	[1]31
2002–03	[1]24
2003–04	[1]16

[1] Department for Transport

For the current-financial year (2004–05) it is forecast that the Department for Transport's costs will be approximately £15,000.

From 1997–98 to 2001–02 transport formed part of the DETR and DTLR. Transport specific information is not readily available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Procurement

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what percentage of the *(a)* crockery, *(b)* cutlery and *(c)* glassware procured by his Department over the last five years is of British manufacture. [170812]

Mr. McNulty: The Department for Transport was formed 29 May 2002 since when all DfT procured crockery is manufactured in the UK, all cutlery is manufactured abroad in various countries, and all glassware is manufactured in France.

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make it his policy to source all sea bass used in catering outlets for which his Department is responsible from hand-line fishermen rather than pair trawlers. [167535]

Mr. McNulty: Defra supports the sourcing of sea bass from sustainable fisheries and handlining, as a relatively low impact method of fishing, can play a part in ensuring fisheries remain sustainable. However, the last report in 2003 by the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas on sea bass advised that the level of exploitation of the stock at that time was sustainable and did not recommend closure of the offshore pair trawl fishery. There are currently no restrictions at a UK or Community level on the method of fishing that can be used to target bass. In addition, to address the dolphin bycatch problem associated with the pair trawl fishery, Defra-funded trials of a separate grid device to reduce dolphin bycatch are currently taking place, with the co-operation of the fishing industry.

In these circumstances, I do not believe that recommending a specific source of supply for bass could be justified at this stage.

Green Transport Schemes

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will publish the research evidence produced by studies made by the Department on the potential land value benefits of development within easy access of a railway station. [168798]

Mr. McNulty: The Department contributed to the Jubilee Line Extension Impact S Study carried out for TfL by the University of Westminster. As part of that study the views of local agents on the impact of the JLE on the property market were sought and a general review of the commercial and residential market along the line was performed. The property report and the overall summary report for the JLE Impact Study will be released in May 2004.

The Department also contributed to a research project by ODPM and the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors on "Property Values and Public Transport Investment". The main objective of the study was the development of a suitable methodology for the estimation of the impact of public transport investment on property values. RICS published the report on Stage I, which was a literature review, as 'Land Value and Public Transport: Stage 1—Summary of findings' in October 2002 and plan to publish the Stage 2 report 'Land value and public transport: Stage two—Summary of findings' on 25 May.

Omega Site (Warrington)

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions he has had on providing public transport links to the Omega site in Warrington as it is developed. [171018]

Mr. McNulty: The Highways Agency, acting on behalf of the Secretary of State, has been in discussions regarding the transport implications of the Omega site on the strategic highways network. The applicants and the borough council will be considering the public transport implications as part of the planning process.

Railways

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will ask Network Rail to launch an urgent inquiry into track quality between Swindon and Paddington. [169332]

Mr. McNulty: This is an operational matter for Network Rail. However, Network Rail advises me that it is already undertaking a comprehensive programme to manage and monitor the track quality in this area and, at the same time, is investing to upgrade the track.

Network Rail has liaised closely with the Health and Safety Executive's Railway Inspectorate over those sections of poorer quality track, which are being monitored though an enhanced regime of inspections. It is investing in maintenance of the track, and switches and crossings (S&C) sites have been receiving additional attention from heavy maintenance gangs. There is also an on-going extensive programme of track and S&C renewals.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport with which stakeholders he has held difect discussions in connection with his review of the structure and organisation of the railways. [171213]

Mr. McNulty: Ministers and officials in the Department of Transport have had discussions with a wide range of people and organisations in the course the current review of the structure and organisation of the rail industry.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the decision of Network Rail to postpone the installation of a radio system for drivers until 2015. [168372]

Mr. McNulty: Network Rail advise me that they are currently implementing a new system for drivers known as the Global System for Mobile Communications for Railways (GSM-R). Its phased introduction is due for completion in 2013.

The installation work has already commenced in Strathclyde. GSM-R will be implemented on all high-speed lines by 2006 and the majority of the GSM-R upgrade will be completed by 2008–09.

The original timetable envisaged completion by 2008. The new time scales and expenditure profile reflect the outcome of the Rail Regulator's Interim Review and are believed to be realistic and deliverable.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will place in the Library copies of the reports on the Central Railway project prepared for him by the Strategic Rail Authority. [171282]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 6 May 2004]:* The Strategic Rail Authority's report took the form of a letter to Ministers from the SRA Chairman. The letter constitutes advice to Ministers. It is not the practice to make available such advice.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how often he meets officials of the Strategic Rail Authority to discuss improvements to the national rail network. [171479]

Mr. McNulty: Ministerial colleagues and I have very frequent meetings with the Strategic Rail Authority.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what the Department's role was in the formulation of the Route Utilisation Strategy (Part One) for the East Midlands published in March by the Strategic Rail Authority; [171504]

(2) what assessment he has made of the Strategic Rail Authority's Route Utilisation Strategy (Part One) for the East Midlands. [171506]

Mr. McNulty: The role of the Department in formulating the Strategic Rail Authority's (SRA) Route Utilisation Strategies is to ensure that the SRA's approach is consistent with broader Government policy, is in the best interests of the taxpayer and is in accordance with expected resources. The framework informing and underpinning all Route Utilisation Strategies was set out in the SRA's Network Utilisation Strategy, published in June 2003. The detail of individual Route Utilisation Strategies is a matter for the SRA.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the profit levels of train leasing companies. [171514]

Mr. McNulty: The profits earned by the rolling stock leasing companies (ROSCOs) are set out in their filed accounts. Their operations are subject to the scrutiny of the competition authorities in the usual way.

Road Works

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the average duration of works carried out by highway authorities necessitating occupation of *(a)* Highways Agency roads and *(b)* local authority roads was in (i) 2000, (ii) 2001, (iii) 2002 and (iv) 2003. [170652]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* This information is not held centrally.

Rural Bus Services (Cambridgeshire)

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many rural bus services in *(a)* the Huntingdon constituency and *(b)* Cambridgeshire are supported by rural bus grants. [170861]

Mr. McNulty: Rural Bus Subsidy Grant (RBSG) is paid to local transport authorities, in the case of Huntingdon this is Cambridgeshire County Council. It is for the authority to decide which services should be supported with the grant. We understand from the county council that there are 25 rural bus services operating in Cambridgeshire that are currently supported by RBSG, of these 13 services operate in Huntingdon.

Transec

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what Transec's chain of command is; and how Transec's staff are *(a)* recruited and *(b)* vetted; [169968]

(2) if he will make a statement explaining the central command structure of Transec. [170061]

Mr. McNulty: The Department's Transport Security Directorate (Transec) is headed by a director supported by two divisional managers. The director reports direct to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport on security matters, and to the Department's Director General for Railways, Aviation, Logistics, Maritime and Security on management issues. The director and her staff play a full and active role as part of the Whitehall counter-terrorist community working closely with colleagues in the police and other Government Departments.

Transec's staff is recruited in a variety of ways, depending on the job and the knowledge and skills needed to do it. Transec's staff includes career civil servants from the Department for Transport and other departments; people recruited through open competition who have relevant experience from industry and/or the security sector; and staff on secondment.

Members of staff are subject to security vetting according to the nature of their work and the access they require to classified assets. The vetting is carried out in accordance with the rules set out in the Government's Manual of Protective Security.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Abattoirs

Mr. O'Hara: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total cost to the Department in the financial years *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04 was of charges brought successfully against abattoirs for breaches of meat hygiene and animal welfare regulations. [166079]

Mr. Bradshaw: The total legal costs incurred by both this Department and the Food Standards Agency (which is responsible for meat hygiene prosecutions, as well as being involved with animal welfare cases) in pursuit of charges that were successfully brought against abattoirs for breaches of meat hygiene and animal welfare regulations were:

	£
2002–03	44,031.61
2003–04	90,748.11

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total cost was to the Department in the financial years *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04 of all charges brought against abattoirs for breaches of meat hygiene and animal welfare regulations, including those which were successfully prosecuted and those which were dropped before they came to court. [166092]

Mr. Bradshaw: The total legal cost incurred by both this Department and the Food Standards Agency (which is responsible for meat hygiene prosecutions, as well as being involved with animal welfare cases) in pursuit of all charges brought against abattoirs for breaches of meat hygiene and animal welfare regulations was:

2002–03—£48,311.26

2003–04—£123,050.62

British Wildlife

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effect of the introduction of genetically modified crops on wildlife; and what studies the Government commissioned on the subject. [169944]

Mr. Morley: The effects on wildlife from the cultivation of each particular GM crop is assessed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the criteria in European Directive 2001/18 on the deliberate release of genetically modified organisms.

In the case of GM herbicide tolerant oilseed rape, beet and maize the effects of the management of these crops on wildlife was studied in the GM crop farm scale evaluations. The results of these evaluations for spring

sown oilseed rape, beet and maize were published in October last year. Results for winter sown oilseed rape will be published later this year.

BSE

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the *(a)* total and *(b)* average monthly cost of the Over-30-Month scheme has been since its inception. [170187]

Alun Michael: The total and average monthly cost of the Over-30-Month scheme are shown in the table.

£ million

	Total cost of the scheme including compensation	*Average cost per month*
1996–97	858	78
1997–98	432	36
1998–99	380	32
1999–2000	394	33
2000–01	401	33
2001–02	301	25
2002–03	367	31
2003–04	[1]321	[1]27
Total	3,454	36

[1] Forecast.

The average monthly costs have decreased over the years reflecting lower compensation rates and disposal costs and fewer animals entering the scheme.

The 1996–97 figure reflects the high compensation rate in the first year. The low 2001–02 figure reflects the reduced numbers entering the scheme as a result of the foot and mouth outbreak.

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the cost of maintaining the Over-30-Month scheme for cattle born after August 1996 until January 2005. [170188]

Alun Michael: The estimated direct cost (compensation and disposal) of maintaining the Over-30-Month scheme for cattle born after August 1996 from April 2004 until January 2005 is £120 million.

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the cost of maintaining the Over-30-Month scheme for cattle born before August 1996. [170189]

Alun Michael: The cost of maintaining the Over-30-Month scheme after April 2004 for cattle born before August 1996 will be spread over several years. The aggregate cost is estimated at £400 million. However, the annual cost will depend on how quickly the cattle are disposed of.

Conferences/Seminars

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans were made by her Department for *(a)* conferences and *(b)* seminars in conjunction with its consultations on (i) the sustainable management of wild deer in England, (ii) hazardous chemicals and (iii) dioxins and dioxin-like polychlorinated biphenyls in the UK environment; what the total cost of organising each of those events was; and how many people attended in each case. [161389]

Alun Michael: The public consultation exercise on the sustainable management of wild deer in England ended recently on 16 April. The consideration of written responses began on 27 April and it is too early to make decisions on how to present the outcome of this exercise. However, when the appropriate stage is reached consideration will be given to the use of conferences and/or seminars.

The Advisory Committee on Hazardous Substances has held an extraordinary meeting to discuss the consultation on the UK chemicals strategy and the review of the UK Chemicals Stakeholder Forum. The Government invited companies in, and organisations representing, the small and medium-size business sector to a seminar on the consultation on 15 April but there was insufficient interest expressed to run this. The approximate cost of these events was £3,100. The consultation on the UK Strategy ends on 4 May.

The Government consultation on the new EU chemicals strategy (REACH) was launched on 30 March 2004. The deadline for comment is 25 June. As part of the consultation process, I chaired a stakeholder conference on 27 April in Birmingham. Approximately 150 delegates were expected to attend representing our main stakeholder groups: industry, environmental, trade unions, and animal welfare and consumer organisations. The cost of organising the conference is estimated at approximately £25,000.

The consultation on dioxins and dioxin-like polychlorinated biphenyls in the UK environment was the first step in the development of a UK action plan on dioxins and related compounds which is a requirement of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. Work is still under way and the Government are seeking further views in a second round of consultation which will feed directly into the finalisation of the action plan. To date no conferences or seminars have been held in conjunction with this consultation, but we will consider the need for such events when we are closer to completion.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans were made by her Department for *(a)* conferences and *(b)* seminars in conjunction with its consultations on (i) a strategy for fly-tipping, (ii) the definition of wild birds and (iii) a new strategy on bovine TB; what the total cost of organising each of those events was; and how many people attended in each case. [161390]

Alun Michael:

Fly-tipping

Defra has worked with ENCAMS to organise a series of nine regional seminars in conjunction with the Environment Agency, the Local Government Associations, the National Assembly for Wales and the Welsh Local Government Association.

The events have used the Flycapture database system but also included discussion on Defra's Fly-Tipping Strategy.

The total cost of the seminars for England and Wales was £77,000 and over 400 delegates have attended the events that have been held so far. More detailed numbers of attendees will be available when the events have finished.

Wild birds

We are currently conducting a public consultation on an amendment to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 in order to ensure that the definition of "wild bird" correctly transposes the EC Wild Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) by protecting all species of birds occurring in the wild state in the European territory of the member states. A short consultation document was issued on the 17 February and the consultation period concludes on 11 May 2004. The proposed amendment will not restrict trade in legally taken or captive bred specimens. The Department has no plans for conferences or seminars in conjunction with this consultation.

Bovine tuberculosis

Defra is holding workshops across England to discuss with stakeholders the issues raised in the consultation document "Preparing for a new GB strategy on bovine tuberculosis". There will be some seven regional workshops and a national meeting in London between 26 March and 5 May 2004, with some 50 delegates at each event. The estimated cost of organising these events is £60,000 to £65,000.

Departmental Procurement

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of the *(a)* crockery, *(b)* cutlery and *(c)* glassware procured by her Department over the last five years is of British manufacture. [170800]

Alun Michael: Defra was formed in June 2001. The information requested cannot be provided, as it is not held centrally. Under public procurement rules, it would be illegal to discriminate between suppliers on grounds of nationality.

Discarded Needles

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received about the collection and disposal of discarded needles and other drug paraphernalia; and if she will make a statement. [170836]

Alun Michael: Over the last two years my officials have received representations from the Chartered Institute of Wastes Management about problems associated with discarded drug paraphernalia, in particular needles. My officials are leading discussions with a number of Government Departments, notably the Home Office, Department of Health and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, looking at what action might be taken to address the problem. A drugs related litter conference took place on 12 February 2004 in Bristol which looked at identifying key issues and discussed how to take matters forward. Work in this area will continue to build upon the positive outcomes of the conference.

Environmental Protection

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much Government funding was available in each of the past three years to Government programmes *(a)* to stop people littering and polluting, *(b)* to promote energy efficiency and *(c)* to cut traffic pollution. [168808]

Alun Michael: *(a)* Defra funding is provided to ENCAMS (formerly Tidy Britain Group) annually. Funding over the last three years is as follows:

	£
2001–02	3,762,000
2002–03	4,597,000[1]
2003–04	3,574,000

This funding supports ENCAMS work on a range of local environmental quality issues, including programmes to discourage littering. In addition ENCAMS is able to undertake additional work funded by or undertaken jointly with local government or other government departments and agencies.

(b) Defra currently provides grants to aid energy efficiency through four main routes.

1. The Carbon Trust—to support and promote energy efficiency and low carbon innovation for business and public sector
2. The Energy Saving Trust—to support and promote energy efficiency in the domestic sector.
3. The Community Energy programme—capital and development funding to refurbish existing and install new community heating schemes.
4. The Warm Front programme—to provide energy efficiency measures to the vulnerable.

[1] Defra allocated an additional 1m to local authorities through ENCAMS for the Local Environmental Quality Pathfinder Programme that forged partnerships between local authorities and the local community. Some of the projects developed reduced fast food litter, railway land litter and schools litter.

The funding made available by Defra and its predecessors to support and promote efficiency measures in the last three years (including the Energy Saving Trust and the Carbon Trust) is of the scale set out as follows:

	£
2001–02	256,000,000
2002–03	225,000,000
2003–04	[1]243,000,000

[1] Budget

(c) Government currently provides funding through the Transport Energy Powershift and CleanUp programmes, which are administered by the Energy Saving Trust. Powershift provides grants towards the purchase of cleaner and more efficient alternatively fuelled vehicles e.g. LPG, natural gas and hybrid vehicles. CleanUp provides grants towards the cost of purchasing exhaust treatment systems which reduce NO_x and Particulate emissions. Both programmes contribute to reducing traffic pollution and were allocated the following Government funding.

CleanUp	£
2001–02	7,400,000
2002–03	8,300,000
2003–04	12,900,000

Powershift	£
2001–02	5,400,000
2002–03	2,200,000
2003–04	7,000,000

Note:
These figures refer to grant spend and do not include management and Administration costs.

Food Export Standards

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent assessment she has made of the effectiveness of *(a)* the UK Government's and *(b)* the EU's regulatory systems to prevent the export of food produced in the EU accession countries which does not fully comply with EU slaughter and production standards. [167324]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 22 April 2002]*: It is the responsibility of the relevant competent authorities in each accession country and EU Member State to ensure that all food is produced in accordance with EU legislation. Once food is placed on the market in the EU, it is up to the relevant central competent authorities in Member States to ensure that the legal requirements continue to be met. The European Commission's Food and Veterinary Office is responsible for ensuring that competent authorities comply with these responsibilities. The Food and Veterinary Office have carried out a series of visits to accession countries to check that they have appropriate control systems in place, and will carry out further visits to ensure continuing compliance.

The Food Standards Agency and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and its agencies are responsible for food safety and food standards in the UK. Enforcement responsibilities are delegated to environmental health and trading standards departments in Local Authorities and the Meat Hygiene Service who carry out checks on food to ensure compliance with food safety and food hygiene standards.

Farm Income

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the impact of the *(a)* ending of the Over-Thirty-Months Scheme and *(b)* start of single farm payments on livestock holdings. [170136]

Alun Michael: The information is as follows:

(a) If the Over-Thirty-Months-Scheme were to end for cattle born after 1 August 1996 this would lead to an increase in domestic beef production, amounting to an additional 175,000 tonnes in 2005. Consequent changes in price will depend on the initial volumes and perceived quality of cow beef, the rate of import substitution, market demand, and changes to the Date Based Export Scheme. Any losses to producers should be relatively short term and market prices for OTM cattle could, in the longer term, be expected to recover to levels close to the EU average. As the present OTMS compensation rate is below the EU market price for cull cows and demand for manufacturing beef is strong, UK farm prices for OTM cattle are expected to rise especially as exports open up leading to a positive effect on the incomes of dairy and suckler beef farmers.

(b) Under the single farm payment scheme, direct subsidies are being decoupled from production which will provide an opportunity for farmers to respond to market signals thereby producing products that consumers demand rather than producing those that they have historically produced, or which attract larger subsidies. Payments under the single payment scheme will initially be composed of an element based on farmers' historic payment in the reference period and an element based on their farm area. Area payments will be fully implemented by 2012. There will be some redistribution of monies within the regions defined by the area payments from the more intensive to the more extensive types of farming, but the impact on individual holdings will also depend on how they respond to opportunities presented by CAP reform.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on farm income levels for farmers in Wirral South. [170273]

Alun Michael: Due to the small number of farms in Wirral South, there are no robust data available on farm incomes for farmers in that area. Net farm income for farms in the EU North Region[1] and for England over the last five years are show in the following table.

Net Farm Income

£

	EU North Region	*England*
1998–99	8,272	10,359
1999–2000	8,659	7,981
2000–01	12,456	9,886
2001–02	16,457	13,558
2002–03	18,512	16,435

Source:
Farm Business Survey

Net farm income is the return to the principal farmer and spouse for their manual and managerial labour and to the tenant-type capital of the business.

[1] Comprising Government Office Regions North East, North West and Yorkshire and the Humber.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on farm income levels for farmers in Oldham, West and Royton in the past five years. [170880]

Alun Michael: Due to the small number of farms in Oldham West and Royton, there is no robust data available on farm incomes for farmers in that area over the last five years. Net farm income for farms in the EU North Region and for England over the last five years are show in the following table.

Net Farm Income

	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
EU North Region	8,272	8,659	12,456	16,457	18,512
England	10,359	7,981	9,886	13,558	16,435

Source:
Farm Business Survey

Net farm income is the return to the principal farmer and spouse for their manual and managerial labour and to the tenant-type capital of the business

Fisheries

Mr. Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress she has made in setting up regional fisheries advisory councils. [171136]

Mr. Bradshaw: A Council Decision to establish Regional Advisory Councils (RACs) is likely to be adopted later this month. This will provide basic principles and guidelines for setting up RACs, and should enable interested parties to take forward their proposals quickly. RACs are intended to be stakeholder bodies, not Government bodies, but we are working actively with interested organisations to help set up those RACs in which the UK has an interest.

RACs will be international organisations, developed and run by their members. Interested parties in the UK have been at the forefront of action, and with their partners in Europe they have made excellent progress towards developing proposals for RACs in the North Sea and in North Western Community Waters.

Flood Defences

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent measures her Department has taken to protect against flooding in the Vale of York. [170009]

Mr. Morley: Decisions on which projects are promoted and their timing rests with the operating authorities.

Within the Vale of York constituency, the Environment Agency has recently improved protection at Boroughbridge and restored flood defences at Rawcliffe which were damaged following the floods in autumn 2000. They are also promoting a series of flood warning improvements in the region.

A number of long-term strategies looking at ways to reduce flood risks are being promoted by EA; included are studies on the rivers Ouse, Nidd and Ure.

Defra regional engineers are assisting Hambleton district council with studies into looking at options to reduce the flood risk from Cod Beck in Thirsk. If these studies should result in a project meeting our standard criteria, Defra will consider it for grant aid.

Finally, Rawcliffe IDB has looked into flood risks at Blue Beck and have introduced (in co-operation with York city council) a programme of maintenance to reduce the build up of debris at key installations.

GM Soya

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the environmental impact of GM soya cultivation in the Colonia Loma Senes region of Argentina in order to inform her policy for the United Kingdom. [170167]

Mr. Morley: I am aware of various reports of the environmental benefits from the cultivation of GM soya and some reported disadvantages apparently due to mishandling of herbicides. However the Department has not made an assessment of GM soya cultivation in Argentina or elsewhere. Soya is not suitable for general cultivation in the UK and no application has been made to cultivate GM soya in the European Union.

GM Micro-organisms

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what assessment she has made of the potential impacts on the European fermentation industry of the decision to be taken in Europe about whether to include within the traceability and labelling regulations those products produced with genetically modified micro-organisms; and if she will make a statement; [170078]

(2) what discussions she has held with and what representations she has received from *(a)* the Food and Drink Federation, *(b)* the European Federation of European Food Additives and Food Enzymes Industries, *(c)* the Confederation of Food and Drink Industries of the European Union, *(d)* individual companies involved in the fermentation sector and *(e)* other stakeholders about the interpretation of the new traceability and labelling regulations in relation to products produced with genetically modified micro-organisms; [170079]

(3) what recent representations she has received about the forthcoming discussions with the European Commission and other member states about the interpretation of the new traceability and labelling regulations in relation to products produced with genetically modified micro-organisms; [170082]

(4) what her policy objectives are for the forthcoming discussions with the European Commission and other member states about the interpretation of the new traceability and labelling regulations in relation to products produced with genetically modified micro-organisms when those organisms are not contained in the final product; and what specific communication she *(a)* has had and *(b)* intends to have with other member states to secure those objectives. [170083]

Mr. Morley: The Secretary of State has not discussed the interpretation of the new traceability and labelling regulations in relation to products produced with genetically modified micro-organisms with stakeholders. However, last autumn officials from the Food Standards Agency and my Department held a series of stakeholder meetings with those interested in the new legislation, including industry bodies and associations, to discuss the implications and scope of both the Genetically Modified Food and Feed Regulation (EC) 1829/2003 and the Traceability and Labelling Regulation (EC) 1830/2003.

At one of these meetings and subsequently, the food and feed industry raised specific concerns in relation to the labelling of products arising from a fermentation process using either genetically modified micro-organisms and/or genetically modified substrates. The UK and other member states raised this issue with the Commission who have undertaken to take forward a discussion at Standing Committee where the Food Standards Agency will seek clarification on the status of these products.

During negotiations on the content of the regulations at European level in 2001 my Department held a separate consultation on the content of the regulations, which provided an additional opportunity for stakeholders, including those in the fermentation industry, to raise issues and concerns.

The Commission produced a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) of the new Regulations prior to negotiations. Furthermore, following meetings with stakeholders last year and subsequent discussions with the European Commission to promote consistency of interpretation across the European Union, my Department and the Food Standards Agency have recently launched a new public consultation on the domestic implementation of the new regulations. This includes draft guidance and draft Regulatory Impact Assessment. Final versions will be published once responses have been considered.

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects further substantive discussions to take place in Europe about the interpretation of the new Traceability and Labelling Regulations in relation to products produced with genetically modified micro-organisms; and by whom the United Kingdom will be represented in those discussions. [170084]

Mr. Morley: The Department expects that substantive discussions about the interpretation of the new Traceability and Labelling Regulations vis-a-vis products produced with genetically modified micro-organisms will take place in the relevant European Union Regulatory and Standing Committees. Officials from my Department and/or the Food Standards Agency will represent the UK at these meetings. A Standing Committee discussing general food law considered the issue on 30 April 2004. The Commission has suggested that a working group to discuss these issues concerning products produced with genetically modified micro-organisms in more detail should take place before the next Standing Committee in June. However, no date has been finalised as yet.

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she intends to make it her policy that discussions about the interpretation of the new Traceability and Labelling Regulations in relation to products produced with genetically modified micro-organisms should continue as part of the two-year review process for the Regulations. [170085]

Mr. Morley: The new Regulations contain specific review provisions, on which the Commission is tasked to report to the European Parliament and to the Council by respectively October and November 2005. The review report may cover any aspect of the Regulations, including in relation to products produced with genetically modified micro-organisms. The UK Government will play a full part in contributing to the Commission's review and will discuss UK stakeholders' concerns within the context of the Regulations' provisions where appropriate.

Horse Exports

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many horses were exported from the United Kingdom in the last year for which figures are available. [169882]

Alun Michael: Computer based systems relating to export health certification from the UK show that during 2003 export health certificates for 733 horses were issued to non-EU destinations and for 8,478 horses to ED destinations. These figures include horses in transit from non-EU countries to EU Member States and animals exported temporarily from the UK for competition purposes. The figures exclude the movement of certain horses to France and Ireland which under a Tripartite Agreement do not require export health certification.

Horse Passports

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost to the Government has been of the introduction of *(a)* horse passports and *(b)* the equine database. [170758]

Alun Michael: Work began in the financial year 2002–03 to extend the requirement for passports to all equines and introduce a national equine database in partnership with industry.

The cost to the Exchequer in that financial year was less than £130,000 and in financial year 2003–04 the cost was less than £500,000, including publicity. These funds were found from within existing resources.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the cost to the horse industry of the introduction of *(a)* horse passports and *(b)* the equine database. [170759]

Alun Michael: A regulatory impact assessment was deposited in the House Libraries with the Horse Passport (England) Regulations 2003. That assessment is being updated and a copy will also be deposited in the House Libraries when the 2004 regulations are laid shortly. This will include an assessment of costs linked to the introduction of the database.

The equine database is being introduced following an initiative by the equine industry in partnership with the Government. It will include some statutory data, though potentially the largest volume of data will be provided by the industry for the industry on a voluntary basis. This will be breeding, performance and evaluation data.

Intensive Farming

Sir Archy Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what plans

she has to propose changes to EU animal welfare regulations to improve the conditions of intensively farmed livestock and poultry; [170592]

(2) if she will commission further research into the efficacy of existing welfare standards applying to intensively reared livestock and poultry. [170593]

Mr. Bradshaw: It is for the EU Commission to propose changes to EU animal welfare legislation. In drawing up proposals, the Commission takes account of advice from its own scientific committee—the Animal Health and Animal Welfare Panel of the European Food Safety Authority; the results of research undertaken by Member States and developments in husbandry techniques.

Defra's farm animal welfare research programme is wide ranging, with projects on all the main livestock species. Details of our current projects can be found on the Defra website. The research provides a sound scientific basis to inform our policies and helps identify areas where we can press the Commission to come forward with proposals to improve the legislation.

Sir Archy Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what assessment she has made of the standard of enforcement of animal welfare regulations governing intensive livestock and poultry units; [170594]

(2) how many inspectors are engaged in maintaining animal welfare regulations governing intensive livestock and poultry units in the UK; and if she will make a statement on the levels of qualifications of inspectors. [170595]

Mr. Bradshaw: This Government is committed to ensuring a high standard of welfare on farms and to properly enforcing the legislation. The State Veterinary Service is the primary enforcement authority in the UK and 368 veterinary officers are engaged in the enforcement of on-farm welfare legislation. These officers are all qualified veterinary surgeons and have received comprehensive training and written instructions on how to enforce the legislation.

In 1999, the Farm Animal Welfare Council (FAWC), an independent body which advises Ministers on animal welfare issues, published its report on the enforcement of animal welfare legislation. Our response to FAWC's report can be found on the Defra website.

The EU Commission's Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) is responsible for carrying out audits of the implementation and enforcement of animal welfare legislation in all Member States to ensure that it is being carried out uniformly across the Community.

Licensed Abattoirs

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many licensed abattoirs there were in England *(a)* in 1991, *(b)* in 1997 and *(c)* on the latest date for which figures are available. [169749]

Alun Michael: The number of licensed abattoirs in England is as follows:

	Red meat	*White meat*
1991	593	98
1997	375	131
April 2004	278	110

Mechanically Propelled Vehicles

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she intends to publish her Department's response to the use of mechanically propelled vehicles on rights of way consultation document. [170248]

Alun Michael: We received more than 15,000 letters and e-mails about the consultation on the use of mechanised vehicles on rights of way. These are currently being analysed and I expect to make a statement on the way ahead once I have fully considered that analysis.

Parish and Town Councils

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what advice and assistance *(a)* her Department and *(b)* the Countryside Agency provide to parish and town councils who wish to (i) start up and (ii) develop their own website. [170577]

Alun Michael: Defra has supported the Countryside Agency's work to promote the use of ICT within the parish sector.

In 2002 the Agency worked with the Local Government Association (LGA), the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), to develop and implement a web-based management and good practice guide for the parish and town council sector. It has a focus on partnership working between parish and town councils and principal local authorities. This 'toolkit' was launched in September 2002 and is hosted within the existing 'Knowledge' website created and managed by IDeA to serve as local government's own management good practice 'warehouse' of information and guidance.

The Countryside Agency has advised NALC on a current project, 'Connecting with Communities'. ODPM, the LGA, IDeA and the Audit Commission have jointly produced a good practice toolkit offering comprehensive communications support to local authorities. This toolkit, found at www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk contains professional advice, best practice case studies and hundreds of documents that can be downloaded free-of-charge to help spread good practice.

The Countryside Agency continues to work with NALC to explore ways in which ICT skills, acquisition of suitable equipment and its usage within the parish and town council sector can be enhanced and supported.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research *(a)* her Department and *(b)* the Countryside Agency

have commissioned into the role, functions and relevance of parish and town councils in the last five years. [170578]

Alun Michael: The information is as follows:

(a) The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs funds came into being in June 2001 and took over responsibility for the Countryside Agency whose responsibilities have included relevant research. Prior to 2001 the Agency was funded by the Department for Environment, Transport and the Regions.

(b) Relevant research commissioned by the Countryside Agency in the last few years is as follows:

(i) The report, Training for Local Councils' was produced for the Countryside Agency by the (then) Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education and was published in 2000.

(ii) In 2003 the University of Gloucestershire was commissioned to research internet resources available to local councils, including websites, e-groups and networks. The study researched how the internet was being used by parish and town councils by identifying good practice, barriers to use, and gaps in provision. The resulting research report, 'Internet resources for town and parish councils', is available from the Agency's website.

(iii) In 2004 the Countryside Agency commissioned UKVillages On Line to manage an on-line poll on attitudes towards parish and town councils. The results have been reported in 'Local Councils Review' and are also available on the Countryside Agency's website.

Radon Gas

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what regulations govern *(a)* testing for radon gas in homes and *(b)* disclosure of radon gas levels when houses are bought and sold. [169718]

Keith Hill: I have been asked to reply.

There are currently no regulations that govern the testing for radon gas in homes.

Approximately 450,000 radon measurements, mostly Government-funded, have been carried out by the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) since 1987. By 1998, every home in England with a greater than 5 per cent. probability of being at or above the radon level of 200 becquerels per cubic metre of air—known as the Action Level—had been offered a free measurement.

The Government have designated areas where new homes should include radon protective measures during their construction to satisfy the requirements of the Building Regulations. This was introduced in 1988 and applied only to parts of Devon and Cornwall, but in 1999 was broadened to include all parts of England and Wales where there is a significant probability of exceeding the Action Level.

It is standard practice for potential home-buyers to carry out a local search. This currently includes information on whether or not the property is located within a radon affected area. Guidance to local authorities from the Local Government Association asks them to provide further information to enquirers where this is the case.

The Government intend to include standard searches in home information packs, legislation for which is in the Housing Bill.

Rural Payments Agency

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment her Department has made of the Rural Payments Agency's performance; how many complaints were received against the Rural Payments Agency in *(a)* 2001 and *(b)* 2003, broken down by type of complaint; when the full development of the Rural Payments Agency will be completed; and what her assessment is of the ability of the Rural Payments Agency to cope with changes owing to reform of the common agricultural policy. [170008]

Alun Michael: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State agreed to the creation of the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) on 16 October 2001.

The RPA's second Annual Report and Accounts, which records performance against the agency's key performance targets, as set by the Secretary of State, was published on 18 September 2003.

An Ownership Board chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs meets quarterly to monitor the performance of the agency, on behalf of the Secretary of State. In addition, I receive weekly progress reports, as the RPA is part of my ministerial portfolio. I also monitor the response to issues raised by MPs and regularly discuss relevant issues with the agency.

The number of complaints dealt with under the RPA's complaints procedure in 2001 and 2003 are set out in the table. These have been broken down into complaints regarding Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS) and Non-IACS schemes.

Schemes	*2001*[1]	*2003*
IACS	3	134
Non-IACS	0	21
Total	3	155

[1] Figures for calendar years from creation of RPA 16 October 2001.

The RPA could not extrapolate the data required to break these figures down to 'type of complaint' without incurring disproportionate costs.

The RPA undertakes regular customer research through a third party to monitor attitudes to its standards of service. The verbatim comments from the 2003 survey indicate that the vast majority of complaints are aimed at the scheme rules and payments rather than at the level of service received.

The primary development of the RPA is through the RPA Change Programme, which now includes the implementation of the changes resulting from CAP

reform. It is planned that these changes will be largely completed by December 2005. The RPA are monitoring the on-going development of the Change Programme to ensure that customer satisfaction is maintained. This may mean future changes to the schedule in order to meet quality requirements. Full year benefits from the Change Programme will be delivered in the financial year 2006–07.

I have every confidence in the ability of the RPA to implement the changes owing to reform of the common agricultural policy.

Timber

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department plans to contribute financially to the establishment of the second phase of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [167628]

Mr. Morley: The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has lead responsibility for establishing a central point of expertise on timber procurement (CPET) and is responsible for organising the resources necessary for its operation.

In December 2003 Defra announced that as a first step the CPET would assess forest certification schemes in relation to Government contract requirements. Bids for this project have been received and are being evaluated. It is intended that this work will culminate in revised guidance that will be made public at the end of August 2004 or thereabouts.

The experience gained from operating the first phase of the CPET will help shape the plans for services in the subsequent phases. This is a new venture and the Government is concerned to ensure that the value of its output is matched with the appropriate level of investment. Defra will consult other Government Departments and other stakeholders to determine the detailed objectives for the next phase of the project, when that phase should be implemented and how the resources should be provided. The investment appraisal will consider, among other options, whether an expanded CPET service could become self-financing to some extent.

The Government remains firmly committed to the establishment of the CPET as integral to implementing its timber procurement policy and its wider efforts to tackle illegal logging and promote sustainable development in forest management.

Vale of York

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures she has taken to ensure that officials employed by *(a)* her Department and *(b)* executive agencies reporting to her Department who deal with the Vale of York (i) have visited the Vale of York and (ii) have a full working knowledge of the area. [170012]

Alun Michael: The following list shows those Defra organisations who operate 'in the field' in the Vale of York.

Core Defra Departments

Rural Development Service

State Veterinary Service

Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate

Egg Marketing Inspectorate

Defra Executive Agencies

Central Science Laboratory

Pesticides Safety Directorate

Rural Payments Agency

Veterinary Laboratories Agency

Non-Departmental Public Bodies

Countryside Agency

English Nature

Environment Agency

Public Corporations Sponsored by Defra

British Waterways Board

Defra Funded Organisations

Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Related Organisations

Government Office for Yorkshire and The Number Rural Team

Forestry Commission

English Heritage

A minimum of 16 members of Defra and related organisations staff have within their field/operational responsibility the Vale of York area.

Due to time constraints it is not possible to produce an accurate figure for the actual number of staff involved, nor objectively assess individual's levels of experience.

However, in recognition of this complexity, a Defra Implementers Group (DIG) has been formed in York and Number with an agreed vision statement "To achieve improved implementation of schemes and programmes delivered by the Defra family from the perspective of our customers". This activity pre-dated the Haskins review of Rural Service Delivery and was the first of it's kind to look at better co-ordination of frontline service delivery in Defra. Workshops were held between Jan and May 2003 to consider practical ideas to improve 'frontline delivery' of Defra 'family' work, in terms of service to customers, quality and effectiveness. A pilot project is currently looking to develop these ideas under the following headings;

awareness Raising across the Defra 'family'

using Information Technology to improve service delivery

closer Working of Defra staff

integrated Rural Development projects demonstrating joined up working

In an attempt to positively engage with constituency issues such as this, Gordon Kingston (GOYH Rural Director) attends the hon. Member's "Yorkshire First" Westminster Round Table quarterly events.

In addition, all Defra staff are encouraged to have an understanding of customer and other stakeholders needs via our competency framework which are used to measure their performance e.g. the 'Building Relationships' competency.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Child Minders (Regulation)

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the effectiveness of Ofsted in regulating child minders. [171303]

Margaret Hodge: The effectiveness of Ofsted in regulating child minders is a matter for the Office of Standards in Education (Ofsted) and I have asked HM Chief Inspector for Schools, David Bell, to write to the hon. Gentleman and place a copy of his letter in the Library.

Classroom Assistants

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many new classroom assistant positions have been created in England in the last seven years. [171313]

Mr. Miliband: The Department collects information on the number of classroom assistants employed in England in January of each year. In January 2004 there were, provisionally, 132,600 teaching assistants employed on a full-time equivalent basis in maintained schools in England, an increase of 71,400 since January 1997.

Correspondence

Mr. Illsley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many letters received during this session by *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials from universities enclosed letters written by hon. Members or which included details of any hon. Members' comments on, or their voting intentions in respect of, the Higher Education Bill. [171106]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Since the beginning of the parliamentary session 2003–04, the Department has received over 1,400 letters on the Higher Education Bill. Correspondence is not systematically analysed to provide this information. Scrutiny of the correspondence to provide this information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Education Funding

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Oldham, West and Royton have benefited from the Excellence in Cities programme; and what the per pupil spending was in each year since the programme's inception. [170919]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows the number of children in Oldham, West and Royton benefiting from EiC, and the annual spend per pupil for the years in question.

	Number of children	*Total EiC expenditure*[1] *(£)*	*Spend per pupil (£)*
2001–02	8,299	549,988	66.27
2002–03	8,184	1,833,178	224.00
2003–04	8,218	2,301,203	280.02

[1] All funding figures supplied by Oldham Excellence in Cities Team.

The large increase in the rate of EiC funding in 2002–03 is due to the extra funding provided through the Behaviour Improvement Programme and the increase in 2003–04 is due to the introduction of the Leadership Incentive Grant.

Education Maintenance Allowances

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many extra people in the North West he expects to stay in education as a result of the introduction of education maintenance allowances; and what plans he has to provide extra funding to further education colleges in the North West to support these extra students. [171134]

Alan Johnson: We estimate that there will be about 3,900 extra 16 year olds in the North West Region in further education this September who would not be participating without the EMA. There will also be a significant number of extra 17 and 18 year olds in further education in the pilot areas.

The 2002 Spending Review settlement allowed for the expected impact of national EMA in further education institutions, including further education colleges.

Educational Attainment

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of 11-year-olds achieved level 4 at Key Stage 2 in England in *(a)* literacy, *(b)* numeracy and *(c)* science in each year since 1997, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [167566]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Failing Schools

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools in Oldham West and Royton deemed to be failing since 1997 have since reached satisfactory standards. [170920]

Mr. Miliband: Two primary schools in Oldham West and Royton deemed to be failing have since reached satisfactory standards.

Free School Milk

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the local education authorities which do not offer free milk to children eligible for free school meals; and if he will make a statement. [166865]

Mr. Stephen Twigg *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* The Department for Education and Skills does not collect any data on school milk provision.

Further Education Colleges

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to provide funding to help further education colleges in *(a)* Heywood and Middleton and *(b)* the North West specifically to refurbish and rebuild their estates. [171133]

Alan Johnson: We have set out plans for 60 per cent. real terms increase in capital expenditure in the post-16 learning and skills sector in 2005–06 compared to 2002–03.

The Department does not provide a specific budget to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for rebuilding/refurbishing further education colleges. It is for the LSC to determine for itself the right level of capital investment in further education colleges from the funds allocated to it by the Department for capital investment. This includes decisions about the level of funding that it expects colleges to contribute to capital projects.

This is an operational matter for the LSC. Mr. Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to the hon. Member on this matter. A copy of his reply will be placed in the House Library.

GCSE

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of 15 and 16-year-olds in Bootle achieved more than five GCSEs at grade A*-C or GNVQ equivalent in each of the last seven years. [171300]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is as follows:

Percentage of 15-year-old pupils[1] achieving five or more grades A-C*

Academic Year	*Bootle*	*England*
1997	24.3	45.1
1998	22.1	46.3
1999	29.5	47.9
2000	28.7	49.2
2001	31.4	50.0
2002	36.1	51.6
2003	34.7	52.9

[1] GCSE/GNVQ results are reported as standard as the results of pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year i.e. 31 August and therefore reaching the end of compulsory education at the end of the school year.

Higher Education

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on higher education in Oldham, West and Royton in each of the last seven years. [170924]

Alan Johnson: The only publicly funded institution providing higher education in Oldham, West and Royton is Oldham College. The amounts of public funding spent in the years for which figures are available are shown in the table below. Expenditure was by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and by the Students Loans Company (SLC). The latter relates only to spending on tuition fees, student loans (cash cost) and the Dependants Grant. Data prior to 1999/2000 are not available. The figures for student support do not include spending on other additional grants, namely, Disabled Students Allowances, Care Leavers Grant and Travel Grant. These were paid through local education authorities, up to 2003/04, and figures are not held centrally.

£000

Academic year	*HEFCE funding*	*SLC funding*
1997–98	275	n/a
1998–99	422	n/a
1999–2000	908	409.1
2000–01	1,100	653.8
2001–02	1,300	926.1
2002–03	1,400	1,094.7
2003–04	1,600	n/a

In addition, institutions located outside Oldham, West and Royton may be undertaking activities in the area, for example outreach to raise the attainment and aspirations of potential higher education entrants, or special arrangements with schools and colleges to improve progression into higher education. This information is not held centrally.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on higher education in Burnley in each of the last seven years. [167930]

Alan Johnson: The only publicly funded institution providing higher education in Burnley is Burnley College. The amounts of public funding spent in academic years and for which figures are available are shown in the following table. Expenditure was by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and by the Student Loans Company (SLC).

£000

	1999/2000	*2000/01*
HEFCE funding[1]	134	n/a
SLC expenditure[2]	0	4.1

[1] The 1999/2000 figure is the Basic Teaching Grant from HEFCE. Burnley College transferred their directly funded numbers to the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN) as from 2000/01 and HEFCE do not hold information on the amount of funding passed by UCLAN to Burnley College in respect of students covered by their franchise arrangements. Figures for HNC and HND provision funded via the Further Education Funding Council prior to 1999/2000 are not held centrally.

[2] Expenditure by the Student Loans Company includes fees, loans (cash costs) and the Dependants Grant. Data prior to 1999/2000 are not available. Expenditure information on other grants (Disabled Students' Allowances, Care Leavers' Grant and Travel Grant) that were, until 2003/04, paid through local education authorities is not held centrally.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on higher education in Wigan in each of the last seven years. [169288]

Alan Johnson: The only publicly funded institution providing higher education in Wigan is Wigan and Leigh College. The amounts of public funding spent in academic years and for which figures are available are shown in the following table. Expenditure was by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and by the Student Loans Company (SLC).

£ million

	HEFCE funding[1]	SLC expenditure[2]
1997/98	0.951	n/a
1998/99	1.2	n/a
1999/2000	2.1	1.407
2000/01	1.934	1.098
2001/02	1.935	0.971
2002/03	1.621	0.935
2003/04	1.611	n/a

[1] This is the Basic Teaching Grant from HEFCE.

[2] SLC expenditure includes fees, loans (cash costs) and the Dependants Grant. Data prior to 1999/2000 and for 2003/04 is not available. Expenditure information on other grants (Disabled Students' Allowances, Care Leavers' Grant and Travel Grant) paid through local education authorities until 2003/04 is not available.

Medical Students

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what assessment he has made of the criteria for selecting students to participate on medical courses under his programme for widening participation in medicine; and what opportunities there are for students with 30 or more points at A Level who have failed to obtain a place to study medicine to participate in this programme; [168202]

(2) how much funding has been allocated by the Government to the widening access programme in medical education in the current academic year; how much he plans to allocate in subsequent years; and if he will break down such funding by individual institution; [168203]

(3) how much funding has been allocated to the improving retention pot for university medical schools for *(a)* the academic year 2004–05 and *(b)* subsequent years. [168204]

Alan Johnson: The admission and selection of students is a matter for individual institutions. Admissions should always be based on individual merit. Professor Steven Schwartz, Vice-Chancellor of Brunel University, is leading a review which will produce a set of high level principles on admissions and help universities learn from best practice at home and abroad.

We know that both the new and existing medical schools are themselves doing excellent work to address some of the access and diversity issues that surround the application and selection process. One of the criteria for the establishment of new medical schools in recent years has been the need to demonstrate an active commitment to widening participation from a broad range of social and ethnic backgrounds to reflect the patterns of populations which are served by the NHS.

In addition, there are projects under the Government's Aimhigher programme aimed at the healthcare professions. Aimhigher, the national outreach programme which operates most intensively in disadvantaged areas, provides funds to local partnerships to increase the attainment levels of young people and raise their aspirations towards university and progression.

In addition, the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) has earmarked £273 million for widening participation in 2004–05, which is allocated as part of the block grant to institutions. Included in this sum is £49 million for widening access and £213 million for improving retention. The breakdown by institution is published in the HEFCE document, "Recurrent Grants for 2004–05" (March 2004/12). No decisions on allocations after that date have yet been made.

The HEFCE widening participation allocation provides some assistance to universities with the additional costs of recruiting and retaining students from non-traditional backgrounds. The allocation is not an incentive. It is paid to the institution, not to individual schools or departments, towards the support costs of students from non-traditional backgrounds who complete a year of their studies. How the funds are used is entirely a matter for the institution.

Middle Schools

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in which local education authorities there are middle schools as part of a three tier school system. [171162]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* The following local education authorities have middle schools as part of a three tier school system:

Bedfordshire
Cambridgeshire
Devon
Dorset
Harrow
Hertfordshire
Isle of Wight
Kent
Kirklees
Leicestershire
Milton Keynes
Newcastle upon Tyne
Norfolk
North
Tyneside
North Yorkshire
Northamptonshire
Northumberland
Poole
Somerset
Staffordshire
Suffolk
West Sussex
Wiltshire
Windsor and Maidenhead
Worcestershire

Music and Dance Scheme

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what the annual budget is of the Music and Dance scheme; [171406]

(2) if he will make a statement on the remit of the Music and Dance scheme. [171408]

Mr. Miliband: The budget for the Music and Dance scheme in the current financial year 2004–05 is £15.9 million.

The scheme currently supports over 800 exceptionally talented children at eight independent specialist schools, four music schools and four dance schools, which are regarded as centres of excellence in their field. In addition, around 80 choristers are helped each year through a subset of the scheme, the Choir Schools Scholarship scheme. Through outreach and partnership working the schools share their expertise and provide music, singing and dance experiences and training for many who would not otherwise get the chance. From September 2004, the scheme is being extended to give greater opportunities for talented children to receive the specialist training they need. A new national grants scheme will enable them to gain access locally to such training out of school hours at four new centres for advanced training and at the junior departments of the six music conservatoires.

Parliamentary Questions

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* Ordinary Written and *(b)* Named Day Questions his Department received in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary session, broken down by month. [171185]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information appears in the following tables.

	Named Day Questions	*Ordinary Written Questions*
Year 2002		
November	23	12
December	82	213
Year 2003		
January	58	320
February	45	294
March	51	296
April	53	343
May	48	248
June	87	445
July	37	359
August	0	3
September	41	236
October	62	323
November	43	312
Total	630	3,404

Current session	*Named Day Questions*	*Ordinary Written Questions*
Year 2003		
November	10	36
December	84	331
Year 2004		
January	98	451
February	89	360
March	122	525
April	48	509
Total	451	2,212

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of Ordinary Written Questions to his Department were answered within five sitting days of tabling, and what proportion of Questions for a Written Answer on a named day received a substantive answer on that day, in *(a)* the 2002–03 parliamentary session and *(b)* this parliamentary session, broken down by month. [171186]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The requested information is listed in the following tables. DfES Ministers take their parliamentary responsibilities very seriously and endeavour to reply to all Parliamentary Questions within the specified deadline.

2002–03 parliamentary session

Percentage

	Percentage of ordinary written questions answered within five sitting days of tabling	*Percentage of named day questions receiving a substantive answer on named day*
November	45	57
December	68.87	37
January	81.33	24
February	63.71	27
March	74.64	42
April	52.43	26
May	57.75	50
June	70.33	22
July	80.92	26
August	n/a	n/a
September	82.15	54
October	76.82	42
November	92.46	52

Current parliamentary session 2003–04

Percentage

	Percentage of ordinary written questions answered within five sitting days of tabling	*Percentage of named day questions receiving a substantive answer on named day*
November	—	[1]n/a
December	65.6	21
January	71.47	20
February	70.47	22
March	81.45	38
April	80.74	20

[1] The current Parliamentary session began on 28 November. No questions were due for answer between then and 30 November

Postgraduate Students

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations he has received from universities regarding difficulties in attracting and retaining postgraduate students from within the United Kingdom. [166734]

Alan Johnson: Both my right hon. Friend and I have received a number of representations from universities about postgraduate education and research. These have included trends and participation in postgraduate programmes. Over the period 1996–97 to 2002–03 there has been a 16 per cent. increase in the number of UK domiciled postgraduate students. The Government recognise the importance of encouraging more students into postgraduate and research study and have taken a number of initiatives to achieve this, including increases to stipends for PhD students and post-doctoral salaries.

Private Sector HE Colleges

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the criteria are relating to private sector colleges of higher education *(a)* for Government support for fees charged to individual students and *(b)* for acceptance of the institution for support from a funding council. [171608]

Alan Johnson: If their course has been 'specifically designated' for student support by my Department, eligible students on courses of higher education at private institutions can apply for support for fees, loans for maintenance and, where appropriate, disabled students' allowance. Generally, the fee rate for a specifically designated course at a private institution will be lower than the publicly funded rate and is not subject to means test. For 2004/05, the fee rate is £1,075.

To be designated for support, a course must be:

at least Certificate of Higher Education level and less than postgraduate level;

validated by a recognised UK degree awarding body; and

of at least one academic year in duration.

Institutions funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) are able to franchise courses to private sector colleges, which would receive indirect funding. To be directly funded by HEFCE, a private sector college would need to be designated for funding by the Secretary of State under section 129 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. The Secretary of State, in reaching a decision on designation, will seek advice from HEFCE. In addition to considering what is affordable to fund, the criteria which the Council use in forming their advice can be found in HEFCE publication 01/05, "Transfers Between the Further and Higher Education Sectors", which I have placed in the House of Commons Library.

Recycled Paper

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when his Department expects to implement in full the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste. [166787]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The "quick win targets" set by DEFRA were communicated widely within the Department, particularly to procurement sections, in October 2003. Due to a lack of re-contracting opportunities since that date it has not so far been possible to implement specific measures to ensure the Department meets the quick win targets. Procurement sections have undertaken to introduce these as soon as re-contracting opportunities arise.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the Department's main suppliers of *(a)* copier paper, *(b)* stationery, *(c)* envelopes and *(d)* paper for reports, in each case stating (i) the name of each paper used and (ii) the recycled and post-consumer recycled content of each paper. [166788]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: My Department's main suppliers of *(a)* copier paper and *(d)* paper for reports are Banner Business Supplies, Guilbert UK Ltd., Glenmore Business Papers, the Paper Company (formerly known as Twenty c Paper) and Premium Paper. Suppliers for *(c)* envelopes are Banner Business Supplies and *(b)* stationery are Banner Business Supplies and AlphaGraphics. However information for parts (i) and (ii) is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of copying paper used by the Department in 2002–03 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained. [166789]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: My Department had no procedures in place to capture information on copying paper in 2002–03. New environmental monitoring arrangements were put in place when new departmental printing contracts were introduced in 2003–04 but the available part-year data have not yet been compiled and analysed.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of paper for printed publications used by the Department in 2002–03 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained. [166790]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: My Department had no procedures in place to capture information on paper for printed publications in 2002–03. New environmental monitoring arrangements were put in place when new departmental printing contracts were introduced in 2003–04 but the available part-year data have not yet been compiled and analysed.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures he has put in place to ensure that his Department meets the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content. [166791]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The "quick win targets" set by DEFRA were communicated widely within the Department, particularly to procurement sections, in October 2003. Due to a lack of re-contracting opportunities since that date it has not so far been possible to implement specific measures to ensure the Department meets the quick win targets. Procurement sections have undertaken to introduce these as soon as re-contracting opportunities arise.

School Buildings

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if he will set a target date for the completion of outstanding repairs to school buildings; [171237]

(2) if he will make a statement on the Government's progress towards achieving its target of rebuilding or remodelling 650 schools by 2004; [171239]

(3) if he will make a statement on the Government's progress towards its target for substantial repairs to be made to 7,000 schools by this year. [171240]

Mr. Miliband: Central government capital support for investment in school buildings in England has increased from under £700 million in 1996–97 to £4.5 billion this year and will rise further to over £5 billion in 2005–06. Most of this funding is allocated by formula to schools and local education authorities so that they can address their investment needs, which are prioritised locally in asset management plans. My department does not collect detailed information on local investment decisions, in view of the unacceptable bureaucratic burden this would impose. The targets mentioned by the hon. Member were realistic estimates based on the increased levels of capital funding available to schools and to authorities. However, we are confident that local education authorities and schools have the investment available for their schools to reach these targets.

For instance, funding includes direct capital funding for every school. From 2002–03 to 2004–05, a typical secondary school has received over £200,000 of its own capital, and a typical primary school over £60,000, enabling them to improve their buildings in line with their priorities. Therefore, we believe that virtually every school in the country has now benefited from substantial repairs or improvements to its buildings, far in excess of the target of £7,000.

Further, funding also includes support for PFI projects. By September 2004, from signed PFI contracts, about 130 newly built or rebuilt schools are scheduled to be operating, plus a similar number of refurbished schools. There are a further 220 schools, new built and refurbished, which are also scheduled to benefit from these PFI contracts. Over 80 schools benefited from substantial investment from New Deal for Schools funding. In the voluntary aided sector, where we allocate funding directly to schools, there have been 90 new or rebuilt school projects in the last five to six years. In addition, authorities are investing in new and rebuilt schools to meet local population growth and the needs of 21st century teaching and learning.

By 2004–05, this government will have provided a total of £24 billion for investment in school buildings in England, enabling schools and authorities to address the backlog of repairs that had built up as a result of years of under-funding and to begin to make schools suitable for the teaching and learning needs of the 21st century.

Earlier this year, I announced the first wave of authorities to benefit from the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme, which aims to renew all secondary schools in England in 10–15 years from 2005–06, subject to future spending decisions. In addition to the BSF programme, we will continue to make substantial funding available for schools in the primary sector and those in the secondary sector not prioritised in BSF. School buildings will continue to be improved in line with local priorities, and support provided for the continuing cyclical, predictive and reactive maintenance needs which are a necessary part of the upkeep of all school buildings so that they do not again decay. In value for money terms, there may be occasions when it is preferable to wait for strategic renewal of a school rather than continue to patch and mend. This will be a local decision. Given this, I do not intend to set a target date for completion of outstanding repairs.

School Funding

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if he will break down funding for each category under school spending in table 2.4 of the Department's Annual Report for 2004 between *(a)* grants provided by the Department, *(b)* revenue support grant, *(c)* amounts collected through the council tax and *(d)* other revenue streams for each local education authority for each financial year since 1998–99; [171769]

(2) pursuant to Table 2.2 of the Department's 2004 Annual Report, if he will break down the spending on schools between primary and secondary schools. [171770]

Mr. Miliband: It is not possible to answer these questions in precisely the way they have been asked as data are not collected centrally on this basis and local authorities are generally free to determine the distribution of grant between the primary and secondary sectors as they see fit, although the data in Table 2.3 indicate an approximate 45:55 split between primary and secondary schools.

Table 2.2 provides details of DfES grants to schools and local education authorities that support schools. The bulk of Government support for schools for the figures in Table 2.4 is provided through the Education Formula Spending Share, details of which are provided in Table 2.1, but it is not possible to sub-divide this distribution accurately between the sectors in Table 2.4.

School Results

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of 15 and 16-year-olds in Oldham, West and Royton achieved five or more GCSRs at grade A*–C or GNVQ equivalent in each of the last seven years. [170923]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is as follows:

Percentage of 15-year-old pupils[1] achieving five or more grades A–C*

Percentage

Academic year	*Oldham, West and Royton*	*England*
1997	34.6	45.1
1998	35.8	46.3
1999	34.8	47.9
2000	38.5	49.2
2001	37.8	50.0
2002	38.1	51.6
2003	40.9	52.9

[1] GCSE/GNVQ results are reported as standard as the results of pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year i.e. 31 August and therefore reaching the end of compulsory education at the end of the school year.

School Sports

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if he will make a statement on

the effects on schools of changes since 1997 in the level of investment in school sports in Oldham, West and Royton; [170906]

(2) how much money has been invested in school sports in Oldham, West and Royton since 1997. [170907]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information is not held in the format requested. Within the context of the statutory National Curriculum, where Physical Education (PE) is compulsory for pupils aged 5 to 16, it is for individual schools to use their budgets as they judge appropriate.

The Government are investing more than £1 billion in England to transform PE, school sport and club links. The funding will help deliver an ambitious Public Service Agreement target, shared with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, to increase the percentage of 5 to 16-year-olds who spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum to 75 per cent. by 2006.

The Department is providing just over £316,000 to support the delivery of a School Sport Partnership in the Oldham LEA area. The partnership includes five secondary and 25 primary schools and provides enhanced sports opportunities for all young people to ensure that their pupils spend a minimum of two hours a week on high quality PE and School Sport. A key objective for all School Sport Partnerships is to ensure that the improvements and enhanced opportunities that they deliver are sustainable and embedded within schools to ensure a lasting legacy. The New Opportunities Fund has provided schools in the Oldham LEA area with over £3.3 million specifically to enhance PE and school sport facilities.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the effects on schools of changes since 1997 in the level of investment in school sports in Bootle. [171483]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information is not held in the format requested. Within the context of the statutory National Curriculum, where physical education (PE) is compulsory for pupils aged five to 16, it is for individual schools to use their budgets as they judge appropriate.

The Government are investing more than £1 billion in England to transform PE, school sport and club links. The funding will help deliver an ambitious Public Service Agreement target, shared with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, to increase the percentage of five to 16-year-olds who spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum to 75 per cent. by 2006.

The Department is providing £273,121 to support the delivery of a School Sport Partnership in the Sefton area. The partnership includes six secondary and 19 primary schools and provides enhanced sports opportunities for all young people to ensure that their pupils spend a minimum of two hours a week on high quality PE and school sport. A key objective for all School Sport Partnerships is to ensure that the improvements and enhanced opportunities that they deliver are sustainable and embedded within schools to ensure a lasting legacy. The New Opportunities Fund has provided schools in the Sefton LEA area with over £3,331,000 specifically to enhance PE and school sport facilities.

Schools (South Ribble)

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools in South Ribble deemed to be failing since 1997 have since reached satisfactory standards. [171661]

Mr. Miliband: No schools in South Ribble have been deemed to be failing since 1997.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money has been spent to develop school sports in South Ribble since 1997. [171671]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information is not held in the format requested. Within the context of the statutory National Curriculum, where Physical Education (PE) is compulsory for pupils aged 5–16, it is for individual schools to use their budgets as they judge appropriate.

The Government is investing more than £1 billion in England to transform PE, school sport and club links. The funding will help deliver an ambitious Public Service Agreement target, shared with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, to increase the percentage of 5–16 year olds who spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum to 75 per cent. by 2006.

The Department is providing £440,130 to support the delivery of a School Sport Partnership in the South Ribble area. The partnership includes 6 secondary and 20 primary schools and provides enhanced sports opportunities for all young people to ensure that their pupils spend a minimum of two hours a week on high quality PE and School Sport. A key objective for all School Sport Partnerships is to ensure that the improvements and enhanced opportunities that they deliver are sustainable and embedded within schools to ensure a lasting legacy. The New Opportunities Fund has provided schools in the Lancashire LEA area with nearly £12 million specifically to enhance PE and school sport facilities.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if he will list the building improvements in each school in South Ribble since 1997; and how much was spent on each improvement; [171672]

(2) how much public funding has been spent on repairing schools in South Ribble in each year since 1997; [171665]

(3) how much funding each school in South Ribble has received from the New Deal for Schools. [171663]

Mr. Miliband: The majority of capital support is allocated to schools and local education authorities (LEAs) by formula, and they decide how to invest it in line with their asset management plans. The Department does not, therefore, have complete information about capital investment at constituency level. Table A sets out the capital support given by the

Government to Lancashire LEA since 1997–98, in total and by programme, including devolved formula capital grants to each school. Table B shows the schools in the South Ribble constituency that benefited from investment through the New Deal for Schools (NDS) programme, which ran between 1997–98 and 2000–01.

Table A: Lancashire LEA capital allocations

£000

Type	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05[1]	2005–06
Additional NDS Grant (615)	—	—	—	—	1,510	—	—	—	—
Assistance with AMPs	—	—	189	—	—	—	—	—	—
Basic L C Vap	—	—	—	—	378	2,167	2,813	—	—
Basic need	5,388	5,519	4,766	6,543	2,931	4,597	9,312	1,200	2,713
Class size initiative	—	1,238	3,711	2,190	347	89	—	—	—
Condition	—	—	—	—	7,923	12,228	16,043	—	—
Devolved formula	—	—	—	9,115	7,517	11,489	17,518	11,811	—
Energy	—	353	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Modernisation (Primary)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3,965	—
Modernisation LEA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3,500	—
Modernisation LEA	—	—	—	—	—	3,296	5,574	7,000	9,514
Modernisation VA	—	—	—	—	—	1,255	3,176	6,233	3,664
NDS 1	2,006	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
NDS 2	—	3,468	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
NDS 3	—	—	7,538	—	—	—	—	—	—
NDS 4	—	—	—	13,376	—	—	—	—	—
Outside toilets	—	275	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Private finance initiative	—	—	13,400	—	—	—	—	—	—
School labs	—	—	—	591	591	—	—	—	—
School security	373	408	429	429	301	258	—	—	—
Schools access initiative	75	211	400	620	980	1,634	2,138	1,509	1,465
Schools Renewal Challenge Fund	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Secondary Learning Support Units	—	—	—	290	314	389	—	—	—
Seed challenge	—	—	—	604	703	1,288	1,282	1,281	—
Specialist schools	—	—	—	100	100	500	—	—	—
Staff workspace	—	—	—	—	—	220	526	—	—
Supplementary credit approvals	2,021	454	1,149	365	454	—	—	—	—
Supplementary NDS for VA schools	—	—	—	63	3	—	—	—	—
Targeted capital funding	—	—	—	—	2,093	2,689	—	—	—
Targeted capital funding—VA	—	—	—	—	—	—	4,225	—	—
Voluntary aided school grant	3,425	5,031	3,597	3,735	3,633	4,371	—	—	—
Total	13,288	16,957	35,179	38,021	29,778	46,470	62,607	36,499	17,356

[1] Further allocations to be announced.

Table B: NDS allocations to schools in the South Ribble constituency

£

	School	Project details	Grant awarded	
1997–98	Balshaw's Church of England High School	Refurbishment of technology areas and laboratories	LEA-wide grant	2,006,000[1]
	St. Anne's Catholic Primary School, Leyland	Schemes submitted by District Liaison Committees (cont)	LEA-wide grant	2,006,000[1]
1999–2000	Penwortham Priory High School	Replacement of roof and floor and remedial drainage work		80,059
	Farington Primary School	Boilers/heating	Project including 17 schools	601,900[2]
	Lostock Hall Community Primary School	Playground repairs	Project including 25 schools	300,000[2]
	Woodlea Junior School	Window repairs/replacement	Project including 14 schools	516,000[2]
	Whitefield Primary School	Playground repairs	Project including 25 schools	300,000[2]
	Lever House Primary School	Rewires	Project including 18 schools	1,007,100[2]
	Penwortham Middleforth Church of England Primary School	Playground repairs	Project including 25 schools	300,000[2]
	Our Lady and St. Gerard's Roman Catholic Primary School, Lostock Hall	Boilers/heating	Project including 17 schools	601,900[2]
	Leyland St. Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School	Rewires	Project including 18 schools	1,007,100[2]
	Wellfield High School	Window repairs/replacement	Project including 14 schools	516,000[2]
	Wellfield High School	Roof works	Project including 13 schools	549,700[2]
	Penwortham Girls High School	Roof works	Project including 13 schools	549,700[2]
2000–01	St. Catherine's RC Primary School	Replacement of two classroom Portakabin		6,671
	Woodlea Junior School	Playground repairs	Project including 29 schools	270,090[2]
	Woodlea Junior School	Replacement of boilers/heating systems	Project including 36 schools	1,143,110[2]
	Worden High School	Roof repairs/replacement	Project including 11 schools	548,460[2]
	Penwortham Girls High School	Roof repairs/replacement	Project including 11 schools	548,460[2]

[1] For NDS 1 grant was allocated for Lancashire LEA-wide projects, part of which was used for work at each of two schools in the South Ribble constituency. The LEA will be able to say how much was allocated to each school.

[2] Allocations shown are the totals for packages of projects within Lancashire LEA which included the schools shown that are in the South Ribble constituency. The LEA will be able to say how much was allocated to each school.

Sexual Health

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures his Department is taking to ensure that young people receive clear and accurate information in schools to enable them to make informed choices about their sexual health; and if he will make a statement. [171171]

Margaret Hodge: Teaching about sexual health and safer sex are key elements of the Government's sexual health strategy and are covered by our Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) guidance, which was sent to all schools in July 2000. All maintained secondary schools have a statutory responsibility to teach SRE. Through SRE pupils learn about sexual health, contraception and the range of advice and support services which are available. Young people should be made aware of the risks of contracting sexually transmitted infections and know about prevention, diagnosis and treatment. In addition, we have made a new resource on 'Teaching and Learning about HIV' available to all schools.

Schools (Stockton, South)

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teacher vacancies there were in Stockton, South on the latest date for which figures are available; and what steps are being taken to reduce them. [171450]

Mr. Miliband: Information on teacher vacancies is not available by constituency as it is collected at local education authority level. In January 2003, the latest information available, there were seven full-time teacher vacancies in Stockton-on-Tees local education authority.

Like other areas, since 1997 Stockton-on-Tees has benefited from the initiatives that the Government have put in place to recruit and retain teachers and to increase the number of staff supporting them in schools. Since 1997, the number of full-time equivalent regular teachers in maintained schools in the Stockton-on-Tees LEA area has risen by 110, from 1,650 to 1,760 in 2003. Over the same period, the number of full-time equivalent school support staff in the area has grown by 340 from 460 to 800 in 2003.

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching assistants there were in schools in Stockton South in *(a)* each of the last seven years and *(b)* on the latest date for which figures are available. [171451]

Mr. Miliband: The following table gives the numbers of full time equivalent teaching assistants in maintained schools in the Stockton South constituency in January of each year' between 1997 and 2003, the latest year for which data are available.

	Number
1997	90
1998	90
1999	100
2000	120
2001	160
2002	110
2003	150

Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the effects on schools of changes since 1997 in the level of investment in school sports in Stockton South. [171470]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information is not held in the format requested. Within the context of the statutory National Curriculum, where Physical Education (PE) is compulsory for pupils aged five-16, it is for individual schools to use their budgets as they judge appropriate.

The Government is investing more than £1 billion in England to transform PE, school sport and club links. The funding will help deliver an ambitious Public Service Agreement target, shared with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, to increase the percentage of five-16 year olds who spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum to 75 per cent. by 2006.

The Department is providing £751,475 to support the delivery of a School Sport Partnership in the Stockton-on-Tees area. The partnership includes five secondary and 25 primary schools and provides enhanced sports opportunities for all young people to ensure that their pupils spend a minimum of two hours a week on high quality PE and School Sport. A key objective for all School Sport Partnerships is to ensure that the improvements and enhanced opportunities that they deliver are sustainable and embedded within schools to ensure a lasting legacy. The New Opportunities Fund has provided schools in the Stockton-on-Tees LEA area with over £2.4 million specifically to enhance PE and school sport facilities.

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of 15 and 16-year-olds in Stockton, South achieved five or more GCSEs at Grade A* to C or GNVQ equivalent in each of the last seven years. [171471]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is as follows:

Percentage of 15-year-old pupils[1] achieving five or more grades A to C*

Percentage

Academic year	*Stockton, South*	*England*
1997	42.9	45.1
1998	44.0	46.3
1999	43.6	47.9
2000	45.9	49.2
2001	49.8	50.0
2002	48.6	51.6
2003	51.8	52.9

[1] GCSE/GNVQ results are reported as standard as the results of pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year ie 31 August and therefore reaching the end of compulsory education at the end of the school year.

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools in Stockton, South deemed to be failing since 1997 have since reached satisfactory standards. [171473]

Mr. Miliband: No schools in Stockton, South have been deemed to be failing since 1997.

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Stockton, South have benefited from the Excellence in Cities programme; and what the per pupil spending was in each year since the programme's inception. [171475]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows the number of children in Stockton, South benefiting from EiC, and the annual spend per pupil for the years in question.

	Number of children	*Total EiC expenditure*[1] *(£)*	*Spend per pupil (£)*
2000–01	8,196	574,495	70.09
2001–02	8,219	1,148,283	139.71
2002–03	8,238	1,700,191	206.38
2003–04	8,295	2,585,332	311.67

[1] All funding figures supplied by Stockton Finance Office.

The large increase in the rate of EiC funding in 2002–03 is due to the extra funding provided through the Behaviour Improvement Programme and the increase in 2003–04 is due to the introduction of the Leadership Incentive Grant.

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how much public funding money has been spent on repairing schools in Stockton South in each year since 1997; [171476]

(2) how much funding each school in Stockton South has received from the New Deal for Schools. [171474]

Mr. Miliband: The majority of capital support is allocated to schools and local education authorities (LEAs) by formula, and they decide how to invest it in line with their asset management plans. The Department does not, therefore, have complete information about capital investment at constituency level. Table A sets out the capital support given by the Government to Stockton LEA since 1997–98, in total and by programme, including devolved formula capital grants to each school. Table B shows the schools in the Stockton South constituency that benefited from investment through the New Deal for Schools (NDS) programme, which ran between 1997–98 and 2000–01.

Table A: Stockton LEA capital allocations

£000

Type	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*[1]	*2005–06*[1]
Assistance with AMPs	—	—	26	—	—	—	—	—	—
Basic L C Vap	—	—	—	—	39	229	300	—	—
Basic need	165	702	1,209	1,524	341	82	2,069	3,035	1,393
City Learning Centres				85	2,381				
Class size initiative	—	384	174	185	103	5	—	—	—
Condition	—	—	—	—	1,439	2,218	2,863	—	—
Devolved formula	—	—	—	1,383	1,118	1,709	2,662	2,233	—
Energy	—	64	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Modernisation (Primary)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	821	—
Modernisation LEA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	668	—
Modernisation LEA	—	—	—	—	—	769	1,318	1,336	1,887
Modernisation VA	—	—	—	—	—	162	431	846	497
NDS 1	531	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
NDS 2	—	358	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
NDS 3	—	—	1,374	—	—	—	—	—	—
NDS 4	—	—	—	2,704	—	—	—	—	—
Nursery provision				61					
Outside toilets	—	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pathfinder schools						61			
Private finance initiative	—	—	—	—	6,400	—	—	—	—
School labs	—	—	—	145	145	—	—	—	—
School security	52	65	65	64	45	39	—	—	—
Schools access initiative	13	69	100	140	224	288	426	316	311
Seed challenge	—	—	—	152	165	267	265	258	—
Specialist schools	—	—	450	—	—	—	—	—	—
Staff workspace	—	—	—	—	—	59	113	—	—
Supplementary credit approvals	87	73	2,012	84	338	—	—	—	—
Targeted capital funding	—	—	—	—	—	653	1,411	1,570	—
Voluntary aided school grant	135	213	1,110	1,914	923	846	—	—	—
Total	983	1,938	6,520	7,541	13,661	7,387	11,858	11,083	4,088

[1] Further allocations to be announced.

Table B: NDS allocations to schools in the Stockton South constituency

£

	School	*Project details*		*Grant awarded*
1997–98	Egglescliffe Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School	Replacement of mobiles	LEA-wide grant	531,000[1]
	Conyers School	Replacement of mobiles	LEA-wide grant	531,000[1]
	Ian Ramsey Church of England Aided Comprehensive School	Improve IT suite	LEA-wide grant	531,000[1]

Table B: NDS allocations to schools in the Stockton South constituency

£

	School	*Project details*		*Grant awarded*
1998–99	Westlands School	Hot water temperature controls to baths		1,464
	St. Mark's Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School, Stockton	Hot water source controls		4,544
1999–2000	St. Mark's Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School, Stockton	Boiler plant replacement (single boiler installations)		39,200
	St. Cuthbert's RC Voluntary Aided Primary School	Boiler plant replacement (single boiler installations)		47,040
	Preston Primary School	Asbestos removal	Project including 11 schools	430,846[2]
	Harewood Infant School	Asbestos removal	Project including 11 schools	430,846[2]
	The Links Primary School	Boiler plant replacement (single boiler installation)	Project including 10 schools	545,801[2]
	Oxbridge Lane Primary School	Asbestos removal	Project including 11 schools	430,846[2]
	Egglescliffe Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School	Boiler plant replacement (single boiler installation)	Project including 10 schools	545,801[2]
	St. Cuthbert's RC Voluntary Aided Primary School	Boiler plant replacement (single boiler installation)	Project including 10 schools	545,801[2]
	St. Mark's Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School, Stockton	Boiler plant replacement (single boiler installation)	Project including 10 schools	545,801[2]
2000–01	Conyers School	Replacement of 11 temporary classrooms		1,021,668
	St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Primary School, Thornaby	Replacement of asbestos roof tiles		16,430
	Preston Primary School	Replacement of obsolete/leaking boilerplant and asbestos insulation	Project including 10 schools	678,800[2]
	Christ The King RC Primary School	Replacement of obsolete/leaking boilerplant and asbestos insulation	Project including 10 schools	678,800[2]
	Egglescliffe School	Replacement of obsolete/leaking boilerplant and asbestos insulation	Project including 10 schools	678,800[2]
	Grangefield School	Replacement of obsolete/leaking boilerplant and asbestos insulation	Project including 10 schools	678,800[2]
	Ian Ramsey Church of England Aided Comprehensive School	Replacement of obsolete/leaking boilerplant and asbestos insulation	Project including 10 schools	678,800[2]

[1] For NDS 1 grant was allocated for Stockton LEA-wide projects, part of which was used for work at each of three schools in the Stockton South constituency. The LEA will be able to say how much was allocated to each school.
[2] Allocations shown are the totals for packages of projects within Stockton LEA which included the schools shown that are in the Stockton South constituency. The LEA will be able to say how much was allocated to each school.

Student Finance

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to his Answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 51W, on student finance, if he will make a statement on the outcome of his discussions with Scottish Ministers. [171114]

Alan Johnson: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education and Skills and the Deputy First Minister agreed that the Scottish Executive and the Department for Education and Skills would keep each other informed as they develop their policies on HE funding, and that the programme of Ministerial meetings on cross border issues would continue.

Student Grants

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the evidential basis is for the estimation that 30 per cent. of full-time students will receive full combined grant in 2006/07. [169245]

Alan Johnson: Our estimate that around 30 per cent. of students will be eligible for the full grant of £2,700 in 2006/07 has been produced using:

a specially commissioned survey from a sample of LEAs providing details of the actual incomes of students used in the assessment for entitlement to student support in 2002/03;

Family Resources Survey (FRS) data to estimate the effects of changes to the definition of income introduced in 2004/05;

forecasts of future inflation rates

estimates of future earnings growth;

The estimate does not take into account possible future changes in the demand for higher education from different income groups.

Sustainable Development

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps his Department is taking to promote the delivery of sustainable development within Government. [166785]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: My Department is implementing an Environmental Management System at each of its sites. Various initiatives are in place within DfES to promote sustainable development within Government, including publicity on the internet, our internal website and hard copy notices and posters in all buildings.

In addition we operate a number of recycling schemes. All of our toner and printer cartridges and our spent fluorescent tubes and light bulbs are recycled and the revenue generated contributes to costs incurred. Other initiatives include recycling cans, paper, batteries and textiles and we are constantly reviewing the position to extend the range of items recycled.

Teachers

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many vacant *(a)* head teacher, *(b)* deputy head teacher and *(c)* teacher posts there were in (i) primary, (ii) secondary, (iii) special and (iv) all schools, expressed as a percentage of the total number of each, in each year since 1997, broken down by local education authority. [167573]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested has been placed in the Libraries. It shows deputy head teacher and classroom teacher vacancy rates in maintained nursery and primary, secondary and special schools by local education authority. Rates have not been provided for head and deputy head teachers in special schools because of the very small numbers involved. There were 10 head teacher vacancies in special schools in England in 2003 and 20 deputy head vacancies. For 2004 overall vacancy rates for head teachers were 0.5 per cent., deputy heads 0.8 per cent. and classroom teachers 0.7 per cent.. Overall vacancy rates by LEA will be published later in the year.

Teaching Assistants

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching assistants there were in schools in South Ribble in *(a)* each of the last seven years and *(b)* on the latest date for which figures are available. [171709]

Mr. Miliband: The following table gives the numbers of full time equivalent teaching assistants in maintained schools in South Ribble constituency in January of each year between 1997 and 2003, the latest year for which data are available.

1997	70
1998	70
1999	90
2000	90
2001	120
2002	100
2003	200

Source:
Annual Schools' Census.

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching assistants there were in West Lancashire schools in each of the last seven years; and what the current figure is. [171489]

Mr. Miliband: The following table gives the numbers of full time equivalent teaching assistants in maintained schools in the West Lancashire constituency in January of each year between 1997 and 2003, the latest year for which data are available.

	Number
1997	140
1998	150
1999	160
2000	180
2001	220
2002	180
2003	300

Source:
Annual Schools' Census.

University Students

Jeff Ennis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students from Barnsley East and Mexborough are attending university; and how many of these students pay *(a)* no tuition fee and *(b)* a partial tuition fee. [170659]

Alan Johnson: In England and Wales students on full-time undergraduate courses and their families are expected to make a contribution towards the cost of their tuition only if they can afford to do so.

For entry in 2002, there were 776 applicants domiciled in Barnsley LEA who were accepted through UCAS to full-time first degree and HND courses at UK institutions.

The number and percentages of students in England and Wales in academic year 2002–03 (latest year for which data are available) who have been assessed to make a nil or partial contribution towards the cost of their tuition is shown in the table:

England and Wales: academic year 2002–03[1]

	Student support scheme student numbers thousands[2]	*Student support scheme students Percentage*[2]
Nil contribution towards the cost of tuition from student/parents/ spouse/ partner[3]	330	43
Partial contribution towards the cost of tuition from student/ parents/spouse/partner	116	15

[1] Provisional.
[2] Contributions towards the cost of tuition are assessed by local education authorities in England and Wales for students normally domiciled in their area and studying in the UK.
[3] Includes students on courses where the fee support was not subject to income-assessment (e.g. PGCE courses, and some other ITT courses; and designated courses at private institutions).
Source:
F503G survey of local education authorities.

National level data are published annually in the Department's Statistical First Releases.

Data are collected from the local education authorities (LEAs) to produce national estimates and the data collection exercise does not allow for the production of firm figures below this level, and therefore data by constituency or local education authority are not available.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

St. Helena

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the £26.3 million previously committed by the British Government towards the building of an airport on St. Helena and if he will make a statement. [170215]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: It was included, as a possible DFID contribution, in last year's international invitation for possible private sector participation in developing air access for St. Helena. I announced on 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1WS, that none of the responses offered a basis upon which, with DFID

financial assistance as described in the invitation, DFID might enter negotiations. Instead, we are now investigating and costing all options to follow expected withdrawal of the present ship from service by around the turn of the decade, including possible development of air access through alternative arrangements. A specialist team will arrive on the island later this week to progress this work and to initiate geo-technical investigations on a possible airport site.

Africa

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what evaluation has been carried out of the value to developing countries in Africa of the *(a)* United States American Growth and Opportunity Act and *(b)* EU Everything But Arms Initiative. [169723]

Hilary Benn: A publication of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) entitled: "Trade Preferences for LDCs: an early assessment of benefits and possible improvements" reference UNCTAD/ITCD/TSB/2003/8, published in 2003, includes an early assessment of the United States American Growth and Opportunity Act.

The Everything But Arms Initiative (EBA) is delivered through the EU's Generalised Scheme of Preferences arrangement (GSP). The GSP is subject to an annual reporting mechanism. The most recent annual report covering the period of 1 July 1999 to 31 December 2001 was produced by the European Commission on 6 June 2003. Given that the EBA initiative was introduced in March 2001, the analysis on EBA is limited in this report.

There is also some analysis, albeit limited because of similar problems in collecting the most recent data, contained in the UNCTAD publication referred to above.

Aid Projects (Asia)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what aid projects his Department expects to develop in Asia during the next three years; and if he will make a statement. [171246]

Hilary Benn: DFID's bilateral programmes in Asia are focused on helping countries achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Projected spend on bilateral programmes in Asia, excluding countries of the former Soviet Union and Iraq, are:

DFID allocation by programme

£000

South and East Asia and Pacific	*2003–04 Estimated Outturns*	*2004–05 Plans*	*2005–06 Plans*
Afghanistan	72,000	75,000	75,000
Bangladesh	65,000	100,000	100,000
China	26,000	45,200	35,200
India	197,000	250,000	280,000
Nepal	26,000	35,000	47,000
Pakistan	64,000	70,000	74,000
Asia Other[1]	56,000	93,700	106,900
Asia Directorate[2,3]	4,000	15,000	15,000
Asia Performance Fund Reserve	4,000	13,100	51,900
Total	514,000	697,000	785,000

2003/04 Estimated

[1] Includes country programmes for Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia and Burma

[2] Includes 2003–04 movement in working capital for the division

[3] Covers regional funds and programmes including the Pacific region

Source:

DFID Departmental Report 2004 (http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Pubs/files/dr2004 default.htm)

DFID's published Country Assistance Plans (CAPs) give details of proposed activities in the larger bilateral country programmes. Copies are placed in the House of Commons library. Finalised CAPs for Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India and Vietnam and draft CAPs for Burma and Nepal are available at: http://www.dfid.gov.uk/News/Consultations/files/caps.htm. CAPs for other recipients of significant bilateral aid in Asia are currently under preparation.

Children's Welfare

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the children's parliament in Malawi in influencing public policy there. [171693]

Hilary Benn: DFID has not made an assessment of the effectiveness of the children's parliament in Malawi in influencing public policy.

In Malawi, DFID prioritises support for the National Assembly, particularly to enable parliamentary committees to fulfil their oversight function and to strengthen citizen's interaction with Parliament. Through membership of the Government of Malawi Task Force on Support for Parliament, DFID notes that UNICEF prioritises support for the children's parliament in Malawi.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the contribution made by children to the improvement of sanitary practice in Bangladesh. [171698]

Hilary Benn: An estimated 110,000 children under five die each year from diarrhoeal disease in Bangladesh. In 1990 the figure was much higher at 260,000.

There are a number of reasons for this improvement; access to improved water supplies increased from 94 per cent. to 97 per cent. and access to improved sanitation rose from 41 per cent. to 48 per cent. Improved hygiene behaviour also makes as important contribution but one which is more difficult to assess. One indicator is the use of soap or ash for hand washing after defecation—surveys suggest a current figure of 26 per cent. for Bangladesh.

The individual contribution made by children in achieving the above improvements cannot be separated out. However, the DFID Bangladesh Water and Sanitation programme explicitly recognises their important role in promoting improvements in sanitary practice. For instance:

(i) DFID's programme with UNICEF and the Bangladesh Department of Public Health Engineering includes a School Sanitation and Hygiene Education component, through which children are encouraged to monitor sanitary practices in their immediate neighbourhoods, and

(ii) DFID has been supporting an NGO (PHULKI) through our programme with WaterAid, which works explicitly with the children of garment workers, using child-to-child approaches for hygiene promotion.

Commonwealth Development Corporation

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether the re-organisation of the Commonwealth Development Corporation has been completed. [171687]

Hilary Benn: The legal documents to establish the Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC)'s new investment management company, Actis were signed on 2 April 2004. These will formalise the new arrangements that I advised Parliament about in my statement of 8 January 2004. However, there are a number of 'conditions precedent' that must be met before the documents can take legal effect. These are largely administrative measures and CDC and DFID staff are now working through with these. It is expected to complete them by the end of June. I shall make a further statement to Parliament at that time and I shall also be placing the relevant documents into the Library.

Departmental Expenditure (Entertainment)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his latest estimate is of the amount spent by his Department on official entertainment in each year from 1996–97 to 2004–05. [168997]

Hilary Benn: The following table shows recorded expenditure by DFID on entertainment for the years in question, to the nearest £000.

	£
1996–97	10,000
1997–98	24,000
1998–99	43,000
1999–2000	62,000
2000–01	48,000
2001–02	55,000
2002–03	82,000

In 2003–04 DFID introduced a new method of assessing administration costs, which had previously been recorded on programme budgets. This included entertainment expenditure previously incurred by overseas offices. The provisional figure for 2003–04 was £246,000 and the projected figure for 2004–05 is £261,000. These changes have increased transparency and will enable DFID to manage administrative costs more effectively, but they mean that the 2003–04 figures and 2004–05 projections are not comparable with earlier years.

The upward trend in entertainment expenditure reflects DFID's increased focus on wider development issues, and the expansion in its representation overseas; with increased devolution to a growing number of country offices.

All expenditure on official entertainment is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on the principles set out in Government Accounting.

Ghana

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what work his Department is supporting to improve literacy in Ghana. [171247]

Hilary Benn: DFID is preparing a new programme of £50 million over five years in support of the Government of Ghana's Education Strategic Plan (ESP). Increasing literacy is a key basic education target of the ESP. This programme follows DFID's five year £50 million Education Sector Support Programme, which similarly aimed to improve literacy levels.

DFID also provided £200,000 between 2000 and 2003 towards the Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy and Bible Translation Literacy Programme, which worked on adult literacy among 34 minority language groups.

A recent survey has shown an improvement in literacy from 48 per cent. of Ghanaians aged 15 or above in 1997–8 to 53 per cent. in 2003.

Global Fund

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what research his Department has conducted on *(a)* the amount of disbursements made by the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in 2003 and *(b)* the amount of money actually spent by recipient governments; and if he will publish his findings. [171210]

Hilary Benn: As a partner and Board member of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, DFID does not conduct its own separate research on the amount of disbursements made by the Global Fund or on money spent by recipient governments. The Global Fund is a public and private partnership and DFID works collaboratively with other partners through the Board to ensure that the financial reporting systems of the Fund are strong and transparent.

DFID is an active member of the Monitoring, Evaluation, Finance and Audit (MEFA) Committee of the Fund. Part of the mandate of this Committee is to review the Global Fund's performance, including areas such as financial audit and results-based disbursement.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much has been pledged to the Global Fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria; how much has been disbursed by the Global Fund; and how much has been spent on administration costs in that period. [171211]

Hilary Benn: The total amount pledged to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria is currently US$5.3 billion. Disbursements by the Global Fund currently total US$ 285 million.

Administration costs are kept low and are subject to regular review by the Board. DFID expects these costs to decrease over time as disbursement accelerates. For 2002, they were US$12.8 million and for 2003 they were US$31.8 million. Costs for the first quarter of 2004 were US$10 million. Operating costs are expected to decline as grant expenditure increases. The Global Fund operates in a transparent way and information—including budgets for its operating expenses—can be viewed on the Global Fund website at www.theglobalfund.org.

Heavily Indebted Poor Countries

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when in 2004 he estimates the Department's objective of securing relief of unsustainable debt for all heavily indebted poor countries will be achieved. [171690]

Hilary Benn: DFID's current Public Service Agreement with HM Treasury sets the target of working to ensure that three-quarters of all eligible Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPCs) committed to poverty reduction receive irrevocable debt relief by 2006. DFID is on track to meet this target.

While progress in implementing the HIPC Initiative has not been as rapid as previously projected, the number of countries reaching Completion Point—the point at which irrevocable debt relief is granted—has increased in recent months. Five countries have reached Completion Point since December 2003 and DFID expects a further five before the end of this year. This would bring the number of countries at Completion Point to 18 out of the 27 eligible countries that have already passed Decision Point. Of the remaining nine countries, it is estimated that all will reach Completion Point by end 2006.

Iraq

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) how many international aid workers have left the British controlled sector of Southern Iraq in the last month; [171153]

(2) how many international aid workers have left Iraq in the last month; [171155]

(3) how many international aid workers there were in the British controlled sector of Iraq on the latest date for which figures are available; [171154]

(4) how many international aid workers there were in Iraq on the latest date for which figures are available. [171156]

Hilary Benn: Comprehensive statistics are not available on the numbers of people working for donor agencies in Iraq, nor of their movements in and out of the country.

In addition to the deployment of their own staff, many donors, including DFID, contract individuals and companies to work in Iraq on particular projects and programmes for specific periods of time. The number of people working for each donor in Iraq is likely to vary from week to week.

We are aware that some people working on reconstruction in Iraq may have left the country over the last month as a result of increased security concerns, and others may be delaying their arrival pending a stabilisation of the situation.

DFID temporarily delayed the deployment of some consultancy staff during April. However, no staff have been withdrawn, and essential workers took up or resumed their postings in late April.

Over the next two months, DFID aims to reduce the number of personnel seconded to the Coalition Provisional Authority as part of the process of handing over authority to an Iraqi Interim Government.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what his estimate is of the level of unemployment in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* the British-controlled sector of Iraq immediately before the start of the recent conflict; [171172]

(2) what his estimate is of the level of unemployment in the British-controlled sector of Iraq immediately after the cessation of hostilities in the recent conflict; [171173]

(3) what his estimate is of the current level of unemployment in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* the British controlled sector of Iraq; [171179]

(4) what the level of unemployment in Iraq was immediately after the cessation of hostilities in the recent conflict; [171180]

(5) what his estimate is of the level of *(a)* female unemployment, *(b)* male unemployment and *(c)* unemployment among workers under the age of 30 in (i) Iraq and (ii) the British-controlled sector of Iraq immediately after the end of hostilities in the recent conflict; [171181]

(6) what his estimate is of the level of unemployment in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* the British-controlled sector of Iraq immediately before the start of the recent conflict for (i) males, (ii) females and (iii) workers under the age of 30; [171182]

(7) what his estimate is of the level of female unemployment in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* the British-controlled sector of Iraq for workers under the age of 30; [171195]

(8) what his estimate is of the level of *(a)* male and *(b)* female unemployment in (i) the British controlled sector of Iraq and (ii) Iraq. [171203]

Hilary Benn: No official figures on the Iraqi labour force exist, so only very broad estimates of unemployment are available. It is not possible to break these down accurately by age, gender or geographic region.

Current estimates suggest that total unemployment levels now are broadly similar to those before the 2003 war. The United Nations and World Bank social and economic needs assessments, which were undertaken after the conflict last year, estimated that the unemployment rate before the 2003 war was around 30 per cent. Current unemployment rates are unofficially estimated at between 20 and 30 per cent. It is believed however that the rate may well be higher for those under 20-years-old.

It is estimated that women make up only 20 to 25 per cent. of the workforce but figures are not available on the numbers of women seeking work, who would be classified as unemployed.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what proportion of international aid workers based in the British-controlled sector of Southern Iraq are Iraqi citizens; [171176]

(2) what proportion of international aid workers in Iraq are Iraqi citizens. [171177]

Hilary Benn: Comprehensive figures are not available on the nationalities of staff working for donor agencies in Iraq. For several agencies, such as United Nations bodies, the World Bank and some NGOs, only Iraqi national staff are working in Iraq at present. In other cases, such as DFID and USAID, non-Iraqi staff are also working in-country.

DFID aims to increase, as far as practicable, the numbers of Iraqis working on our reconstruction programmes.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what the level of inflation is in Iraq; [171198]

(2) what the level of inflation was in Iraq immediately before the start of the recent conflict. [171204]

Hilary Benn: The pre-2003 conflict inflation rate is estimated to have been between 20 and 30 per cent. although the data is not considered to be very reliable. The Coalition Provisional Authority is working on the development of sound methodologies for measuring inflation in Iraq's post-Saddam era.

Mr. John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what proportion of Iraqi households have access to running water; [171199]

(2) what proportion of Iraqi households in the British-controlled sector of Iraq currently have access to *(a)* running water and *(b)* electricity; [171200]

(3) what proportion of Iraqi households in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* the British controlled sector of Iraq had access to (i) running water and (ii) electricity immediately before the start of the recent conflict. [171201]

Hilary Benn: Until the Gulf War in 1991 safe water was accessible to over 95 per cent. of the urban and 75 per cent. of the rural population of Iraq. The last reliable pre-conflict figures are for the year 2000 when urban and rural coverage had dropped to 92 per cent. and 46 per cent. respectively. Deterioration of the system had been particularly severe in the south, including Basra, due to the discriminatory policies of the former regime.

Access to safe water deteriorated further as a result of the conflict in 2003 and the subsequent looting. Estimates suggest that the immediate post-conflict coverage was 60 per cent. for urban and 30 per cent. for rural populations.

Considerable work has taken place since the end of the conflict to improve the quantity, quality and reliability of water supplies. There are no reliable statistics of current coverage, but informal estimates by the Coalition Provisional Authority (South) indicate that, in the south, coverage has increased by 10–15 per cent. since May 2003. By the summer of 2004, water quality and volume in Basra is expected to have exceeded pre-conflict levels.

The electricity supply in Iraq is measured by total power generated and the number of hours per day for which power is available. Recent reports by the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) record that average electricity production is in the region of 4,000 megawatts (MW), approximately the same as before the 2003 conflict. A number of generating units are undergoing maintenance and should be back in service by the summer peak demand period. The CPA power generation target for 1 June 2004 is 6,000 MW, significantly above the pre-conflict levels.

The most recent figures for the availability of power by governorate are as follows:

	Average hours of power available per day as of 1 April 2004	*Megawatts*
Southern Governorates under British Control		
Multanna	18	59
Basrah	24	258
Dhi Qar	20	103
Maysan	20	64
Najaf	13	88
Other Governorates under British Control		
Najaf	13	88
Qadisiyah	14	60
Wasit	11	86
Karbala	19	84
Babil	15	100
Anbar	15	175
Salah Ad Din	15	210
Baghdad	17	1,155
Dyala	15	98
Naynawa	15	360
Dahok	14	90
Arbil	16	—
Tamim	16	134
Sulamaniyah	16	—

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the total amount of investment has been in the Iraqi *(a)* public, *(b)* private and *(c)* voluntary sector, over the past year. [171202]

Hilary Benn: Statistics are not available on aggregate levels of investment by sector in Iraq.

Maldives

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much aid has been provided by *(a)* the UK and *(b)* the EU to the Maldives Government in each of the last three years. [172053]

Hilary Benn: The information is as follows:

(a) UK bilateral assistance to the Maldives totalled £286,000 in 2000–01, £83,000 in 2001–02 and £195,000 in 2002–03. Data for 2003–04 is not available yet for publication. UK assistance is part of the Small Grants Scheme, administered locally by the High Commission on behalf of DFID for poverty alleviation. Funds go mainly to small projects and institutions.

(b) The European Union has given no aid to the Maldives government in 2000 and 2001. Data for 2002 and 2003 are not yet published.

Parliamentary Questions

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what proportion of *(a)* Ordinary Written Questions to his Department were

answered within five sitting days of tabling and *(b)* Questions for written answer on a named day received a substantive answer on that day in *(a)* the 2002–03 parliamentary session and *(b)* this parliamentary session, broken down by month. [171193]

Hilary Benn: We are unable to provide information in the format requested without incurring disproportionate cost. DFID endeavours to respond to all Parliamentary Questions within deadlines where possible. I refer the hon. Member for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross to the statement made by the Leader of the House on 3 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 907W.

Poverty Reduction

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list in ascending order of progress the 16 key countries in Sub-Saharan Africa for which the Millennium Development Goal on poverty reduction was set. [171681]

Hilary Benn: The PSA target for poverty reduction relates to the entire region of Sub-Saharan Africa and is not based on the 16 key countries because comparable data over time are not available at the country level. The latest figures show that the percentage of the population below $1 a day[1] in Sub-Saharan Africa is 49 per cent. (compared to a 1990 figure of 47.4 per cent.). The latest comparable figures for nine of our 16 key countries are given in the following table.

	Percentage of population below $1 a day[1]
South Africa	<2
Kenya	23.0
Mozambique	37.9
Malawi	41.7
Ghana	44.8
Zambia	63.7
Nigeria	70.2
Ethiopia	81.9
Uganda	82.2
Congo, DR	[2]
Lesotho	[2]
Rwanda	[2]
Sierra Leone	[2]
Sudan	[2]
Tanzania	[2]
Zimbabwe	[2]
Sub-Saharan Africa	49.0

[1] The percentage of the population living below the commonly used international $1 a day standard, measured in 1993 international prices and adjusted for local currency using purchasing power parities.
[2] Not available.

Primary Education

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions he has had on improving access to primary education; and if he will make a statement. [171016]

Hilary Benn: Discussion with international agencies, partner governments and civil society on improving access to primary education is a continuing priority. Recent examples include strengthening the Fast Track Initiative led by the World Bank; improving girl's education in collaboration with UNICEF in support of the 2005 gender equity MDG target; participating in the Global Campaign for Education for All (GCE), led by British NGOs, in which 460 MPs, and children's representatives took part; and providing education guidance for the Africa Commission.

Both the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State and I have also recently taken part in Parliamentary discussions—a Children's Parliament at Central Hall and an MPs' meeting, respectively—as part of the GCE Week of Action in April to discuss the importance of education for all children.

Progress has been made in many countries with global enrolment in primary education increasing from 596 million in 1990 to 648 million children in 2000. However, with over 100 million still out of school, much still remains to be done.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what progress has been made in providing primary education for girls in developing countries; and if he will make a statement. [164510]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Please accept my apologies for a slight error contained in the previous reply published on 31 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1429W.

Pursuant to that reply, the EFA Global Monitoring Report 200304 shows that the net enrolment ratio (NER) for girls' primary enrolment in developing countries has increased from 73.5 per cent. in 1990, to 78.9 per cent. in 2000. The ratio between girls and boys' enrolment rates, has also improved from 0.86 in 1990 to 0.93 in 2000 for primary education.

However, much still remains to be done. DFID is planning to increase its investment in primary education to £1 billion over the next four years.

Sustainable Development

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he is taking to promote the delivery of sustainable development within Government. [165432]

Hilary Benn: The Department for International Development works with other departments to assist in the delivery of Sustainable Development (SD).

The World Summit on Sustainable Development's Plan of Implementation provides the international framework for the promotion of sustainable development. The lead UK departments are DFID, DTI, FCO and Defra (coordinator), all represented on the Ministerial SD Task Force. DFID leads in four areas,

Water and sanitation

Integrating environment into poverty reduction strategies

Access to clean energy

Finance (volume and effectiveness of aid—joint lead with Treasury)

The UN Commission on Sustainable Development tracks progress on United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)/World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) follow-up (including MDGs). It works to a two-year cycle—progress review years followed by policy development years. The 2004–5 biennium covers (1) water and

sanitation, (2) human settlements, and (3) "Type 2" partnerships. DFID officials have been involved in the CSD 12 meetings just concluded (1/05/04).

HOME DEPARTMENT

Commission for Racial Equality

13. **Jeremy Corbyn:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the likely impact on staffing levels of changes to the budget of the Commission for Racial Equality. [171328]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office, like other public sector bodies, is seeking to improve Value for Money. As part of this, it has set itself a target to generate significant savings in administration costs, for redirection to support front line services, over the next three years.

We have agreed with Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) that, following a successful exercise last year to reduce its budget deficit, its administration costs should be reduced this year by 4.5 per cent., the same percentage as the Home Office. This will have some effect on staffing levels, which the CRE are assessing, but will not effect work to deliver key objectives.

CCTV

14. **Mr. Bill O'Brien:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what advice is given by his Department on the provision and funding of CCTV in urban areas; and if he will make a statement. [171329]

Caroline Flint: Since 1997, the Home Office has provided a variety of funding, which has been used to establish and run CCTV schemes in large and small urban areas, as well as residential and rural locations. Under the Crime Reduction Programme CCTV initiative, which ended in 2003, £170 million was invested in 684 CCTV schemes.

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships have funding of £72.3 million in 2003–04 and £74 million in 2004–05 available for crime reduction initiatives under the Building Safer Communities Fund, which could include CCTV, and £50 million per annum to police BCUs in 2003–04 and 2004–05.

Anti-Social Behaviour Act

15. **Mr. George Howarth:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the implementation of powers contained in the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003. [171330]

Mr. Blunkett: The majority of the powers in the Ant-Social Behaviour Act 2003 have now been commenced.

This is the biggest single package of measures in tackling anti-social behaviour. They have been introduced after widespread consultation with communities and practitioners. The new powers are part of the Government's "Together Campaign" to help local people and agencies tackle the menace of yob behaviour.

Migration (EU Accession States)

17. **Angela Watkinson:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the potential impact of migration from EU accession states on public services in the UK after 1 May. [171332]

Mr. Browne: The measures that we have taken to regulate the UK labour market and prevent access to benefits and housing by nationals of the accession countries who are not in work, should mean that nationals of those countries coming to the United Kingdom are likely, as a group, to place relatively low demands on key public services. They will also, of course, be contributing like everyone else to the costs of those services by the taxes they pay.

Police Recruitment

18. **Mr. Bellingham:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on police recruitment policy. [171333]

Fiona Mactaggart: Our general policy is to ensure that our national recruitment standards programme attracts recruits in sufficient number and of the right quality. In particular, our policy is to encourage more ethnic minority, graduate and female applicants to the Police Service and ensure that police officer numbers do not fall below current record levels.

Recruitment policy is drawn up in consultation with the Association of Chief Police Officers and the Association of Police Authorities.

Sex Offenders

20. **Mrs. Helen Clark:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the resettlement of sex offenders within the community. [171335]

Paul Goggins: Those who receive a prison sentence of 12 months or more are supervised by the National Probation Service on their release from custody. Those who are assessed as the highest risk are supervised under the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements. The provision of stable accommodation is a major factor in the resettlement of offenders and approved probation and bail hostels have a key role to play.

Serious Organised Crime Agency

21. **Phil Sawford:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the proposed Serious Organised Crime Agency. [171336]

Paul Goggins: Serious organised crime poses a substantial and sophisticated threat to the UK. The Serious Organised Crime Agency will provide an effective response by reducing organisational boundaries, linking intelligence and operations, and providing a single point of contact for all matters related to such crimes.

Persistent Arsonists

22. **Hywel Williams:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the current aftercare of persistent arsonists; and if he will make a statement. [171337]

Caroline Flint: The Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements we established in 2001 have provided the means by which all agencies involved in protecting the public from offenders—including persistent arsonists—can co-ordinate their efforts and provide a much closer supervision of high-risk offenders.

The OPDM-led Arson Control Forum (established in April 2001) provides the strategic direction of the national fight against arson. The forum has also invested a total of £9.3 million in local arson prevention over three years.

We will also be identifying young people with targeted measures before they become involved in offending as part of our new Prolific and Priority Offender Strategy.

Terrorism (Mental Illness)

23. **Harry Cohen:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he proposes to take in respect of the arrangements for individuals suspected of having a terrorist connection or intent who may be deemed to be suffering from mental illness. [171338]

Mr. Blunkett: The prisons where those suspected of terrorist connections or intent are held have good medical facilities providing 24-hour cover. In addition, prisons have access to relevant hospitals, including secure hospitals, where referral is appropriate on medical grounds. Provisions therefore exist to deal with any mental or other health problems regardless of the reasons for detention.

Where an individual is not detained in prison he will be treated within the national health system.

Anti-Social Behaviour

24. **Gareth Thomas:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures are being taken to build up local expertise in measures to tackle anti-social behaviour. [171339]

Mr. Blunkett: Tackling anti-social behaviour is a key priority for the Government. That is why we have launched the Together Campaign, ensuring local practitioners gain real expertise in tackling anti-social behaviour.

A key part of the Together Campaign is the Together Academy and Actionline. The academies are designed to train front-line workers in the use of new and existing powers. In total there were 10 events held during March 2004 across England and Wales, training just over 2,000 academy graduates.

The Actionline ensures new and existing powers and best practice are used and understood. There have been over 1,000 since March.

The campaign will help improve the response to tackling anti-social behaviour by placing the focus within the heart of our communities and providing them with the opportunity to work together and also the tools to take action to tackle anti-social behaviour.

We have provided funding for every crime and disorder partnership across England and Wales and introduced specialist anti-social behaviour prosecutors to develop local expertise.

Criminal Justice Interventions Programme

25. **Mr. Michael Jabez Foster:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made on extending the criminal justice interventions programme. [171340]

Caroline Flint: Criminal Justice Interventions Programme (CJIP) was successfully introduced into 30 areas with the highest levels of acquisitive crime in April 2003. The full programme—which includes drug testing on charge, arrest referral and through care and aftercare packages—has been expanded to a further 36 areas in April 2004. In the CJIP areas, waiting times for treatment have fallen significantly over the past year and the numbers starting treatment increased by 47 per cent.

Alcohol-related Violence

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what further action he proposes to reduce alcohol-related violence. [171334]

Mr. Blunkett: In March the Government launched the national alcohol harm reduction strategy for England. We intend to work together with all our stakeholders including the alcohol industry to implement all the recommendations in the strategy.

At the end of April, I announced a clampdown to be led by Paul Evans, the former Police Chief, who was so successful in achieving results in Massachusetts.

This will be a concerted enforcement campaign in the early summer to tackle under age drinking and selling alcohol to those already drunk. We want to rid our town centres of late night alcohol related violence. We will also work closely with local authorities, licencees and retailers to ensure that the full powers of the law are used effectively.

Advertising Campaigns

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the estimated cost of the current police advertising campaign warning of the dangers of terrorism is; and from which budget that cost is being met. [164278]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 31 March 2004]:* There are currently two publicity campaigns that are being run warning of the danger of terrorism. One is the Life Savers Campaign and the other is the "Who owns this Bag?" campaign. The total cost of these campaigns is estimated at £355,500 and is being met jointly by the Metropolitan Police Service, the City of London Police, the British Transport Police, Transport for London and the Association of Chief Police Officers.

Ammonium Nitrate

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had on the security implications of the commercial sale of ammonium nitrate fertiliser. [166840]

Ms Blears: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Elliot Morley) on 28 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1002W.

Criminal Record Checks

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he plans to charge charities for criminal record checks. [169860]

Ms Blears: The Criminal Records Bureau charges a fee for all Disclosures, except that Disclosures are issued free in the case of volunteers. We have no plans to charge volunteers.

Departmental Computers

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to update computer *(a)* hardware and *(b)* software standard packages used in his Department. [166364]

Fiona Mactaggart: In line with Government procurement policy most Information Communication Technology (ICT) in the Home Office is now delivered through service contracts which include a requirement to update both software and hardware to ensure that technologies are kept up to date and do not reach end of usable life. While there are major projects managing step changes of both software and hardware there is also ongoing work to ensure that both are up to date and relevant to the business use the ICT is being put to. The extent to which either is fully up to date depends on the relevance of up to date technologies to Government business requirements. All ICT investments need also to pass the test of best value and be subject to appropriate investment justification.

The following table illustrates updates to software and hardware planned or under consideration.

Home Office area	*Updates planned or under consideration*
Core Home Office and parts of Immigration and Nationality Directorate	On going programme of server infrastructure, desktop hardware and software refreshment underway, affecting all core Home Office users and approximately 7,000 IND users.
Immigration and Nationality	The current ICT service provider contract for the IND caseworking system expires shortly. Competitive tendering process for ongoing ICT service provision is in hand. An upgrade of network, desktop and server hardware and software are planned as part of contract.
National Offender Management—Prisons Service	Infrastructure rollout of PC's and telephones has completed. Service contract has a requirement for upgrade to hardware and software on two more occasions during the contract lifecycle.
National Offender Management—Probation Service	An ongoing programme upgrading servers, desktops and printers across the estate is underway. Latest versions of Microsoft Windows will be deployed on desktops.
United Kingdom Passport Service	Consideration underway for moving networks away Windows NT and for desktop refreshment replacing current ICT before end of useful life.

Departmental Procurement Policy (Sea Bass)

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his Department's policy to source sea bass used in catering outlets for which his Department is responsible from hand-line fishermen rather than pair trawlers. [167541]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office does not serve sea bass in any of the catering outlets for which it is responsible. Should this position change the Home Office would follow Department for Environment, Foods and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) policy, who are the lead Department on fisheries issues, on sourcing sea bass as follows:

> Defra supports the sourcing of sea bass from sustainable fisheries and handlining, as a relatively low impact method of fishing, can play a part in ensuring fisheries remain sustainable. However, the last report in 2003 by the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas on sea bass advised that the level of exploitation of the stock at that time was sustainable and did not recommend closure of the offshore pair trawl fishery. There are currently no restrictions at a UK or Community level on the method of fishing that can be used to target bass. In addition, to address the dolphin bycatch problem associated with the pair trawl fishery, Defra-funded trials of a separate grid device to reduce dolphin bycatch are currently taking place, with the co-operation of the fishing industry.

In these circumstances, Defra's policy is not to recommend a specific source of supply for sea bass at this stage.

Drugs

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the estimated level of drugs-driven crime for the UK was in each of the last five years for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [168726]

Caroline Flint: Recorded crime figures, which are used to measure trends in crime, include statistics on drugs offences, such as possession, and on property crimes, such as burglary, but do not record whether the latter are related to an offender's drug habits. There are therefore no figures currently available for levels of drug-driven crime over the last five years.

The Home Office sponsored New English and Welsh Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (NEW-ADAM) survey, which involved interviewing and drug testing those arrested by the police, provides an insight into the proportion of crimes that are drug related. However, these figures are not nationally representative.

Analysis of the data from the first eight sites in the survey, collected during 1999–2000, showed that 65 per cent. of arrestees tested positive for one or more illegal drug, with up to 29 per cent. testing positive for opiates (including heroin) and/or cocaine (including crack). Those arrestees reporting no drug use in the year before this study reported an average of 46 acquisitive crimes compared to 432 among heroin and/or cocaine/crack users.

Identity Cards

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information he has collated on countries which have suffered terrorism since 1986 and which, while suffering from terrorism, used identity cards; and which of these countries used cards with biometric data. [169728]

Mr. Blunkett *[holding answer 29 April 2004]:* Unfortunately, the information requested is not available. Neither the Home Office nor the Foreign Office have records on terrorist incidents which date back to 1986.

The Government has made it clear that the key to an effective identity card scheme is the security of the issuing process and rigorous and consistent procedures for using the card, together with the inclusion of biometrics stored on a central database.

This is where the proposals for a UK identity card scheme differ from card schemes in many other countries which do not have the kind of biometric security that is proposed for the UK scheme.

The Government believes that a secure identity card scheme would disrupt the use of false identities by terrorist organisations, for example in the money laundering and organised crime, which support terrorist activities.

As I set out in my evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee on 4 May 2004, this is an assessment shared by the Director General of the Security Service and indeed also by the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police.

Internet Watch Foundation

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what analysis he has undertaken of the Internet Watch Foundation's Annual Report 2004; and if he will make a statement. [166799]

Ms Blears: We welcome the Annual Report of the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) 2003, which was published in March 2004, and congratulate the IWF on their achievements.

The report shows a continued increase in the number of reports made to the IWF, to just under 20,000 in 2003. The report also highlights the fact that only 1 per cent. of illegal content identified by IWF in 2003 was hosted in the UK: this represents a significant improvement from 18 per cent. in 1997, and demonstrates the willingness of UK industry to work effectively to remove illegal content. These figures also demonstrate the continuing need for international co-operation to deal with illegal content on the internet: the report shows that the IWF themselves have active partnerships with hotlines and other agencies abroad, and support the UK police in their efforts to encourage such co-operation.

Overall, the report clearly shows the value of a co-operative approach involving a wide variety of partners in combating child pornography on the Internet and other illegal content. It shows a welcome increase in the number and range of companies supporting the IWF, and particularly the involvement of companies from sectors not previously engaged with the IWF. The involvement of such groups as mobile telecommunications providers, search engines and the finance industry in discussions with the IWF and others to reduce access to illegal content is further demonstration of the value of this approach.

Prisons

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessments of *(a)* Private Finance Initiative and *(b)* market testing have been carried out by the Prison Service since January 2000; who carried out the work; and what the main findings were. [167363]

Paul Goggins: In late 2000 the Prison Service commissioned Patrick Carter, then a non-executive director of the Strategy Board for Correctional Services, to consider how best to develop the contribution of the private sector, particularly the Private Finance Initiative (PFI), to achieving the objectives of the Prison Service. Mr. Carter reported in January 2001. The main findings relevant to the question were that past market tests demonstrated beyond doubt the value of the competitive process in driving down costs and improving performance in public sector prisons, that PFI had proved successful in attracting capital investment and delivering high quality prisons and that competition should continue. Ministers welcomed the report.

Security Services

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proposals he has to provide more information to the public on the protection work done by the security services. [166036]

Mr. Blunkett: The Security Service (MI5) has a long standing role and depth of experience in providing protective security advice to Government and those sectors of the business community critical to the national infrastructure. The service has recently expanded its work in this area into a new structure, the National Security Advice Centre (NSAC). As part of the expansion, the service launched its upgrade website (www.mi5.gov.uk) on 30 April. This provides a substantial body of material offering practical advice on sensible security precautions for business organisations and anyone with responsibility for the safety of others. Its purpose is to put the terrorist threat into context and set out sensible security precautions. The website is publicly accessible and will be updated regularly.

The website complements information for the public on the Home Office, UK Resilience, Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Metropolitan Police sites. It represents a further step forward in the drive to put more information about the terrorist threat in the public domain. Advice on protection against electronic attack will remain the responsibility of the National Infrastructure Security Co-ordination Centre (NISCC) (www.niscc.gov.uk).

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Security Threat (Mox Plutonium)

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether she has initiated a review of the security of the sea transport of Mox plutonium fuels in response to the heightened international threat from terrorism. [171652]

Mr. Timms: Any such future shipment will be carried out in accordance with the Nuclear Industries Security Regulations 2003, which are administered and enforced by The Office for Civil Nuclear Security (OCNS). OCNS will not allow a shipment to proceed until all necessary security measures, commensurate with the threat pertaining at the time, are in place. It is Government policy not to disclose details of these security arrangements.

Berkeley Nuclear Research Laboratories

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what physical protection measures exist at the Berkeley nuclear research laboratories in Gloucestershire against the accidental or deliberate crash of an aircraft onto the site; and whether these have been enhanced since 2002. [171649]

Mr. Timms: The UK's civil nuclear sites apply stringent security measures regulated by the Office for Civil Nuclear Security (OCNS), the security regulator. The security regulator works closely with the Health and Safety Executive, the safety regulator, which provides advice on the safety implications of events, including external hazards such as plane crashes, at nuclear installations. Security at nuclear sites is kept under regular review in the light of the prevailing threat and has been significantly enhanced since the terrorist attacks in the USA on 11 September 2001. It is Government policy not to disclose details of these measures which could potentially be of use to terrorists.

Businesses

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many businesses have started up in Wigan since 1997; [169315]

(2) how many new businesses have been established in Wigan since 1997. [169317]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales, including 500 in Wigan Local Authority (which contains the constituency of Wigan), in the fourth quarter of 2003. The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before. There were 1,900 business start-ups in Wigan Local Authority in 2003. Data for Local Authorities are not available for before 2003.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Wigan Local Authority (which includes the constituency of Wigan) are shown below for the period 1997 to 2002. Data for 2003 will be available in Autumn 2004.

VAT Registrations: 1997–2002

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Wigan	640	635	620	670	580	630

Source:

Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and de-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government has taken to help small businesses in Sittingbourne and Sheppey since 1997. [170292]

Nigel Griffiths: Enterprise Grants of more than £391,000 and Research and Development Grants of more than £587,000 have been awarded to SME's in Sittingbourne and Sheppey since 1997. In addition, an application for a Freight Facilities grant (to enable businesses to transport their goods by means other than by road) resulted in a company receiving more that £403,000.

The total number of businesses in Swale is currently 3,828. Penetration of the business population by Business Link Kent has increased fourfold since 1997. The number of unique businesses that have been assisted by the Business Link has risen from 9 per cent. in 1997–98 to 36 per cent. in 2003–04.

Around 60 businesses have been recognised and 52 committed to Investors in People (KP) during the period as a result of an intervention with Business Link Kent.

In the past two years, a number of specific European funded programmes have significantly assisted 28 companies in Sittingbourne and Sheppey by providing Mentors who have undertaken various projects in the companies to enable them to develop their business.

Women Entrepreneurs in Swale were targeted in a programme during 2001–02, 128 women attended and 26 new businesses started as a result.

Coalminers' Compensation

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many respiratory test centres have been paid by her Department for medical assessment for the coalminers' compensation scheme; by whom they are run; and what Government payments they have received. [170786]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* At present, the Department's respiratory disease medical providers are Atos Origin who are currently responsible for 29 test centres and two mobile test centres. The total cost to the Department for the provision of the medical assessment process since 1999 is £146 million.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of claimants have received *(a)* interim payments and *(b)* full and final settlements of the claims registered by the top 10 solicitors, determined by number of claims lodged, for respiratory disease and vibration white finger under the coalminers' compensation scheme. [170787]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* As of 4 May 2004 the figures are as follows:

Top 10 Solicitors[1]	*[2]Percentage of Claimants who have received an Interim payment*	*[3]Percentage of Claimants who have received a full and final settlement*
Beresfords Solicitors	0.46	7.97
Thompsons	19.13	29.73
Hugh James Ford Simey	14.17	32.08
Raleys Solicitors	12.08	28.40
Browell Smith & Co.	13.10	22.88
Mark Gilbert Morse	8.82	24.69
Avalon	0.27	1.57
Union of Democratic Mineworkers	7.66	30.27
Watson Burton	8.19	30.41
Barber & Co.	0.06	4.23

[1] Top 10 Solicitors are in descending order and based on the number of claims received
[2] Total number of claimants who have received an interim
[3] Total number of settlements include claims settled by denial/ withdrawal

A very large number of claims for respiratory disease have been registered in the last six months and will not yet have been through to the stage of a possible payment.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many privately funded medical assessments have been received under the coalminers' compensation scheme where the claimant has rejected the assessments paid for by the Government under the scheme. [170788]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* The Department's Contractors do not record whether claimants have privately funded their own medical assessment.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many different claims handling agreements were signed by Government under the coalminers' compensation scheme; with whom; by whom and when. [170789]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* The Claims Handling Agreements (CHA) for respiratory disease and Vibration White Finger were negotiated with the claimants' solicitors. Separate CHAs were negotiated with the Union of Democratic Miners (UDM), the only difference being costs which are lower.

The agreements are:

Respiratory disease CHAs:

England and Wales—signed in September 1999

Scotland—June 2000

Australia and New Zealand—January 2003

UDM—November 1999

VWF CHAs:

England and Wales—All signed in January 1999

Scotland

UDM

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what amount is budgeted by Government for paying solicitors under the miners' compensation scheme for *(a)* 2004, *(b)* 2005 and *(c)* 2006. [170790]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* The figures according to the forecast at the end of 2003 are:

£ million

Financial year	*COPD*	*VWF*
2003–04	126.20	21.56
2004–05	154.28	38.11
2005–06	181.50	23.30

The forecasts will be revisited in the light of the number of claims now received in the respiratory disease scheme.

Payments made to solicitors will of course depend on the volume of cases processed and offers accepted.

Miners' Compensation Scheme

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many claims have been registered under the coalminers' compensation scheme for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and vibration white finger by Beresfords Solicitors in each year since the scheme began to the latest date for which figures are available. [171640]

Nigel Griffiths: As of 7 May 2004 the figures are as follows:

	COPD	*VWF*
1995	0	5
1996	17	23
1997	4	29
1998	120	45
1999	373	413
2000	2,697	4,270
2001	1,872	1,196
2002	6,788	5,317
2003	50,914	347
2004	16,886	0
Total	79,671	11,648

Note:
The COPD claim receipts are those claims that are fully registered, i.e. exclude partially registered claims (website claims yet to be fully registered on ICMS due to a submission error during input) and claims in the holding policy (pool of claims accepted with minimum data, awaiting further information to permit cross referencing and duplicate checks prior to full registration).

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the average final settlement for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and vibration white finger was for the top 10 solicitors as determined by fees charged to her Department under the miners' compensation scheme. [170740]

Nigel Griffiths: As of 6 May 2004 the figures are as follows:

Top 10 Solicitors[1]	*[2]Average full and final settlement (£)*
Thompsons	9,187
Hugh James Ford Simey	9,390
Raleys Solicitors	8,683

Top 10 Solicitors[1]	[2]Average full and final settlement (£)
Browell Smith and Co.	8,175
Mark Gilbert Morse	4,373
Graysons	4,420
Beresfords Solicitors	1,679
Union of Democratic Mineworkers	4,532
Watson Burton	4,851
Towells Solicitors	8,581

[1] 'Top 10' solicitors are in descending order and based on solicitors costs received.

[2] Average full and final settlements include claims denied/withdrawn.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which 10 solicitors had the most new claims lodged under the miners' compensation scheme in 2004. [170741]

Nigel Griffiths: As at 6 May 2004 the figures are as follows:

Top 10 Solicitors[1]	Claim Receipts in 2004[2]
Raleys Solicitors	19,890
Beresfords Solicitors	16,886
Avalon	13,797
Browell Smith & Co.	13,363
Hugh James Ford Simey	13,180
Thompsons	12,820
Delta Legal	6,818
Corries	4,750
AMS Law	4,697
Union of Democratic Mineworkers	4,145

[1] 'Top 10' solicitors are in descending order and based on the number of claims received.

[2] Claim receipts are those claims that are fully registered. These figures exclude claims registered partially on the website (yet to be fully registered within ICMS due to a submission error during input) and claims held within the holding policy (pool of claims accepted with minimum data, awaiting further information to permit cross referencing and duplicate checks prior to full registration).

Departmental Annual Report

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether any of the grant-in-aid to countries of the former Soviet Union in respect of nuclear legacy programmes mentioned at paragraphs 16.18 to 16.21 of her Department's Annual Report, Cm 6216, has been *(a)* used and *(b)* earmarked for future use to help deal with the surplus military plutonium stockpile in Russia. [170983]

Mr. Timms: £70 million over 10 years is allocated to help deal with the disposition of surplus Russian military plutonium. The precise details of the disposition programme have not yet been agreed between Russia and the US and, as a result, none of the UK allocation has so far been spent. Consideration is therefore being given to the use of these funds to assist in closing down the three remaining plutonium-producing reactors in Russia.

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much the production of her Department's latest annual report cost; how many copies were printed; how many copies of it were sold at its cover price; to whom copies of the report have been provided free of charge; and how many copies were provided free of charge. [171078]

Ms Hewitt: The cost incurred by the Department for design and artwork of the latest Departmental Report (April 2004) was approximately £9,036. This figure includes the costs incurred in placing an electronic version of the report on the Departmental website. Other costs of printing and publication were met directly by the publisher, The Stationery Office Limited (TSO), and did not fall to the Government. TSO recoups these costs through sales and uses its commercial judgment as to the number of copies printed. The latest departmental report was only published on 28 April 2004 and 469 copies were sold at the cover price (£32) by TSO or through its accredited agents and other booksellers within the first week.

The Department is in the process of circulating some 430 complimentary copies to Ministers, Opposition Front Bench spokesmen, Select Committee Members and staff, the Parliamentary Libraries, DTI officials and external Board Members (including in agencies and NDPBs), officials in other Government Departments and journalists.

Departmental Procurement (Sea Bass)

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make it her Department's policy to source all sea bass used in catering outlets for which her Department is responsible from hand-line fishermen rather than pair trawlers. [167544]

Ms Hewitt: DTI follows the guidance issued by Defra on this issue. Defra supports the sourcing of sea bass from sustainable fisheries and handlining as both are relatively low impact methods of fishing.

Departmental Publications

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the newspapers, magazines and periodicals her Department *(a)* produces and *(b)* funds, stating (i) the title and subject matter, (ii) the cost to her Department in 2003–04, (iii) the number produced, (iv) the readership and (v) the cost per publication. [168861]

Ms Hewitt: My Department does not hold this detailed information centrally. To provide this information could only be done at disproportionate cost.

Disconnections (Utilities)

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what assessment she has made of the burden of proof in the warrants process for disconnection; and if she will make a statement; [170376]

(2) when she next expects to meet the Chief Executive of Ofgem to discuss disconnections to residential customers. [170377]

Mr. Timms: The DTI has discussed, and will continue to discuss as appropriate, disconnections matters with Ofgem. With DTI's encouragement, Ofgem has been in discussion with gas and electricity suppliers about the arrangements governing disconnections, particularly for vulnerable customers. Ofgem has now issued an industry consultation paper that sets out proposed revisions to, and clarification of, those arrangements. The arrangements governing the warrants process are set out in the Rights of Entry (Gas and Electricity Boards) Act 1954, as amended. If a supplier wishes to disconnect, it must give the customer two days' notice of its intention to visit the premises. It has the right of entry to disconnect, but, if the customer is not at home or refuses entry, it may only exercise this right after it has obtained a warrant from a court. The court may require evidence of the debt, and of the supplier's efforts to recover that debt. The customer should be advised when and where the supplier will apply for a warrant, and can defend the application.

Equal Opportunities Commission

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the reduction in the planned growth budget for the Equal Opportunities Commission. [168064]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 29 April 2004]:* My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has rightly set targets for all government departments to achieve spending efficiencies.

My Department, like others, seeks to deliver its demanding objectives as efficiently as possible. I set similarly high standards for our Agencies and non-departmental public bodies, including the Equal Opportunities Commission. I have therefore asked the EOC to make a reduction in its budget for 2005–06 and 2006–07. I am confident that the EOC will meet the challenge of reducing its operational costs while continuing its excellent work of promoting gender equality in 21st century Britain.

Fathers Direct Conference

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the date was of the press release issued by the Institute of Directors making reference to women of childbearing age referred to in her speech of 5 April at the Fathers Direct conference; and if she will make a statement. [170278]

Ms Hewitt: The press release issued by the Institute of Directors (IoD), while Ruth Lea was Head of Policy Unit, around the time of the introduction of the new work and parent laws that I referred to was dated 3 April 2003. In summarising the views expressed by the IoD regarding the impact on women of childbearing age I also drew on other press releases issued which criticised the steps the Government have made to increase the provision of family-friendly policies. These were issued on 17 April 2001 and 4 March 2002.

I used my speech to highlight the initial evidence on the impact of the flexible working legislation is showing that many parents and employers are taking advantage of flexible working to both their benefit. Since the law was introduced almost 800,000 parents of children under six have had their request for flexible working either fully or partly accepted and the proportion of requests being refused has reduced by almost a half.

Fuel Cell Technologies

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the steps taken to engage UK industry in the development of fuel cell technologies; and if she will make a statement. [171280]

Mr. Timms: The Energy White Paper contained a number of commitments on fuel cells. These involved the development of institutional support for the emerging UK fuel cell industry. We have made good progress in taking these forward. Fuel Cells UK was established in May 2003 with pump-priming support from DTI. Fuel Cells UK played the leading role in developing a UK Fuel Cell Vision, which was launched at the Grove Fuel Cell Symposium in September 2003. Also launched at that event was the Fuel Cells Forum, an IT based knowledge transfer network, informing UK stakeholder of worldwide activity and allowing the opportunity to easily engage business, academia and the Regions.

DTI has supported industrial fuel cell R&D under the DTI Advanced Fuel Programme since 1992. Funding for Collaborative Research and Development in Fuel Cells is now available as part of the Technology Programme, launched on 26 April. The DTI will continue to engage with industry to identify and address the technical and non-technical barriers to the deployment of fuel cell technologies in order to support UK Business.

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what support will be given to those UK companies involved in the development of fuel cell technologies. [171281]

Mr. Timms: The DTI has supported industrial R and D on fuel cells since 1992, under the DTI New and Renewable Energy Programme, with a value of approximately £2 million per year. DTI has recently reviewed and simplified its business support products. In future, fuel cell proposals may be eligible for funding under the DTI Collaborative Research and Development product, part of the DTI Technology Programme. A call for proposals (which includes fuel cells) is currently open. Details are available on the DTI website.

Basic research in universities on both fuel cells and hydrogen is supported by the Engineering and Physical

Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), most recently under its SUPERGEN initiative. The Carbon Trust is also able to support fuel cell and hydrogen projects, including taking strategic investments.

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Insurance

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on proposals under discussion in the European Council working group to abolish gender discrimination in insurance claims. [168897]

Ms Hewitt: The Government has welcomed the development of European sex discrimination legislation through an Equal Treatment Directive. The Government strongly supports most of this Directive, but is aware of concerns about some aspects, including the effects of prohibiting the use of sex-based factors in insurance pricing. The UK will continue to negotiate constructively to achieve a final agreement that reflects UK priorities and concerns.

International Development

Sir Archy Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what further steps she proposes to promote international trade with developing countries; [169371]

(2) what trade proposals she has to enable countries in Africa to increase levels of trade with the UK. [169372]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The best opportunity for promoting trade with developing countries is a successful and ambitious result from the Doha Development Agenda in the World Trade Organisation. We are working closely with the European Commission, other member states and other governments to secure this. While the Doha Round remains our top priority, we are also working with the Commission on the revision of the EU's Generalised System of Preferences, which offers preferential access for developing countries to the now even larger European market, and totally tariff and quota free access for the Least Developed Countries, many of which are in sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, negotiations for Economic Partnership Agreements with the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries are under way.

The forthcoming Trade and Investment White Paper will consider, among other issues, the trade framework between the EU and developing countries. The UK is also supporting capacity building in developing countries in trade policy and negotiations to the tune of £165 million over three years, by supporting organisations such as the Centre for WTO Law and the South Centre. We hope that the Commission for Africa, announced by the Prime Minister on 26 February, will consider what more can be done to help specifically African countries reap the benefits of increased world trade.

Large Combustion Plants Directive

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment the Government have made of the impact on the United Kingdom coal industry of introducing a national emissions reduction plan in order to implement the Large Combustion Plants Directive. [171238]

Mr. Timms: The Government have commissioned independent research into the potential impact on United Kingdom coal production of the alternative routes to implement the Large Combustion Plants Directive. The results of this research will help to inform the choice of implementation route and will be published in due course.

Liabilities Management Unit

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the members of her Department's liabilities management unit; what the qualifications of each are; and what the permanent place of employment of each secondee to the unit is. [170978]

Mr. Timms: The DTI organisational structure contains a Coal Liabilities Unit and a Nuclear Liabilities Management Unit.

There are 39 staff in the Coal Liabilities Unit, 37 of whom are civil servants and two of whom are seconded from our claim handlers IRISC.

There are 15 staff in the Nuclear Liabilties Management Unit, consisting of four civil servants and 11 secondees, from BNFL, UKAEA and RW Newchem.

In addition, both Units have contracts with a number of consultants to provide additional support and advice.

London Development Agency

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many London Development Agency board members have *(a)* current and *(b)* recent business experience. [168710]

Jacqui Smith: The information is as follows.

(a) 11.

(b) 11.

Manned Space Travel

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what Government support is available for research into manned space travel. [170454]

Ms Hewitt: In December 2003 the Government published its Space Strategy, which targets investment at those projects that offer the best commercial opportunities, scientific knowledge and environmental information, rather than national prestige. As we do not believe that human spaceflight programmes fall within these targets, we are focusing on the robotic exploration

of the solar system. For example we are currently examining the scientific and industrial benefits of participation in the European Space Agency's Aurora programme.

Micro-satellites

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her assessment is of British industry's readiness to take advantage of the market for launching micro-satellites; and what action her Department is taking to improve that readiness. [170453]

Ms Hewitt: In December 2003 the Government published clear priorities in its support for the UK space industry, the particular strengths of which lie in the Earth observation, satellite navigation and satellite communications sectors, both in their supply-side and in their fast-growing downstream segments. While the Government are alert to the need to ensure access to space, including for our leading-edge micro-satellite industry, we believe that the current over-supply in the global commercial launches market makes intervention unnecessary.

New Businesses (Oldham, West and Royton)

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new businesses have been established in Oldham West and Royton since 1997. [170936]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales, including 400 in Oldham Local Authority (which contains the constituency of Oldham West and Royton), in the fourth quarter of 2003. The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before. There were 1,900 business start-ups in Oldham Local Authority in 2003. Data for Local Authorities are not available for before 2003.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Oldham Local Authority (which contains the constituency of Oldham West and Royton) are shown in the table for the period 1997 to 2002. Data for 2003 will be available in autumn 2004.

VAT Registrations: 1997–2002

	Oldham
1997	480
1998	470
1999	465
2000	480
2001	440
2002	510

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service, available from: www.sbs.gov.uk/statistics/vatstats.php

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

North Sea Energy Production

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of the value of contracts for oil and gas production platforms in the North sea in areas for which the UK Government granted licences was awarded to UK-based firms in each of the last five years. [170410]

Mr. Timms: Information on UK companies winning contracts from UKCS oil and gas operators is compiled only for major fields, such as Millom (approved 1999), Leadon (2000), Clair (2001), Goldeneye (2002) and Buzzard (2003). The involvement in these projects by UK-based companies with the necessary capability ranged from around 60 per cent. to 75 per cent. by contract value over this period.

Nuclear Security

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the main points were of the agreement reached with the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the exchange of nuclear security information to which reference is made at paragraph 16.17 of her Department's Annual Report, Cm 6216. [170989]

Mr. Timms: The agreement between the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Department of Trade and Industry facilitates the exchange of classified information regarding the safety and security of civil nuclear installations. Such agreements are vital in combating the threat of global terrorism.

Omega Site (Warrington)

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the impact of the development of the Omega site in Warrington on *(a)* Warrington and *(b)* the regional economy. [171019]

Jacqui Smith: My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has not made an assessment of the impact of the development of the Omega site in Warrington. Omega South is one of the North West Development Agency's strategic regional sites. It has the potential to create some 12,000 jobs and it is essential that the development of this scale and significance is consistent with both national and regional planning policies.

Pilot Joint Taskforce

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the annual cost to her Department of participation in the Pilot joint taskforce on the future of the UK oil and gas industry *(a)* has been and *(b)* is expected to be in the next five years; and how her Department measures value for money from participation in the Pilot taskforce. [170977]

Mr. Timms: provides the PILOT Secretariat, plus around £100K annually in direct support of industry initiatives and other related activity.

DTI's financial commitment to PILOT is expected to remain the same for the next £5 years, subject to continual review and reflecting the situation in the UKCS (United Kingdom Continental Shelf).

PILOT has set itself a number of challenging objectives that includes specific targets for production, investment and job creation. These objectives are transparent and measurable and DTI continually monitors progress.

Post Office

Mr. Jack: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will place in the Library details of the business case underpinning the Post Office's closure proposals for the Fylde constituency. [171800]

Mr. Timms: No. Under the public consultation process, Post Office Limited supplies extensive information to assist stakeholders and other interested parties in their consideration of post office closure proposals, but detailed financial information is, necessarily, commercially confidential.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will urge Post Office Limited to make more time for consultation available to *(a)* the public and *(b)* other interested bodies when post offices are being considered for closure. [172069]

Mr. Timms: No. The public consultation period for proposed closure of post offices under Post Office Limited's urban reinvention programme has already been extended from four to six weeks. In addition, Postwatch receives notification of proposals two weeks in advance, and Members of Parliament one week in advance, of the start of public consultation. Local authorities are invited to provide relevant information, in advance, on infrastructure and regeneration projects to assist Post Office Limited in preparing its proposals.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the performance of Royal Mail delivery services in Hendon constituency. [170192]

Mr. Timms: Delivery services are the operational concern of Royal Mail Group and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Premium Rate Telephone Numbers

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she is taking to reduce the incidence of companies providing misleading information regarding premium rate telephone numbers; and if she will make a statement. [169377]

Mr. Timms: The regulation of Premium Rate Services is a matter for the Independent Committee for the Supervision of Standards of Telephone Information Services (ICSTIS). Their Code of practice sets out the requirement for companies to provide clear pricing information and specifically prohibits the use of misleading pricing information.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent representations and discussions she has had regarding misleading information by companies charging premium rate costs for telephone services; and if she will make a statement. [169378]

Mr. Timms: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has had no recent representations on this matter. Misleading information about such services is a matter for the Premium Rate Services regulator, the Independent Committee for the Supervision of Standards of Telephone Information Services (ICSTIS).

Regeneration (Hampshire)

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much money her Department has spent on the South Hampshire Priority Area for Economic Regeneration in *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2002–03 and *(c)* 2003–04; and how much is budgeted to be spent in (i) 2004–05 and (ii) 2005–06. [165319]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 1 April 2004]:* The DTI, alongside a number of other Government Departments, funds the South East of England Development Agency (SEEDA) to catalyse and carry out economic development and regeneration activities in the South East region. Funds are provided to SEEDA as a Single Budget and it is not possible to separate out DTI funded activity within the Agency's work. Activity by the Agency is however very relevant to the DTIs economic development objectives and is an important element of spend in the South Hampshire Priority Area for Economic Regeneration.

SEEDA's priority areas are based on Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) 9. SEEDA has spent some £34 million in 2001–02, £32.6 million in 2002–03, and £20.4 million in 2003–04 in the South Hampshire Priority Area for Regeneration, which for RPG purposes includes Portsmouth, Southampton, Fareham, Gosport, Havant and Eastleigh.

Known allocated spend in 2004–05 will be in the order of £10 million with further expenditure of around £9 million in 2005–06. The amount spent may, however, vary from this, for example, because of land and property spend in 2005–06 for which there is not a current estimate. Future expenditure will be determined through the Area Investment Framework process which the Agency has developed, which defines local priorities and brings together not just SEEDA funding but multiple mainstream funding streams.

Besides this, investment made directly by the Department of Trade and Industry in the area is as follows.

£

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
Smart and Enterprise Grant	485,754	1,007,191	332,605	76,000	51,000
Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (following on from the Teaching Company Scheme)	25,500	20,000	77,000	76,000	51,000

Phoenix Fund

A sum of £839,000 has been allocated from the Phoenix Fund for two projects in the area within the period. This grant is not annualised but is drawn down as spent.

Small Firms Loan Guarantee

In addition the Small Firms Loan Guarantee (SFLG) guaranteed 38 loans in the year 2001–02 valued at £2.15 million, 37 loans in 2002–02 valued at £2.9 million and 66 loans in 2003–04 valued at £4 million. These figures do not equate to spend. Government expenditure only arises if there is a subsequent default and the guarantee is called upon. Figures for future years are not available as SFLG is demand led.

Business Link Wessex

Spend in South Hampshire by Business Link Wessex on providing business support to SMEs is approximately £1.3 million per year for the years 2001–02, 2002–03 and 2003–04. Expenditure in 2004–05 will be of the same order. The budget for 2005–06 is not yet firm.

Regional Development Agencies

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list, for each of the nine regional development agencies in England, *(a)* the aggregate amount of forward funding commitments entered into by the Agency at 31 March and *(b)* the annual budget of the Agency for financial year 2004–05. [169491]

Jacqui Smith: The figures are set out in the following table; the information on commitments has been provided by the Regional Development Agencies.

£ million

	Budget for 2004–05	*Committed spend in relation to 2004–05*
Advantage West Midlands	245	245
East of England Development Agency	99	65
East Midlands Development Agency	124	47
London Development Agency	379	260
North West Development Agency	358	346
ONE North East	237	224
South East England Development Agency	130	96
South West of England Regional Development Agency	130	127
Yorkshire Forward	266	245

Regulations

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the regulations that have been *(a)* introduced and *(b)* removed by her Department in each year since 1990. [169165]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 28 April 2004]*: There have been 1713 regulations introduced by the Department in the period 1991 to 2003. A listing of these Statutory Instruments will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

There is no centrally held information about the regulations removed during the period. But a recent OECD Economic Survey of the United Kingdom noted that "economic and administrative regulations inhibiting competition and barriers to trade are amongst the lowest in the OECD".

Renewables Obligation

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the implications for the renewables obligation of the liquidation of Atlantic Electric and Gas; and whether its renewables obligation liabilities have been acquired by another going concern. [171385]

Mr. Timms: My officials are discussing the implications for the renewables obligation of the liquidation of Atlantic Electric and Gas with Ofgem. At this stage it is too early to assess the impact on the renewables obligation.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will assess the effectiveness of the mechanism of the trading of renewable obligation certificates (ROCs), with specific reference to the liquidation of an energy company possessing ROCs. [171386]

Mr. Timms: In the event of the liquidation of an energy company possessing ROCs, the ROCs are one of the company's assets and can be sold by the liquidators, either to a company acquiring the business of the insolvent supplier or separately to another purchaser.

Small Business Office, Brussels

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the planned *(a)* resource budget, *(b)* administration costs and *(c)* staff numbers are for 2004 of the Small Business Office in Brussels sponsored by her Department. [168449]

Nigel Griffiths: For the financial year 2004–05 the budget provided by the Small Business Service for the UK SME liaison office in Brussels (Smallbusinesseurope) is £127,500.

Two full time staff are engaged in the office's work, and a university placement student is also employed for 10 months each year.

Small Business Service

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the written ministerial statement of 28 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 43–44WS on small business service, how much financial support her Department intends to provide for the Phoenix Fund Building scheme from April; and for what period. [171611]

Nigel Griffiths: The total budget for the Phoenix Fund is £50 million from April 2004-March 2006. From that, the following allocations have been made to those parts of the Fund referred to in the written ministerial statement of 28 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 43–44WS:

City Growth Strategies—£3.5 million

Building on the Best element of the Phoenix Development Fund—£13.4 million

Building on the Best element of the Challenge Fund for Community Development Finance Institutions—£8.4 million.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the devolution of Small Business Services. [169102]

Nigel Griffiths: As announced in the 2004 Budget statement the Government will devolve regional and local Business Link services to the RDAs, within a framework for setting national standards and services to be developed by the Small Business Service, the RDAs and other Government Departments funding business support. The Government intend to implement devolution from April 2005, and will publish more details on these new arrangements in the 2004 Spending Review.

Small Businesses

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps her Department is taking to protect small businesses from late payments. [168905]

Nigel Griffiths: This Government has done more than any other to specifically address the problem of late payment. We introduced the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 which allows small businesses to claim interest and debt recovery costs on late paid invoices and also gives representative organisations the right to challenge unfair contract terms on behalf of SMEs.

The Government helped to create the Better Payment Practice Group (BPPG) a cooperative forum of Industry associations and Government that seeks to improve the payment culture in the UK. The BPPG provides a range of information and advice to all businesses, its website www.payontime.co.uk includes a guide to using the legislation as well as other tools.

A recent survey by the REL Consultancy Group looked at average days payable outstanding (DPO) and concluded that UK companies' payment performance is 33.6 days against 42.4 days for Europe as a whole, whilst countries such as Italy (67.9) and France (63.4) perform considerably less well.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government has taken to help small businesses in Oldham West and Royton since 1997. [170935]

Nigel Griffiths: The Business Link Operator for North Manchester has provided assistance to 887 businesses in the Oldham West and Royton constituency since 2001. The Small Business Service was set up as an agency of the Department of Trade and Industry in April 2000. Contracts were exchanged with a national network of 45 Businesses Link operators (seven in the North West) to provide Business Support to small and medium sized enterprises from April 2001. Before this date Government Support to businesses was provided through Training and Enterprise Councils and the SBS does not have access to this data.

The 887 companies have received assistance on Business Finance, Environmental, E-Services, High Growth, International, Innovation Technology and Design, Micro Support, Supply Chain, and Workforce Development and other Account Management assistance.

Eight companies have received offers of grant from the Research and Development Grant scheme with a total value of £195,000.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many new businesses have been established in Preston since 1997; [169672]

(2) how many new businesses have started up in Preston since 1997. [169678]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales, including 2,600 in Lancashire County (which contains the constituency of Preston), in the fourth quarter of 2003. The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before. There were 10,200 business start-ups in Lancashire County in 2003. Data for counties are not available for before 2003.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Preston local authority and South Ribble local authority (parts of both include the constituency of Preston) are shown in the table for the period 1997 to 2002. Data for 2003 will be available in Autumn 2004.

VAT registrations: 1997–2002

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Preston	465	420	410	395	365	345
South Ribble	275	300	255	280	240	250

Source:

Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Software Patents Directive

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the Government's stance is on the proposed EU Software Patents Directive. [171107]

Ms Hewitt: The Government continues to support the thrust of the proposal put forward by the European Commission for a Directive on the patentability of computer-implemented inventions that clarifies the existing position and reduces uncertainty in this field. Recent discussions on this subject have taken place between my officials and officials of other Member States with a view to a discussion in the Competitiveness Council on 17 and 18 May 2004. My Department continues to work with interested parties and other Member States to achieve a Directive that offers benefits for both innovators and users of this technology in the UK and Europe.

Steel Industry

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the *(a)* level and *(b)* effects on the UK steel industry of steel dumping in Europe; and if she will make a statement. [167847]

Mr. Timms: None. Complaints about dumping in the European Union relating to steel or any other product and its effects on the Community industry, including the UK, are assessed by the European Commission against the criteria laid down in the EC's Basic Anti-dumping Regulation. The European Commission determines whether dumping has occurred and the extent to which the industry has been injured. If it finds dumping and injury, it may recommend anti-dumping measures which usually take the form of additional duties. It is then up the Member States, including UK government officials, to support or oppose any Commission recommendation for anti-dumping measures.

Sub-post Offices (Leicester)

Mr. Dorrell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many *(a)* benefit, *(b)* postal order and *(c)* Girobank transactions were completed in each of the last five financial years by the sub-post offices at (i) 30 Went Road, Birstall, Leicester and (ii) 778 Melton Road, Thurmaston, Leicester; [170638]

(2) what the cost to Post Office Ltd. was in each of the last five financial years of keeping open the sub-post offices at *(a)* 30 Went Road, Birstall, Leicester and *(b)* 778 Melton Road, Thurmaston, Leicester. [170639]

Mr. Timms: These are operational maters for Post Office Ltd. and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Sustainable Energy

Sir Archy Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to promote sustainable technologies to generate power supplies in future. [169370]

Nigel Griffiths: The Government's target for renewables is that, by 2010, 10 per cent. of our electricity sales will come from renewable sourced electricity. The target is challenging as we are starting from a low base.

The Government's main policy mechanism for achieving the target is the Renewables Obligation (and Renewables Obligation Scotland) Introduced in April 2002, it places an obligation on all licensed electricity suppliers to supply a specified and growing proportion of their sales from electricity generated from a range of eligible renewable sources.

Through the Renewables Obligation (RO), we are looking to accelerate the development of renewables in a wide range of sources and technologies. In order to encourage a more vigorous and diverse renewable energy sector, the Government has allocated a total of £350 million over four years for capital grants and research grants to promote forms renewable energy that are further from becoming commercially competitive. This includes among other things grants of £117 million for offshore wind, £66 million for energy crops and biomass, £25 million for solar photovoltaics (PV), £10 million for community schemes and £5 million for wave and tidal demonstration projects.

The Government additionally has a target of achieving at least 10 gigawatts of good Quality combined heat power (CHP) capacity by 2010 and published its Strategy for CHP to 2010 on 26 April of this year confirming its continued aim towards that target. CHP is a highly fuel-efficient energy technology which (puts to use waste heat produced as a by-product of the electricity generation process and) can make a significant contribution to the UK's sustainable energy goals.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to make a statement on the first annual report on sustainable energy; and what form such a statement will take. [170279]

Mr. Timms: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, wrote on 26 April to Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Maidenhead (Mrs. May) and the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker) informing them that the Government was publishing on that day the first annual report on the Energy White Paper, among other documents, and that copies of the report had been placed in the Libraries of the House. My right hon. Friend also made a written ministerial statement on 27 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 37WS, announcing that the annual report had been published and that copies had been placed in the Libraries of the House.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has no plans to make a further statement.

Tokamak Experimental Reactor

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on progress being made to build the International Tokamak Experimental Reactor. [170165]

Ms Hewitt: The international partners are trying to reach a compromise on the two proposed locations for ITER that will be acceptable to the whole ITER partnership. Extensive negotiations are also taking place between the candidate hosts Europe and Japan to see whether the issue can be resolved bilaterally.

Unsolicited Faxes

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps her Department is taking to protect consumers from unsolicited faxes. [171348]

Mr. Timms: Individual subscribers are offered protection from unsolicited direct marketing faxes under the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003 and the sending of such faxes is prohibited unless individuals have given their prior consent.

Corporate subscribers are protected from receiving unsolicited direct marketing faxes if they have previously notified the sender that they do wish to receive such faxes or have been registered for at least 28

days with the Fax Preference Service (FPS), which is an "opt-out" scheme and is run on Ofcom's behalf by the Direct Marketing Association.

Utilities (Disconnections)

Jonathan Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the benefits of expanding the moratoria on disconnections for vulnerable groups beyond the winter months; and if she will make a statement. [171315]

Nigel Griffiths: Last month, Ofgem issued an industry consultation paper that set out proposed revisions to, and clarification of, the arrangements for gas and electricity disconnections. This should ensure that vulnerable customers are not, in the future, disconnected. I very much welcome this development, which will benefit vulnerable customers throughout the year.

West Lancashire

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many businesses have started up in West Lancashire since 1997. [171725]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales, including 2,600 in Lancashire county (which contains the constituency of West Lancashire), in the fourth quarter of 2003. The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before. There were 10,200 business start-ups in Lancashire county in 2003. Data for counties are not available for before 2003.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for West Lancashire local authority (which contains the constituency of West Lancashire) are shown as follows for the period 1997 to 2002. Data for 2003 will be available in autumn 2004.

VAT registrations: 1997–2002

West Lancashire	*Number*
1997	260
1998	245
1999	290
2000	265
2001	285
2002	265

Source:

Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service, available from: www.sbs.gov.uk/statistics/vatstats.php

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were-registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

PRIME MINISTER

Departmental Procurement

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Prime Minister what percentage of the *(a)* crockery, *(b)* cutlery and *(c)* glassware procured by his Office over the last five years is of British manufacture. [170806]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Minister for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Alexander) today, *Official Report*, 10 May, c. 4W.

Dr. Salim Abu Hunak

Mr. Drew: To ask the Prime Minister whether he raised the case of Dr. Salim Abu Hunak, held in Abu Salim Prison in Tripoli, when he recently met Colonel Gadaffi; and what action the Government is taking to make progress towards the release of Dr. Hunak. [171645]

The Prime Minister: My discussions with Colonel Gadaffi on 25 March focused on international and regional security issues.

We are aware of the case of Salem Abu Hanak and are monitoring developments.

We remain concerned about Libya's human rights record and will continue to press Libya to implement its recent announcements to sign international agreements against torture and abolish the "People's Courts".

Early Retirement

Bob Spink: To ask the Prime Minister how many employees in his office took early retirement in the last financial year; and at what total cost. [171729]

The Prime Minister: None.

House of Lords

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the peers appointed since 1997 who are members of Northern Ireland political parties, broken down by party. [171741]

The Prime Minister: Since the beginning of 1997, five Ulster Unionist Party working peers have been appointed: Lord Molyeaux of Killead, Lord Rogan, Lord Laird, Lord Maginnis of Drumglass and Lord Kilclooney.

House of Lords Appointments Commission

Lady Hermon: To ask the Prime Minister how many times the House of Lords Appointments Commission has met since its formation. [172009]

The Prime Minister: The full House of Lords Appointments Commission has met 26 times since its formation.

Menus

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Prime Minister whether he is consulted on the menus at functions where he is the host. [171779]

The Prime Minister: Catering at official functions held at No. 10 Downing Street is provided by a variety of approved caterers. Menus are created to suit the nature of the function and to take into account the dietary needs of guests.

WALES

Departmental Annual Report

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how much the production of his Department's latest annual report cost; how many copies were printed; how many copies of it were sold at its cover price; to whom copies of the report have been provided free of charge; and how many copies were provided free of charge. [171082]

Mr. Touhig: The 2004 Wales Office Annual Report cost £11,515. The minimum order of 250 copies were printed for the Wales Office, of which 112 copies were provided free of charge to: all Welsh MPs; all members of the Welsh Affairs Committee; all Assembly Members; the Secretaries of State for Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Department for Constitutional Affairs; the Conservative Shadow Secretary of State for Wales; and, the Permanent Secretaries of the National Assembly for Wales and the Department for Constitutional Affairs. A further four copies were laid in the House.

The Stationary Office (ISO) also printed a further 600 copies for their own stores. As the report has only recently been published, TSO are unable to provide figures on purchases from their stores.

Farming

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many farms in Wales, comprising what land areas and in what locations, have restrictions applied to them in respect of land use as a result of the residual radioactivity from the Chernobyl nuclear accident. [169879]

Mr. Touhig: The figures show the number of farms in Wales, their location and area of land covered by restrictions on the movement of sheep, as a result of the residual radioactivity from the Chernobyl nuclear accident. There have been no restrictions on land use as a result of the Chernobyl accident.

Restrictions in Wales at 30 April 2004[1]

Number of farms	359
Land area (hectares)	53,000
Location	Snowdonia, North Wales

[1] Statistics provided by the Food Standards Agency

Mold Flood Alleviation Scheme

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with the National Assembly for Wales Government about providing exceptional costs to implement the Mold Flood Allevation Scheme; and if he will make a statement. [169774]

Mr. Touhig: I understand that the National Assembly has made £3.713 million available to the Environment Agency, this financial year, to support flood defence works within its approved programme. It is up to the Agency to determine priorities within its budget. The Agency is currently reviewing its capital programme, to see how it can maximise the funding available for the Mold scheme.

Parliamentary Questions

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales (1) how many *(a)* Ordinary Written and *(b)* Named Day Questions his Department received in (i) the 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary session up to the most recent date for which figures are available, broken down by month; [170762]

(2) what proportion of *(a)* Ordinary Written Questions to his Department were answered within five sitting days of tabling and *(b)* Questions for a Named Day received a substantive answer on that day in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary session up to the most recent date for which figures are available, broken down by month. [170763]

Mr. Touhig: The information is not available in the format requested. However, during session 2002–03 the following parliamentary questions were tabled:

290 (Ordinary Written Questions) of these 41 per cent. were answered within five sitting days.

42 (Named Days) of these 61.9 per cent.were answered on the specified date.

For 2003–04:

91 (Ordinary Written Questions) of these 52.7 per cent. were answered within five sitting days.

6 (Named Days) of these 100 per cent. were answered on the specified date.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Business Rate

Harry Cohen: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to take steps to enable business rate income to remain with local authorities; how much business rate was collected by the London Borough of *(a)* Waltham Forest and *(b)* Redbridge in the last year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [171445]

Mr. Raynsford: The amounts of business rates collected in 2002–03, the most recent year for which figures are available, are:

(a) London Borough of Waltham Forest: £35.412 million

(b) London Borough of Redbridge: £38.511 million

These figures are taken from the QRC4 return from each authority.

The Office of Deputy Prime Minister is planning to introduce the Local Authority Business Growth Incentives scheme from April 2005. This scheme will allow retention of some business rates revenue by local authorities whose areas experience business rates

growth above a predetermined threshold. We shall issue a consultation paper about the preferred scheme in the summer.

The Balance of Funding Review, which I chair, has received evidence for and against the complete return of business rates to local authority control. The Review is due to report in the summer.

Business Rates (Chorley)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much was collected in business rates in Chorley in each of the last three years. [172108]

Mr. Raynsford: The figures for National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) collected in Chorley in each of the last three years are tabled as follows:

£

	In year collection
2001–02	16,300,841
2002–03	16,824,868
2003–04	16,672,318

The figures for 2003–04 have been calculated, but as yet not audited and certified by the Audit Commission.

Committee of the Regions

Ann Winterton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the representatives to the Committee of the Regions will come from the elected members to the proposed regional assemblies. [171782]

Mr. Raynsford: At present, in addition to nominations received from the Local Government Association, each English regional chamber and the Greater London Authority nominate one member and one alternate to be proposed by the Government as English members of the Committee of the Regions.

As stated in the White Paper, Your Region, Your Choice: Revitalising the English Regions (Cm 5511—May 2002), the Government intends that in those regions where an elected regional assembly is established, the assembly will take the role for its region currently exercised by the regional chamber. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will consult on the detail of the nomination process in advance of nominations for the committee to be instituted in 2006.

Council Tax (Greater London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the total of unpaid council tax in Greater London, broken down by borough, in each year since 1997. [170502]

Mr. Raynsford: Tabled are figures for the amounts of council tax payable for each financial year from 1996–97 to 2002–03 that had not been collected by the end of the year to which they related.

Amounts of council tax uncollected at the end of the financial year

£ thousand

	1996–97	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Inner London							
City of London	27	40	49	37	38	41	66
Camden	6,100	6,082	5,220	4,700	4,610	4,389	5,215
Greenwich	3,448	3,410	3,725	4,324	4,019	4,331	4,146
Hackney	5,997	6,435	8,371	11,859	13,085	11,391	9,652
Hammersmith and Fulham	5,075	5,084	3,627	3,425	3,363	3,156	2,916
Islington	6,431	4,509	4,542	4,269	4,441	3,869	5,664
Kensington and Chelsea	2,007	2,123	2,068	2,085	2,079	2,550	2,842
Lambeth	8,694	8,729	9,186	7,377	9,012	7,864	6,373
Lewisham	5,846	3,817	4,134	3,849	3,593	3,834	4,183
Southwark	6,259	7,934	9,126	10,324	7,168	5,905	5,141
Tower Hamlets	2,712	3,016	2,976	3,244	3,493	3,397	3,215
Wandsworth	4,937	3,637	2,730	2,668	2,478	2,597	2,175
Westminster	2,009	2,145	1,981	2,471	3,186	3,027	3,010
Total inner London	59,542	56,961	57,735	60,632	60,565	56,261	54,598
Outer London							
Barking and Dagenham	1,043	1,134	1,208	1,466	1,848	1,840	2,966
Barnet	3,798	3,691	3,944	3,908	4,019	4,008	4,223
Bexley	1,575	2,486	2,914	2,803	2,737	2,866	2,804
Brent	3,833	4,069	3,591	4,664	4,363	5,314	6,897
Bromley	1,724	1,795	2,181	2,942	3,037	3,440	3,829
Croydon	4,954	5,096	5,390	6,961	7,236	5,592	5,070
Haling	2,723	2,765	3,037	3,737	4,838	4,738	4,642
Enfield	4,204	4,445	3,775	4,015	3,878	4,225	4,597
Haringey	9,177	8,314	7,488	7,915	6,290	5,867	4,5[illegible]
Harrow	1,502	1,496	1,674	2,187	1,151	963	2,091
Havering	1,466	1,142	1,757	2,669	2,344	2,905	3,258
Hillingdon	2,639	2,491	2,399	3,098	2,985	2,641	3,964
Hounslow	3,095	3,683	3,173	3,541	3,536	4,064	4,398
Kingston upon Thames	921	2,118	3,127	2,727	2,906	2,166	2,059
Merton	2,201	1,932	2,319	2,396	2,420	2,697	2,319
Newham	4,703	4,881	4,926	5,342	5,475	5,298	4,294
Redbridge	1,840	1,763	1,937	2,403	2,748	2,869	3,073

Amounts of council tax uncollected at the end of the financial year

£ thousand

	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Richmond upon Thames	1,564	1,507	2,187	2,100	2,134	1,886	2,040
Sutton	720	1,039	1,323	1,303	1,366	1,553	1,673
Waltham Forest	3,378	3,738	5,659	6,066	6,357	5,313	4,141
Total Outer London	57,060	59,585	64,009	72,243	71,668	70,245	72,864
Total Greater London	116,602	116,546	121,744	132,875	132,233	126,506	127,462

[1] Amounts relate only to the financial year shown: arrears carried forward from earlier years are not therefore included.

In addition, the total level of council tax arrears includes amounts uncollected from previous years. Reliable figures for these are not currently available for individual local authorities. It is estimated, however, that nationally, the level of arrears carried forward from previous years is currently equal to approximately twice the amount not collected in-year.

Emergency Vehicles (Speed Cameras)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list *(a)* the official meetings he has had with the Mayor of London since July 2000 and *(b)* the dates and subject of each meeting. [170567]

Yvette Cooper: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has had no official meeting with the Mayor of London since July 2000.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for the Home Department on the cost to fire and rescue authorities of dealing with the paperwork resulting from fire engines on emergency calls captured on speed cameras contravening speed limits. [170734]

Mr. Raynsford: None.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) on how many occasions in each of the last 12 months fire authority vehicles on emergency calls have been captured on speed cameras contravening speed limits in each fire and rescue authority; [170735]

(2) how many administrators were involved, and at what annual cost, in each fire and rescue authority to deal with paperwork resulting from emergency vehicles captured on speed cameras contravening speed limits. [170732]

Mr. Raynsford: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Fire Authority Precepts

Mr. Michael Foster: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many complaints he received about the precepts of combined fire authorities for 2004–05 between 10 February and 28 April; [171404]

(2) how many complaints he received about the Hereford and Worcester Combined Fire Authority's precept for 2004–05 between 10 February and 28 April. [171405]

Mr. Raynsford: Over the last three months the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has received a large volume of correspondence about council tax, some covering specific local authorities and others about the council tax system in general. The information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Football Stadium, Falmer

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 19 April, *Official Report*, column 348W, on the football stadium, Falmer, if he will define the nature of representations received following the closure of the inquiry into the proposal for a football stadium at Falmer, East Sussex, which he deems to be relevant in his consideration of the report from his planning inspector. [171513]

Keith Hill: The Inspector's report into the applications made by Brighton and Hove Albion Football Club Ltd. for a new stadium at Falmer is currently before the First Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister for decision, which will be made on the basis of all the available evidence. Representations received after the close of the public inquiry will be taken into account, so far as they are relevant, in making that decision. For reasons of procedural propriety, it is not possible to discuss the nature of the post-inquiry representations received. However, it will be clear from the decision letter what matters have been taken into account and the weight that has been accorded to any particular matter.

My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister is currently engaged in a reference back exercise where he is inviting comments from the relevant parties about issues arising since the close of inquiry. Representations made in relation to this exercise will be copied to those parties. Given the hon. Member's interest in the case, copies of the reference back correspondence will be sent to the hon. Member.

My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister will take into account all comments received in making his decision.

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister on what date he received the report from his planning inspector into the proposal for a football stadium at Falmer, East Sussex; and for what reasons he has not yet announced his decision. [171540]

Keith Hill: The Inspector's report into the applications by Brighton and Hove Albion Football Club Ltd. was received by the First Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister on 11 December 2003.

A decision has yet to be made because my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister is currently engaged in a reference back exercise in relation to this case, which was initiated on 19 March 2004. Comments from the relevant parties about issues arising since the close of inquiry have been invited, specifically representations received about the draft Brighton and Hove Local Plan. It is my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister's view that this exercise will enable him to take a more fully informed decision. It should not be read as an indication of my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister's attitude to the proposals generally one way or the other.

My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister will take into account all comments received in making a decision on the application. Given the hon. Member's interest in the case, copies of the reference back correspondence will be sent to the hon. Member.

Green Belt

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what acreage of land identified as green belt in 1997 has been subsequently declassified, broken down by county; and what acreage classified as non-green belt in 1997 has since been classified as green belt, broken down by county. [171539]

Keith Hill: The hectares of land classified as non-Green Belt in 1997 but classified as Green Belt in 2003 and land declassified as Green Belt between 1997 and 2003 are tabled as followed.

Changes to the extent of Green Belt in England: 1997—2003
hectares

	New classified Green Beltland	*Declassified Green Beltland*
Berkshire	10	0
Cheshire	1,080	0
Derbyshire	0	60
Dorset	160	0
Durham	280	0
Essex	160	0
Hertfordshire	20	30
Kent	0	20
Lancashire	3,850	270
London	0	20
Merseyside	0	160
North Yorkshire	760	60
Northumberland	12,810	0
Nottinghamshire	0	190
Somerset	120	0
South Yorkshire	670	0
Staffordshire	130	0
Surrey	110	50
Tyne and Wear	0	110
West Midlands	200	0
West Yorkshire	0	340
Total	20,360	1,310

Housing

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the effect of the Starter Homes Initiative on the residents of Oldham, West and Royton. [170878]

Keith Hill: I refer my right hon. Friend to the answer given on 29 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1228W.

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on his assessment of how the change in the level of council funding for housing has affected the residents of West Lancashire since 1997. [171546]

Keith Hill: Since 1997 allocations of capital funding to local authorities for housing purposes have risen consistently by about 15 per cent. per annum on average. This includes the Major Repairs Allowance we introduced in 2001–02 specifically for the improvement of local authority stock alongside the Decent Homes standard which sets out minimum standards to be met by 2010. West Lancashire's allocations in the period 1997 to 2003–04 have risen by over 300 per cent. In addition to this welcome increase there has been support through the Community Housing Task Force and Government Office for the North West that has helped the local authority and its tenants to choose the best strategy for long term improvement.

16 local authorities in the North West have transferred all their stock, and five local authorities have transferred part of their stock. This has unlocked £1,739 million in private finance, of which £553 million has gone to local authorities in capital receipts, with the remaining £1,186 million going directly into renovating and maintaining the transferred properties. Four local authorities have schemes on the programme that have not yet transferred, three of which have had positive ballot results. Ellesmere Port and Neston, Halton, Hyndburn, Macclesfield and West Lancashire have been granted places on the 2004 programme.

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he plans to announce the decision on the 2004 housing stock transfer programme. [171266]

Keith Hill: I refer my hon. Friend to the written statement made by my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister on 5 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 80WS.

Ordnance Survey

Mr. Sayeed: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much money from Government *(a)* grants and *(b)* contracts, Ordnance Survey has used to support its commercial aerial activities. [153755]

Yvette Cooper: None.

Mr. Sayeed: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister for what reason Ordnance Survey rejected Getmapping's bid for the Millennium Map to be adopted as the Imagery Layer in Digital National Framework in November 2001. [153757]

Yvette Cooper: Ordnance Survey takes third party data into its databases only after full and careful consideration of content, quality, price and management of intellectual property rights associated with the data

being evaluated. The OJEU process is always used for this purpose when there are alternative sources. To ensure value for money, the costs, benefits and quality of Ordnance Survey's own in-house capability is taken into consideration in these evaluations.

The reasons for rejecting particular third party data are confidential between Ordnance Survey and the third party.

Mr. Sayeed: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many sales Ordnance Survey made of the Millennium Map during the period of its contract as a re-seller of the map. [153759]

Yvette Cooper: Ordnance Survey gave notice to terminate its contract with Getmapping for distribution of Getmapping products in April 2002.

Statistics of commercial sales of partners' products by Ordnance Survey are confidential between Ordnance Survey and its partners.

Planning

John Mann: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the key performance indicators for local authorities are for the delegation of planning decisions to officers. [171432]

Keith Hill: The Local Government Association and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have jointly published revised guidance on schemes of delegation. The document is called "Delivering Delegation" and apart from re-affirming policy on delegation, the document also details the types of decisions that can be delegated and provides best practice models of delegation schemes. This is agreed to be a more effective way of ensuring appropriate levels of delegation than measurement through a formal performance indicator.

Regional Assemblies

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the current and projected elements of the Your Say campaign; and what the total estimated cost is of each. [169259]

Mr. Raynsford: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 366W.

Ann Winterton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what security the proposed regional assemblies would have to give in order to borrow cash. [171498]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects the provisions on security for money borrowed by elected regional assemblies to be similar to those for local authorities following the Local Government Act 2003.

Swarcliffe Pathfinder Scheme

Colin Burgon: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects final approval to be given for the Pathfinder Scheme for Swarcliffe to proceed. [171758]

Keith Hill: Final approval for the Swarcliffe scheme to proceed will be issued following the submission and approval of the Scheme's Final Business Case.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Castlereagh College

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what action has been taken to ensure Castlereagh College is able to offer assistance and training to people who face redundancy in the Castlereagh/East Belfast and Strangford areas; and if he will make a statement. [171028]

Mr. Spellar: As part of its role in supporting local economic development, Castlereagh College is well placed to offer assistance and training to people facing redundancy in the Castlereagh, East Belfast and Strangford areas. Of particular relevance is the College's new service, "Conexus" which links the College's vocational, employability and business programmes. The range of services offered by Conexus includes:

individual career advice and guidance;

individual guidance on learning and retraining opportunities;

identification of learning needs and the development and delivery of tailored solutions;

a range of programmes to enhance employability and provide qualifications linked to industry's needs; and

extensive links with other economic agencies and local employers.

Cigarettes

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) when he expects to reply to the questions, reference *(a)* 159955 and *(b)* 159956, tabled by the hon. Member for East Antrim on 8 March 2004; [172047]

(2) how many container loads of cigarettes have been reported stolen in Northern Ireland in the last 12 months for which records are available; [159956]

(3) what the *(a)* total number of cigarettes and *(b)* total amount of tobacco seized by Customs and Excise in Northern Ireland was in the last 12 months for which records are available. [159955]

Mr. Pearson: I am sorry for the delay in replying.

Regarding the number of container loads of cigarettes stolen in Northern Ireland (question reference 159956), a substantial search of records is required to collate the information requested. I will write to the hon. Gentleman with this information once it is available. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library.

The total quantity of cigarettes and hand rolling tobacco seized by Customs in 2002–03 (question reference 159955) is set out in the Annual Report of the Commissioners of HM Customs and Excise published in December 2003, copies of which are available in the House of Commons Library. The location of a seizure is by no means an indication of the location of the illicit market for which they are bound. Specifically in Northern Ireland in 2002–03 Customs seized 31.5 million cigarettes and 731 kilos of hand rolling tobacco.

Disabled People (Education)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what provision is being made to assist disabled people in undertaking courses at each of Northern Ireland's universities. [171004]

Mr. Gardiner: The Department for Employment and Learning has in place a number of specific actions designed to promote access to Higher Education by students with disabilities. These include a funding premium, special project funding and capital funding. The universities might, for example, use this funding to provide specialist equipment or specific support for students with a disability.

The Department also provides the universities with special project funding under the "Improving Provision for Disabled Students" initiative. Queen's University Belfast (QUB) has received special project funding to support a Disability Services Co-ordinator, and to support a project entitled "To Enhance Employment opportunities for Students with Disabilities". The University of Ulster (UU) has received special project funding to establish, in partnership with QUB Institute, a register of freelance professional and non-professional support workers, including dyslexia support workers, readers and notetakers, to assist students with disabilities.

QUB and UU have received Disability Capital Funding from the Department, which is aimed at assisting the universities in funding essential capital works to provide, for example, ramps, lift adaptations, disabled toilets, carparking for the disabled, alarm system adaptations for the deaf and visually impaired and automatic doors.

Energy Efficiency

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what measures are in place to encourage energy efficiency in Northern Ireland. [168191]

Mr. Gardiner: Statutory responsibility for energy efficiency in Northern Ireland is shared between a number of Government Departments and Agencies which have committed approximately £16 million in programmes sponsored during 2003. In addition the private sector is also playing an active role.

The Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment is responsible for overall energy policy, including the development of a strategic and co-ordinated approach to energy efficiency. In addition, Invest NI promotes energy efficiency in the industrial and commercial sectors and provides a programme of support to businesses. During January 2004 Invest NI ran the Northern Ireland Energy Show attended by almost 1,000 delegates. A programme of 10 master classes, facilitated by industry experts, supported the exhibition.

The Department for Social Development has lead responsibility for energy efficiency in the domestic housing sector, working closely with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. Details of the housing measures are contained in the Home Energy Conservation Report which is published annually and copied to all Northern Ireland MPs and MLAs. A copy is available in the Library.

Northern Ireland Electricity manages the Customer Energy Efficiency Levy programme, with an annual fund of approximately £3.8 million, 80 per cent. of which is used for 'whole house' solutions in homes that are likely to be at risk from fuel poverty.

The Energy Savings Trust funds two Energy Efficiency Advice Centres which provide free and impartial energy advice to domestic consumers.

The Carbon Trust, with funding support from Invest NI, manages the "Action Energy" programme, including promotional events, advice on energy efficiency best practice, and interest free loans for energy efficiency projects to small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Over the past three years, through over 800 energy audits with North Ireland businesses, the Action Energy programme has identified energy savings in excess of £30 million.

The Department of Finance and Personnel operates a programme of energy efficiency measures in the public sector that includes the:

Benchmarking of each building occupied by a public body for its energy performance and emissions of carbon dioxide;

Provision of additional funding to enable public bodies to implement energy saving improvements to buildings which cannot be funded from normal budget allocations;

Provision of training courses in energy awareness and management for relevant staff throughout all Government Departments; and

Purchase of electricity generated from renewable sources (green electricity) where this represents value for money.

Football

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make it his policy not to draw from the £8 million Soccer Strategy budget the money required to bring the Windsor Park stadium up to the required standard to permit the World Cup qualifying matches against England and Wales to be held at the stadium. [170202]

Angela Smith: To date, no element of the £8 million Soccer Strategy budget has been earmarked for Windsor Park. However, an indicative sum of £3 million has been earmarked from Soccer Strategy monies for playing facilities generally. Bringing Windsor Park up to the required standard for the World Cup qualifiers against England and Wales could be considered as part of the playing facilities component of the Strategy but I would emphasise that responsibility for resolving any deficiencies at Windsor Park, and identifying appropriate sources of funding for that purpose, rests with the IFA and the owners of the venue.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much money has been allocated to bring Windsor Park stadium up to the required standard to permit the World Cup qualifying matches against England and Wales to be held at the stadium. [170203]

Angela Smith: Responsibility for bringing Windsor Park stadium up to the required standard to permit the World Cup qualifiers against England and Wales to be held at the stadium rests with the governing body of Football in Northern Ireland, the Irish Football Association (IFA), and the owners of Windsor Park, Linfield FC. As no request for Government funding has been received either from the IFA or Linfield FC for this purpose, no Government money has been allocated.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the nature is of the relationship between Windsor Park and the Northern Ireland international football team in relation to the staging of international fixtures. [170205]

Angela Smith: Responsibility for staging international football matches rests with the Irish Football Association (IFA). Under an agreement, between Linfield Football Club and the IFA the home internationals are staged at Windsor Park.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what Government assistance has been provided for the Irish Football Association's youth development programme through its School of Excellence. [170244]

Angela Smith: Government has provided via the Sports Council for Northern Ireland, a £1.6 million funding package for the Irish Football Association's (IFA) Youth Development Programme over a three-year period. This funding package is directed to the IFA's Football Development Centres rather than a School of Excellence. So far 25 youth Football Development Centres, have been established across Northern Ireland with a total spend of £1.2 million to date.

Independent Monitoring Commission

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what sanctions are available to the Government regarding the Independent Monitoring Commission Report and its conclusions in respect of Sinn Fein. [170455]

Mr. Spellar: Under the Northern Ireland Act 1998, as amended by the Northern Ireland (Monitoring Commission etc.) Act 2003 and the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Northern Ireland Act 2000 (Modification) Order 2004 (S.I. 2004/1164), my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, may take steps to reduce financial assistance to Assembly parties or the pay of Members of the Assembly for a period of up to 12 months if *(a)* the Monitoring Commission has made a report containing a recommendation about steps which are steps that the Assembly might consider taking were section 1 of the Northern Ireland Act 2000 not in force; and *(b)* the taking of those steps would have required the passing of an Assembly resolution in relation to a political party.

The Secretary of State must also be satisfied either that the party in question is not committed to non-violence and exclusively peaceful and democratic means; or that the party is not committed to such of its Members as might become Ministers or junior Ministers observing the other terms of the pledge of office.

La Mon Bombing

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 30 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1332W, whether search and log records for the night of 17 February 1978 have been retained in a location other than within the investigations file and HM Coroner's reports relating to the La Mon bombing. [165692]

Mr. Pearson: Further to the answer that my right hon. Friend (Jane Kennedy) gave the hon. Gentleman on 30 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1332W, I am advised that further inquiries have been carried out as a result of the hon. Gentleman's Question by the District Commander of Castlereagh into the retention of any search records and logs for the La Mon bombing in 1978. The inquiries were carried out in Castlereagh District Command Unit, Ards District Command Unit and in other DCUs where persons were arrested in connection with the incident, however no search records or logs have come to light.

I understand that force policy in respect of search records was first issued in 1983.

Lyric Theatre (Belfast)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the amount of Lottery Art Fund money being made available for the re-development of the Lyric Theatre in Belfast. [168471]

Angela Smith: Since 1996 the Arts Council Lottery Fund has made awards totalling £95,000 towards proposals for the re-development of the Lyric Theatre. The Council also awarded £2 million in-principle in December 2003 towards the costs, estimated at £117 million, of rebuilding the Theatre on its current site. With an annual income of approximately £7 million (dependent on ticket sales) the Arts Council is not in a position to make large capital awards.

Decisions on individual arts lottery awards are a matter for the Arts Council and are made independently of Government, although I welcome the awards made.

The current condition of the Lyric Theatre is one of a number of identified weaknesses in Belfast's arts infrastructure. My Department is working with the Arts Council to develop an investment strategy for addressing these deficiencies, building on the lottery funding already committed by the Arts Council.

National Stadium

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on *(a)* the progress with the search for a site for the proposed National Stadium for Northern Ireland and *(b)* the proposed timescale of the project. [170242]

Angela Smith: Recently, I invited the Strategic Investment Board (SIB) to undertake a robust business planning exercise to consider whether a multi-sports stadium to accommodate Soccer, Rugby and Gaelic Games is a long-term, commercially viable proposition in revenue terms. The issue of location is not being addressed at this stage but may be considered if the viability of a multi-sports stadium is established.

Planning Policy

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made in reviewing the remit and powers of the Planning Appeals Commission; and if he will make a statement. [169921]

Angela Smith: The Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) was subject to a quinquennial review during 2002 and the report of that review is available on the OFMDFM website (http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/pac/pacreport/index.htm).

The purpose of the quinquennial review was to consider three main issues: the need for the functions performed by the PAC, organisational options for delivery of these functions and the performance of the PAC in meeting the needs identified.

There are no plans at present to conduct a further review.

Police Service

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the Police Service of Northern Ireland will be adopting the colour vision requirements arising from his Department's review of the medical assessment process for police recruits. [170204]

Mr. Pearson: The Home Office undertook a review of police recruitment medical standards. Part of this work entailed a review of the eyesight standards relating to both visual acuity and colour vision. The work was completed last year and the recommendations introduced in England and Wales.

When the new standard was introduced PSNI considered the findings. An area of concern centred on the fact that the new standards took no cognisance of handling firearms safely since this is not a requirement for officers in England and Wales.

It was therefore decided not to adopt the new standard until the particular circumstances pertaining to PSNI were reviewed. A research project has been established to ascertain the justifiable requirements for visual standards for recruits to PSNI.

PSNI are presently awaiting the findings of this research, which will be considered in association with the standards in England and Wales.

Policing Board

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many meetings of *(a)* the Northern Ireland Policing Board, *(b)* its sub-committees and *(c)* other events related to their membership each member of the board (i) was entitled to attend and (ii) actually attended. [170406]

Mr. Pearson: The information requested in respect of meetings of the Northern Ireland Policing Board is detailed in the following table.

In respect of the information relating to attendance at sub committees and other events I would invite my hon. Friend to write directly to the Chairman of the Policing Board for Northern Ireland at the following address.

Professor Desmond Rea,
Chairman
Policing Board for Northern Ireland,
Waterside Tower,
31 Clarendon Road,
Clarendon Dock,
Belfast
BT1 3BG.

Attendance at Northern Ireland Policing Board meetings held during the period 4 November 2001 to 30 April 2004

Member	*Number of meetings attended (possible)*
Mr. Alex Attwood	28 (29)
Mr. Denis Bradley (Vice Chairman)	28 (29)
Viscount Brookeborough	25 (29)
Mr. Joe Byrne	27 (29)
Mr. Fred Cobain	28 (29)
Mr. Ivan Davis	5 (5)
Mr. Brian Dougherty	27 (29)
Mr. Sam Foster	23 (24)
Mr. Barry Gilligan	28 (29)
Mr. Willie Hay	26 (29)
Mr. Tom Kelly	21 (29)
Lord Kilclooney	18 (29)
Mr. James Leslie	5 (5)
Mrs. Pauline McCabe	28 (29)
Mr. Alan McFarland	24 (24)
Mr. Eddie McGrady	22 (29)
Mrs. Rosaleen Moore	25 (29)
Mr. Ian Paisley Jnr.	29 (29)
Prof Desmond Rea (Chairman)	29 (29)
Mr. Suniel Sharma	21 (29)
Mr. Sammy Wilson	29 (29)

Notes:

1. The total number of board meetings that it would have been possible for each member to attend is shown in brackets.
2. Mr. Ivan Davis and Mr. James Leslie left the board on 19 February 2002 and were replaced by Mr. Sam Foster and Mr. Alan McFarland on 20 February 2002.

School Transport

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will amend the relevant legislation to reduce the number of pupils Translink is entitled to carry on each school bus journey. [171002]

Angela Smith: Home-to-school bus transport was the subject of an extensive inquiry instigated by the Northern Ireland Assembly's Environment Committee. The Department of the Environment is at present engaged in the initial stages of preparing a Regulatory Impact Assessment of the Committee's main recommendations, including those aimed at reducing the number of children permitted to travel on each bus. The way forward will be considered in the light of findings arising from this exercise.

Tourist Board

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much capital grant has been paid by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board in each parliamentary constituency during the last five years. [170436]

Mr. Pearson: The total capital grant paid by the NITB in each parliamentary constituency during the last five years is as follows.

Financial assistance paid to all tourism projects by constituency

£

Constituency	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	Total
Across all constituencies and Cross border	5,295	76,143	54,740	34,842	500	171,520
Belfast, East	38,300	2,200	2,000	10,500	26,000	79,000
Belfast, North	213,256	232,515	15,529	5,000	2,000	468,300
Belfast, South	555,579	1,335,651	1,941,769	16,686	13,801	3,863,486
Belfast, West	3,461	20,000	741,500	20,000	0	784,961
East Antrim	4595	74,613	1,004,280	132,330	700	1,252,518
East Londonderry	58,975	680,564	424,041	394,880	30,114	1,588,574
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	490,529	513,891	1,529,299	216,671	3,000	2,753,390
Foyle	394,825	671,388	516,529	2,606,564	26,189	4,215,495
Lagan Valley	5,600	73,716	23,837	27,788	3,800	134,741
Mid Ulster	44,738	37,786	230,574	119,655	30,825	463,578
Newry and Armagh	160,642	387,311	1,442,727	1,749,394	46,693	3,786,767
North Antrim	386,518	952,746	1,060,944	119,013	10,573	2,529,794
North Down	52,106	43,939	12,527	10,700	26,000	145,272
South Antrim	1,290,105	52,856	93,735	98,842	2,000	1,537,538
South Down	1,165,554	2,335,992	821,966	286,707	15,555	4,625,774
Strangford	356,175	69,390	248,675	5,000	65,911	745,151
Upper Bann	70,185	2,059	46,136	13,806	500	132,686
West Tyrone	149,069	356,287	235,418	4,369	0	745,143
Totals	5,481,507	7,919,047	10,446,226	5,872,747	304,161	30,023,688

Triple Test (Pregnant Women)

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what guidelines have been issued to each of the Northern Ireland health boards regarding the triple test for pregnant women. [171797]

Angela Smith: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave him on 25 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 954W.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Social Security Appeals

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs when he expects the appeal lodged with the social security commissioners by John Sheridan of Birkenhead to be heard. [171444]

Mr. Lammy: Mr. Sheridan's application to set aside the previous Commissioners' ruling of 6 January 2004, which deemed the application for Leave to Appeal to be Out of Time, is currently before a Social Security Commissioner for consideration of the grounds. A notice will be issued to all parties in the coming weeks.

19th Century Census

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs in which year MyFamily.com. Inc. is likely to make the census for *(a)* 1861, *(b)* 1871, *(c)* 1881 and *(d)* 1891 available on the internet. [171705]

Mr. Leslie: The census returns 1861–1891 for England and Wales are included in the non-exclusive licence granted by the National Archives to MyFamily.com. The timing of the public release of the material covered by non-exclusive licences is entirely a matter for the company concerned.

MyFamily.com has announced on its website that the 1891 Census returns for England and Wales are now available online. The 1871 Census returns are also in the early stages of release on their website. There is currently no information on its website relating to the release of the 1861 or 1881 Census returns.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs when the non-exclusive licence was granted to MyFamily.com Inc. to digitise the decennial population census return from 1841 to 1901; and at what rate a royalty charge is made for the licence. [171706]

Mr. Leslie: MyFamily.com was granted a non-exclusive licence agreement with the National Archives to digitise and distribute images of the enumerators' census returns for England and Wales 1841–1891 in June 2002, with a subsequent amendment in September 2002 to include the 1901 Census returns.

In line with HMSO guidelines, the royalty rate for such a non-exclusive licence is a flat 7 per cent. of net revenues.

Crown Courts

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what guidance is given to Crown courts regarding the provision of facilities for the press; and if he will make a statement. [171573]

Mr. Leslie: The Court Standards and Design Guide sets out the accommodation requirements for courts and includes provision for a press assembly room at all Crown court centres for use by members of the press attending court. The number of courtrooms in the building determines the size of the room. Dedicated seating for members of the press is also provided within each courtroom. Additional facilities can be made available for the press where there is a specific need, such as when a court is hearing a case attracting high public interest.

Departmental Procurement

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs

what percentage of the *(a)* crockery, *(b)* cutlery and *(c)* glassware procured by his Department over the last five years is of British manufacture. [170794]

Mr. Leslie: The vast majority of my Department's catering requirements are provided by contracts which include the provision of crockery, cutlery and glassware. When my Department procures these products directly it is done locally, on an ad hoc basis. Detailed information could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

European Constitution Referendum

Llew Smith: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what his policy is on the apportionment of public funds to the *(a)* No and *(b)* Yes campaigns on the European Constitution Referendum. [170985]

Mr. Leslie: The Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 makes the Electoral Commission responsible for distributing public funds to the designated organisations that will serve as the No and Yes campaigns in any referendum. The legislation provides for grants from the Electoral Commission of up to £600,000 to be distributed to each designated organisation.

Each designated organisation is allowed to send one referendum address free of charge; to use, on application, public rooms such as schools and libraries free of charge for holding public meetings in the 28 days ending with the day before the date of the poll; and is entitled to referendum campaign broadcasts, the length and frequency of which will be determined by the licensing body having regard to any views expressed by the Electoral Commission.

Fine Collection

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on the collection of fines imposed by magistrates' courts in *(a)* Chorley, *(b)* Leyland, *(c)* Preston, *(d)* Blackburn and *(e)* West Lancashire. [172067]

Mr. Leslie: Data on the collection of fines is collected at Magistrates' Court Committee (MCC) level. I am therefore only able to provide data for Lancashire MCC as a whole. There has been a steady improvement in the fine collection performance of Lancashire MCC over the last year. The payment rate stood at 90 per cent. in the last quarter of the 2003–04 financial year, against the national payment rate of 76 per cent. for the same period.

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on the collection of fines imposed by magistrates' courts in Stockton South. [171463]

Mr. Leslie: Data on the collection of fines is collected at Magistrates' Court Committee (MCC) level. I am therefore only able to provide data for Cleveland MCC as a whole. There has been a steady improvement in the fine collection performance of the Cleveland MCC over the last year. The 2003–04 payment rate stands at 91 per cent. at the end of March 2004 against the national payment rate of 76 per cent. in the last quarter of the 2003–04 financial year.

Older People

Mr. Webb: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs for what *(a)* initiatives, *(b)* campaigns and *(c)* advisory bodies relating to older people his Department and its predecessor (i) is responsible and (ii) has provided funding since 2001; and what the cost in each year was for each one. [166241]

Mr. Lammy: For the last two years, my Department has been a member of the Employers Forum on Age and paid a subscription of £2,115 in 2002 and again in 2003.

My Department is also responsible for policy on mental incapacity, which affects a significant number of older people, and plans to introduce legislation better to protect those affected by incapacity.

From 1 April, the Public Guardianship Office, whose role is to protect the finances of people with mental incapacity has embarked on a project to raise awareness of its services. Activities are being piloted in Dorset and will include things such as having leaflets in doctors' surgeries, as well as being available to district and practice nurses. Information will also be given to Pension Service staff running pension clinics/surgeries, as well as to relevant local authority staff

Details of other relevant initiatives are provided in the table below:

£

Name of Initiative	*Funding 2001*	*Funding 2002*	*Funding 2003*
Establishment of a mental Incapacity Consultative Forum involving a wide range of stakeholders including organisations representing older people.	—	5,000	5,000
Review and improvement of the procedures for creating Enduring Powers of Attorney (EPAs) to better enable people to plan for the future by delegating decision making about financial affairs to relatives, friends or professionals in the event of loss of mental capacity.	—	No funding involved as the professionals involved in the working group did so on a voluntary basis.	No funding involved as the professionals involved in the working group did so on a voluntary basis.
Research project—The role of the Public Guardianship Office in safeguarding vulnerable adults against financial abuse (Funded by the Public Guardianship Office)	—	—	60,000
Publication of the Draft Mental Incapacity Bill	—	—	Ongoing
Making Decisions Booklet—Planning for future incapacity	—	—	10,000 approx.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Brazil

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the UK Government has made to the Government of Brazil over its stance on international inspection access to its uranium enrichment facilities. [170864]

Mr. MacShane: As with all other states that have not done so, we regularly urge Brazil to sign and ratify the Additional Protocol to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which covers access to facilities by International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors.

Discussions between the Government of Brazil and the IAEA concerning access are continuing, and we look forward to a satisfactory outcome in due course.

Colombia

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received concerning the plans of President Uribe in Colombia to pass a constitutional amendment in order to allow him to run for a second term; and if he will make a statement. [170239]

Mr. Rammell: Through our Embassy in Bogota we are monitoring the on-going debate within Colombia on the question of allowing a serving or former President to stand for re-election. Clearly such a step must be agreed through the proper constitutional channels. This is an internal matter for the people of Colombia and their elected representatives to decide, and one that would involve a lengthy legislative process including approval from the country's Constitutional Court. In any event, we will continue to work with the democratically elected Government of Colombia on issues of mutual interest.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations Her Majesty's Government have made to the Colombian Government concerning the protection of human rights defenders in that country; and if he will make a statement. [170241]

Mr. Rammell: We make frequent representations to the Government of Colombia on human rights matters, including the important issue of the safety of human rights defenders. Human rights are at the heart of our policy towards Colombia. Our Embassy in Bogota last discussed these issues with the Colombian Government on 21 April. The need to respect human rights defenders and the work of their organisations was highlighted in the statement by the Chairperson on "the Situation of Human Rights in Colombia" at the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva only last month. It was also underlined in the EU statement on Colombia at the same forum.

Cuba

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received from the mission in Havana concerning the commencement of the trial of the human rights dissident Juan Carlos Gonzalez Leiva. [170268]

Mr. Rammell: Juan Carlos Gonzalez Leiva was tried and found guilty, at his trial on 26 April 2004, of disrespect for authority, public disorder, disobedience and resisting arrest. He was sentenced to four years. At the time of his trial, Mr. Leiva had already spent two years in jail without trial. He was released by the court on 26 April, under terms similar to parole. The trial was originally scheduled for 27 April but was brought forward by a day at short notice, presumably to avoid attendance by international observers.

The EU regularly issues statements condemning the imprisonment of human rights activists, and most recently, on 12 March 2004, we again called upon the Cuban Government to release without delay all the imprisoned dissidents.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government requested observer status at the trial in Cuba of Juan Carlos Gonzalez Leiva; and if he will make a statement. [170269]

Mr. Rammell: Officials of the British Embassy in Havana did not request observer status at the trial, but have followed Juan Carlos Gonzalez Leiva's case closely and have been in regular contact with his family. Embassy officials spoke to Mr Leiva on Tuesday 27 April, a day after his trial.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations Her Majesty's Government has made to the Cuban Government concerning the imprisonment of human rights activists in Cuba; and if he will make a statement. [170270]

Mr. Rammell: UK policy on Cuba is governed by the EU Common Position, which has human rights enshrined as its key principle. The EU regularly issues statements condemning the imprisonment of human rights activists and other political prisoners. Most recently, on 12 March 2004 we called upon the Cuban Government to reflect on the significance of the granting of the UNESCO World Press Freedom Prize to Raul Rivero and again called for the release of all the imprisoned dissidents. I also raised our concerns at these imprisonments with the Cuban Ambassador in London.

Departmental Officials

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, which former officials of the Department have asked for permission to join *(a)* PricewaterhouseCoopers, *(b)* Deloitte & Touche, *(c)* Ernst and Young and *(d)* KPMG. [156902]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[pursuant to his answer, 3 March 2004, Official Report, c. 978W]:* I have become aware that Sir Andrew Woods, ex-Ambassador to Moscow sought permission in April 2000 to join Ernst and Young, and took up the appointment in May 2000. This was listed in the Fourth Report of the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments. I am unaware of any former officials of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office who since 1998 have asked for permission to join PricewaterhouseCoopers, Deloitte & Touche or KPMG.

To locate individual requests from officials earlier than 1998 would incur disproportionate costs.

EU Constitution

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much money, and what assistance in kind, his Department is giving to support the Conference on the proposed EU Constitution organised by the Federal Trust and scheduled to take place on 1 and 2 July 2004; and how much money his Department *(a)* has committed and *(b)* plans to commit to support events which are favourably disposed towards UK accession to a treaty creating an EU constitution. [169390]

Mr. MacShane: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office will provide a speaker and £2,000 to fund the associated lunch for the conference to take place on 1 and 2 July organised by the Federal Trust for Education and Research and the University Association for Contemporary European Studies (UACES). This is an academic event co-organised by the main coordinating body of academics interested in Europe (UACES), and seeks to debate rather than 'promote' the draft EU Constitutional Treaty. Agreement has not yet been reached on the EU Constitutional Treaty and decisions on funding of related events will be taken in due course.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs in what way the proposed European constitution takes into consideration cultural and religious diversity. [171308]

Mr. MacShane: Article 1.3.3 of the draft EU Constitution states that, as one of its objectives, "the Union shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity and shall ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced". Article 1.51 makes it clear that while religion remains a matter for individual Member States, the Union equally respects the status of all religious and secular organisations.

European Council of Ministers

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on *(a)* the transitional arrangements for voting and *(b)* the qualified majority voting requirements in the Council of Ministers. [171499]

Mr. MacShane: Under the terms of the 2003 Treaty of Accession, which came into force on 1 May 2004, the new Member States have been incorporated into the present system of voting in the Council of Ministers.

The allocation of votes when the Council is required to act by a qualified majority is as follows:

Belgium	5
Czech Republic	5
Denmark	3
Germany	10
Estonia	3
Greece	5
Spain	8
France	10
Ireland	3
Italy	10
Cyprus	2
Latvia	3
Lithuania	3
Luxembourg	2
Hungary	5
Malta	2
Netherlands	5
Austria	4
Poland	8
Portugal	5
Slovenia	3
Slovakia	3
Finland	3
Sweden	4
United Kingdom	10

For their adoption, acts of the Council require at least 88 votes in favour cast by at least two-thirds of the members.

This will continue until the new voting arrangements under the Treaty of Nice come into effect on 1 November 2004.

Gaza Strip

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the Israeli Government concerning the effect of border restrictions on the ability of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency to distribute emergency food aid to refugees in the Gaza Strip. [171119]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We have made clear to the Israeli Charge in London and to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Israel, our view that the restrictions placed on UN Relief and Works Agency aid operations at Erez crossings are inconsistent with Israel's acknowledgement that humanitarian assistance should be provided to the Palestinian population. We have urged the Israeli Government to ensure aid agencies have clear guidelines concerning access to Gaza and that restrictions are significantly eased. The EU Presidency was lobbied along similar lines.

Indonesia

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Indonesia concerning *(a)* the attack by masked gunmen on Christians at the Tabernacle Church in Kilo Village, Poso District, Sulawesi, *(b)* the murder of the Reverend Freddy Wuisan, *(c)* the shooting of Rosia Pilongo, the Dean of the Law Department of Sintuwu Maroso University, Silawesi, and *(d)* the shooting of Jhon Christian Tanalida close to Poso City, Silawesi. [168574]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The British Ambassador in Jakarta last raised our concerns about the situation in Central Sulawesi, including the cases referred to at a meeting with the Coordinating Minister for Welfare on 20 April 2004. We continue to urge the Indonesian Government to do all they can to ensure the safety and security of communities that have been affected by the violence in Central Sulawesi.

Together with our European partners we are in regular dialogue with the Indonesian Government and urge them to encourage religious freedom, maintain law and order and promote reconciliation in areas of conflict. We also seek opportunities to work with the Indonesian authorities on measures to resolve inter-communal violence in areas such as Sulawesi. We welcome the Indonesian Government's initiatives to bring peace to its troubled provinces.

Iraq

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many incidents of *(a)* unlawful destruction of property and *(b)* collective punishment there were in each month since the end of the original major conflict in Iraq, in the sector controlled by the British occupying forces. [168078]

Mr. Rammell: The UK strongly denies allegations that we have been involved in collective punishments, including the destruction of property, and would fully investigate any such allegation. Where property or land has been destroyed during the course of coalition activities we understand that the owners have been compensated.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether all public servants acting on behalf of the United Kingdom in Iraq after the hand-over of sovereignty will continue to enjoy legal immunity in Iraqi law. [170184]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We are finalising the detailed arrangements for the transition. An important element of those arrangements will be to ensure that appropriate measures are in place to safeguard the legal position of UK public servants after the handover of power to the Iraqi Interim Government.

Israel (Targeted Assassinations)

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on his policy towards Israel's targeted assassinations policy. [169853]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We have repeatedly made clear to the Government of Israel that their policy of targeted assassinations is illegal, unjustified and counter-productive. Both Israel and the Palestinians must refrain from actions that may further escalate tensions, including any more such killings.

Maldives

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the Government's relations with the Maldives. [172054]

Mr. Rammell: The UK enjoys good relations with the Maldives, a fellow member of the Commonwealth. The British High Commissioner in Colombo (accredited to the Maldives) visits regularly, most recently from 19 to 22 March when he met the Foreign Minister and the Minister for Home Affairs among others.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action the Commonwealth has taken to encourage multi-party politics in the Maldives. [172055]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: It is for the Commonwealth Secretariat to comment on any action they may have taken to encourage multi-party politics in the Maldives. The Commonwealth Secretary General visited the Maldives in January 2003.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what official contacts his Department has had with representatives of the Democratic Party of the Maldives. [172056]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Officials in London and at our High Commission in Colombo (accredited to the Maldives) have met representatives of the Maldivian Democratic Party several times, most recently on 24 March.

Nuclear Non-Proliferation

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what means other than the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty the Government are seeking to use to *(a)* strengthen the inspection and monitoring of uranium enrichment facilities and *(b)* restrict the extension of such facilities. [171037]

Mr. MacShane *[holding answer 6 May 2004]:* As my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary made clear in his statement of 25 February 2004, *Official Report*, columns 46–49WS, on Weapons of Mass Destruction, recent experience has shown there is a need for more wide-ranging inspections of national nuclear industries. The International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) Additional Protocol provides the basis for carrying out such inspections. We seek universal adherence to the Additional Protocol and believe suppliers of nuclear technology should increasingly see this as a key commitment when they judge export licence applications. We are working with partners to enhance the effectiveness of the IAEA and strengthen its ability to ensure that nations comply with their safeguards agreements.

There is a strong argument that states which fail to comply with their safeguards obligations should forfeit the right to develop the nuclear fuel cycle, particularly the enrichment and reprocessing capabilities which are of such proliferation sensitivity. This would not deprive them of the possibility of constructing and running civil nuclear power stations but would prevent a seemingly civil programme masking a weapons programme.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action the UK Government have taken to *(a)* support and *(b)* implement the Proliferation Security Initiative. [171038]

Mr. MacShane *[holding answer 6 May 2004]:* Since the launch of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) in May 2003 the UK has been one of a core group of countries working to drive the initiative forward. This has involved intensive worldwide lobbying efforts in

support of the Statement of Interdiction Principles agreed at Paris in September 2003. To date, more than 60 countries have expressed their support for PSI and their intention to apply its principles.

We want the PSI to become an established, accepted and effective part of the international security architecture. To that end, we are working with partners in the context of the International Maritime Organisation to make it an internationally recognised offence to transport weapons of mass destruction (WMD), their delivery systems and related materials on commercial vessels. To extend the legal base of interdiction operations we are opening negotiations with major commercial flag states to allow for the boarding of vessels which may be carrying cargoes which could be used in WMD programmes. We are currently examining a range of measures to deter proliferators and further raise the political and economic costs of trafficking in WMD.

We will continue to take the necessary steps to strengthen our capacity to act effectively as and when required to take action consistent with the PSI Statement of Interdiction Principles.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent steps the Government have taken to prevent the proliferation of missile and nuclear weapon technology from North Korea. [171039]

Mr. MacShane *[holding answer 6 May 2004]:* The Government support fully the six-party talks process aimed at ensuring compliance by North Korea with the ideals of a nuclear-free Korean peninsula, and persuading them to comply with their obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

We are also playing a principal role in the Proliferation Security Initiative which, while it does not specifically target any particular state, aims to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and technology associated with such weapons.

Peru

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what reports the UK mission in Peru has received concerning the date of the review of the case of Walter Cubas Balathazar; and if he will make a statement; [170240]

(2) what representations the Government have made to the Peruvian Government *(a)* in support of Mr. Cubas Balathazar and *(b)* in opposition to his detention; and if he will make a statement. [170277]

Mr. Rammell: Our Embassy in Lima raised the matter with the Ministry of Justice in July and November 2002, and again this April. We understand from the Peruvian authorities that the first hearing of Walter Cubas Balathazar's re-trial before the normal criminal justice system will be held on 14 May 2004. Our Embassy will continue to monitor closely this and all other similar cases. We support the Peruvian Government's efforts to improve and protect human rights for all Peruvians. We maintain a good dialogue with Peru on human rights.

DEFENCE

Arctic Convoys

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many of those who served on the Arctic convoys during the Second World War received the Russian 40th Anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War medal. [170357]

Mr. Caplin: The Royal Navy Medal Office issued approximately 15,000 Russian 40th Anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War medals during the early 1990s to eligible Royal Navy, Royal Marine, Army, Royal Air Force and Merchant Navy personnel. It would not be possible to provide a more precise figure without a manual trawl through the relevant service records at disproportionate cost. In addition the Russian Embassy in London issued medals directly to members of both the Russian Convoy Club and the North Russia Club, but the numbers involved are not known.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many of those who served on the Arctic Convoys during the Second World War received the Atlantic Star. [170358]

Mr. Caplin: There is no definitive Medal Roll which indicates how many people received the Atlantic Star. It would not, therefore, be possible to establish how many recipients of the Atlantic Star sailed in Arctic waters on the convoys to Russia without undertaking an individual check of all the wartime personnel records which could be done only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimates he has made of the cost to the Department of awarding a medal for service on the Arctic convoys. [171121]

Mr. Caplin: It is not possible to determine with any certainty how many people served in Arctic waters during the Second World War, but it is estimated that more than 95,000 Royal Navy personnel may have done so. The cost of issuing a new medal to Royal Navy veterans alone, including staff costs and the cost of the medal itself, would be at least £14 million if all those eligible or their next of kin applied.

Catterick Barracks (Medical Personnel)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many medical personnel are based at Catterick Barracks, broken down by *(a)* service, *(b)* rank and *(c)* specialisation. [170004]

Mr. Caplin: There are 32 medical personnel, six GPs and 26 Combat Medical Technicians, based at Catterick Garrison, all of whom are Army personnel. They are ranked as follows: two Lieutenant Colonels; one Major; three Captains; one Colour Sergeant; three Sergeants; four Corporals; five Lance Corporals and 13 Privates.

Defence Agencies (Scotland)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many people worked for *(a)* the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency in Scotland and *(b)* the Defence Secondary Care Agency in

Scotland on 1 April; what the overall personnel costs were for each agency (i) on that date and (ii) on 1 April 2003; and if he will make a statement; [170439]

(2) how many people worked for the *(a)* Veterans Agency, *(b)* British Forces Post Office, *(c)* Defence Vetting Agency and *(d)* Defence Medical Education and Training Agency in Scotland on 1 April; what the overall personnel costs were for each agency (i) on that date and (ii) on 1 April 2003; and if he will make a statement; [170443]

(3) how many people worked for *(a)* the Armed Forces Personnel and Administration Agency, *(b)* the Defence Intelligence and Security Centre, *(c)* Defence Estates and *(d)* the Defence Geographic and Imagery Intelligence Agency in Scotland on 1st April; what the overall personnel costs were for each agency (i) on that date and (ii) on 1st April 2003; and if he will make a statement; [170447]

(4) how many people worked for *(a)* the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office, *(b)* the Defence Export Services Organisation in Scotland, *(c)* the Defence Medical Services in Scotland and *(d)* the Base Repair Organisation in Scotland on 1 April; what the overall personnel costs were for each agency (i) on that date and (ii) on 1April 2003; and if he will make a statement; [170441]

(5) how many people worked for the *(a)* Defence Transport and Movements Agency, *(b)* Medical Supplies Agency, *(c)* Defence Communications Services Agency and *(d)* Defence Storage and Distribution Agency in Scotland on 1 April; what the overall personnel costs were for each agency (i) on that date and (ii) on 1 April 2003; and if he will make a statement; [170444]

(6) how many people worked for the *(a)* RAF Personnel Manning Agency, *(b)* RAF Training Group Defence Agency, *(c)* Warship Support Agency and *(d)* Defence Procurement Agency in Scotland on 1 April; what the overall personnel costs were for each agency (i) on that date and (ii) on 1 April 2003; and if he will make a statement; [170445]

(7) how many people worked for *(a)* the Disposal Services Agency, *(b)* the Pay and Personnel Agency, *(c)* the Defence Aviation Repair Agency and *(d)* the Meteorological Office in Scotland on 1 April; what the overall personnel costs were for each agency (i) on that date and (ii) on 1 April 2003; and if he will make a statement; [170442]

(8) how many people worked for *(a)* the Naval Manning Agency, *(b)* Service Children's Education, *(c)* the Duke of York's Royal Military School and *(d)* the Naval Recruiting and Training Agency in Scotland on 1 April; what the overall personnel costs were for each agency (i) on that date and (ii) on 1 April 2003; and if he will make a statement; [170446]

(9) how many people worked for the *(a)* Army Personnel Centre, *(b)* Army Training and Recruiting Agency, *(c)* Defence Dental Agency and *(d)* Defence Bills Agency in Scotland on 1 April; what the overall personnel costs were for each agency (i) on that date and (ii) on 1April 2003; and if he will make a statement. [170448]

Mr. Caplin: Information on the number of Service personnel at regional level is not available centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. Information on Civilian personnel at regional level for 1 April 2004 and for personnel expenditure by the organisations named for 2003–04 is not yet available.

The Defence Evaluation and Research Agency was disestablished on 1 July 2001, when two new organisations, QinetiQ plc and the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL), were created. QinetiQ is a public limited company, and all operational inquiries should be directed to its Chief Executive. DSTL remains a part of the Ministry of Defence.

The Defence Secondary Care Agency was abolished on 1 April 2003 and its education functions transferred to the Defence Medical Education and Training Agency; its remaining functions were transferred to Defence Medical Services.

I will write to the hon. Member in due course and a copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Defence Personnel (Vale of York)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) when he expects details of numbers of service and civilian personnel in the Vale of York for July 2003 to become available; [170000]

(2) how many service personnel were serving in the Vale of York on 27 April. [170001]

Mr. Caplin: Service personnel data by local authority is published in Tri-Service Publication (TSP) 10. Currently the Defence Analytical Services Agency are reviewing the source data and process by which location statistics are produced so data from TSP10 as at 1 July 2002 is the latest available. An investigation into the viability of the inclusion of Parliamentary Constituency data will be conducted as part of the review. The target date for completion of the review is December 2004.

The number of civilian personnel working for the Ministry of Defence as at 1 July 2003 in Yorkshire and the Humber was 3,080. The latest available figure is 3,160 as at 1 March 2004.

The numbers are for permanent, full-time equivalent staff, non-industrial and industrial, including Trading Funds and excluding those on career breaks, long term sick leave, secondment etc. Reliable data are not available as follows:

Government Office Region level.

Green Minister

Mr. Breed: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will list the meetings at which his Department has been present regarding the delivery of sustainable development across Government as co-ordinated by the Ministerial Sub-Committee of Green Ministers; [171803]

(2) what work his Department's Green Minister has undertaken in the last three months in that capacity; and what meetings his Department's Green Minister has attended in the last 12 months in that capacity. [171802]

Mr. Caplin: I represent the Ministry of Defence on the Ministerial Sub-Committee of Green Ministers. It has been established practice under successive Governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees. This practice is now formalised by Exemption 2 of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. However, my work as the Ministry of Defence's Green Minister involves regular correspondence outside that committee with Government Ministers in order to ensure that the Ministry of Defence's interests in environmental and sustainable development issues are fully and properly represented.

Iraq

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the number of *(a)* private military companies and *(b)* British private military companies working in Iraq. [166133]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: I have been asked to reply.

We are not aware of any private military companies (UK or otherwise) operating in Iraq in military operations. A number of British (and other) private security companies are providing security advice and assistance to the reconstruction effort. The number of security personnel working in Iraq fluctuates, but we are aware of up to 1,000 British nationals working in this sector.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether any member of the UK armed forces has been charged in relation to the deaths of civilians in Iraq caused by Coalition action. [170226]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:)* As at 30 April 2004, no member of the United Kingdom armed forces had been charged in relation to the deaths of civilians in Iraq.

Land Release (Hampshire)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 22 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 662W on land releases (Hampshire), when he expects to complete the review on estate rationalisation relating to *(a)* Arborfield, *(b)* Deepcut and *(c)* Bordon/Whitehill. [170469]

Mr. Caplin: As my right hon. Friend the Minister of State advised in his written statement on 25 November 2002, *Official Report*, column 2WS, the Defence Training Review identified Arborfield, Deepcut and Bordon as sites that are likely to be surplus to Defence requirements.

Any decisions on any of these sites will be announced to the House in the usual way but none have been taken to date.

Low Flying

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much has been paid in compensation to farmers for livestock losses caused by low flying military aircraft in *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* Wales in each year since 1994. [170874]

Mr. Caplin: The information is not held in the format requested, but the value of compensation paid (inclusive of legal costs) in relation to livestock losses caused by low flying military aircraft in England, Scotland and Wales for each financial year since 1994 is as follows:

£

	Amount paid
1993–4	337,569
1994–5	259,814
1995–6	261,328
1996–7	169,092
1997–8	169,867
1998–9	401,326
1999–2000	220,112
2000–1	491,663
2001–2	272,334
2002–3	236,453
2003–4	330,082

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many training sorties have been undertaken within the mid-Wales military tactical training area by military aircraft flying below 250 feet in each year since 1994 for which figures are available. [170875]

Mr. Caplin: The amount of military low flying that takes place in the United Kingdom is better expressed in hours rather than by number of sorties, which can vary significantly from minutes to several hours. The information is only available for the last four training years, as previously the data was compiled in a different manner. The figures for the training year 2003–04 are due to be published in the next statement on the pattern of military low flying that will be available to the House in Summer 2004.

The following information reflects the actual amount of operational low flying carried out within 7T, the tactical training area in mid-Wales. These statistics are consistent with the information provided annually in the statement on the pattern of military low flying.

Training year

1999–2000—38 hours 8 minutes

2000–01—25 hours 21 minutes

2001–02—30 hours 23 minutes

2002–03—33 hours 12 minutes

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* representations and *(b)* complaints have been received by the (i) RAF and (ii) Department about low flying military aircraft in (A) England, (B) Scotland and (C) Wales in each year since 1994. [170876]

Mr. Caplin: In maintaining our records we do not differentiate between representations and complaints; all complaints, whether received centrally or at individual establishments are recorded on a central database and it is not possible to distinguish between them. Detailed records are only retained for three years; it is therefore not possible to provide the information requested for earlier years.

The number of complaints received based on information provided by the complainant for (A) England, (B) Scotland, (C) Wales regarding military low flying over the last three training years are outlined in the table.

	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
England	3,003	3,194	3,248
Scotland	759	687	831
Wales	496	454	488
Isle of Man	0	1	1
No county provided	11	13	11
Total	4,269	4,349	4,579

MOD Sites (Portsmouth)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what research he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on his Department's land bounded by Halliday Crescent, Melville Road and Henderson Road in Portsmouth; and if he will make a statement. [169403]

Mr. Caplin: The site formed part of the married quarter estate transfer to Annington Homes in November 1996. No trace of any records can be found on any research for the site, although legal searches into title in connection with the sale would have been completed at the time.

Nepal

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the items of military equipment gifted to the Government of Nepal since January 2000. [170991]

Mr. Ingram: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given on 12 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1789W by my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Rammell) which listed all equipment gifted to the Government of Nepal under the Global Conflict Prevention Pool. In addition to this, a Departmental Minute has recently been placed before the House of Commons setting out the intention to gift two Short Take-Off and Landing (STOL) Islander aircraft, radios and Explosive Ordnance Disposal equipment to the Government of Nepal.

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the methods the Government employs to ensure that military helicopters it has provided to the Royal Nepalese Army are only used for logistical, medical and humanitarian purposes. [170992]

Mr. Ingram: A letter of agreement was signed by the Nepalese Chief of the Army Staff and by HM Ambassador. This set out the understanding on which the two MI-17 transport helicopters were being gifted to the Government of Nepal. In particular, it was specified that the helicopters were being gifted as part of the non-lethal support the UK provided to support the Government's campaign against the Maoist insurgency. It was further agreed that combat and attack roles were precluded for the lifetime of the aircraft, and that the helicopters would only be used for logistic, humanitarian and medical purposes. We have no grounds to believe that the aircraft gifted by the UK have been misused.

Nuclear Weapons

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 339W, on nuclear contingent liability arrangements, what criteria he used to determine what constituted an objection. [171120]

Mr. Ingram: The ways in which a Member of Parliament can object to a contingent liability are as detailed in Government Accounting 2000 Paragraph 26.4.7.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the importance of nuclear deterrence as a military strategy in the war against terrorism. [170212]

Mr. Hoon: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 30 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 577W, to the hon. Member for Moray (Angus Robertson).

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many NSQEP personnel in the UK are able to maintain the UK's nuclear weapons and naval nuclear reactors; what their age profile is; what their names are; and if he will make a statement; [170323]

(2) what estimate he has made of the adequacy of the supply of people suitably qualified and experienced to maintain *(a)* the UK's nuclear weapons and *(b)* the Royal Navy nuclear reactors; what steps the Government is taking to secure the supply of people with such qualifications; and if he will make a statement. [170354]

Mr. Ingram: In the United Kingdom, there are some 10,000 (as at December 2002) Nuclear Suitably Qualified and Experienced Personnel (NSQEP) who are able to support the MOD's nuclear weapon and nuclear propulsion programmes. Personal details of these individuals are not held centrally in the MOD. However, the number of shore-based NSQEP employed by the MOD in support of these programmes is some 1,400. Their average age is 49.

Throughout 2002 the MOD's NSQEP Head of Profession actively participated in a cross-Government Department Nuclear and Radiological Skills study that provided an estimate of the adequacy of personnel to support the UK's nuclear and radiological sector. The report identified that while there is no immediate overall general cause for concern, there are a number of shortages in some disciplines. There are, however, concerns about the general age profile and the supply of suitably qualified and experienced personnel to replace those who retire over the next 15 years. One aspect of the Government response to the Nuclear and Radiological Skills study, in line with the Government Skills Strategy, was the development and licensing, in March 2004, of a Sector Skills Council for the UK's nuclear sector. The MOD's NSQEP Head of Profession co-ordinates Defence Nuclear skills interests at the Industry Nuclear Skills Group and engages closely with the Sector Skills Council.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on safety reviews conducted on nuclear submarines. [171000]

Mr. Ingram: Safety reviews on nuclear submarines are conducted routinely at several levels in accordance with rigorous and well-rehearsed procedures. Prior to sailing, rigorous checks are undertaken to validate all aspects of a vessel's seaworthiness. Regular safety reviews, that comply fully with legal requirements, are also carried out on board to ensure the material state of the submarine is monitored and maintained.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on research and development of low yield nuclear weapons in the UK. [170211]

Mr. Ingram: No such research or development is being undertaken.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the estimated cost is of *(a)* designing and *(b)* manufacturing a new nuclear warhead; and if he will make a statement. [170337]

Mr. Hoon: The December 2003 Defence White Paper clearly stated the Government's position that decisions on whether to replace Trident are likely to be required in the next Parliament. The costs of the design and manufacture of any nuclear warhead would depend on a range of factors, and these will be considered as part of any such decision.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the age profile is of the staff of *(a)* his Department's Chief Scientific Advisor and *(b)* the maintenance contractor SERCO who possess the qualifications necessary to (i) maintain the design intent of the current nuclear warheads and (ii) design the next generation of warheads; and if he will make a statement. [170338]

Mr. Ingram: There are several staff working in the Chief Scientific Adviser's area in support of, and providing advice on the nuclear weapons programme, a number of whom have previously worked at AWE. However, with the exception of one AWE secondee, they are not "qualified" to conduct nuclear warhead design work, since only AWE plc, the design authority under the contract, can "qualify" people to undertake such work.

MOD's contract for the management and operation of AWE sites is with AWE Management Limited (AWE ML), a consortium of three equal partners, including SERCO. Responsibility for the day-to-day management of AWE sites is delegated to a separate company, AWE plc, which is owned by AWE ML.

It is not possible to categorise the capabilities of qualified AWE plc personnel in the way requested. However, the following table provides data on those AWE plc employees engaged in maintaining the relevant research and development capabilities who are formally qualified to degree level and above.

Age range	*Percentage age of total formally qualified and employed in R and D*	*Numbers employed in R and D who are qualified to degree level and above*
20 to 30	26	212
31 to 40	34	282
41 to 50	23	194
51 to 60	15	121
60 plus	2	21
Total	100	830

Wind Farms

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many wind farm applications his Department has been consulted upon; and to how many of these objections were made. [171515]

Mr. Caplin: Under arrangements agreed with the British Wind Energy Association, Civil Aviation Authority and DTI, the Ministry of Defence is voluntarily consulted by wind farm developers. Since 1 January 2000, the date from which accurate records have been maintained, some 3,139 proposals have been received of which we have been unable to approve 1,040.

As regards formal planning applications for the construction of wind farms upon which MOD has been consulted by the planning authority, some 58 have been notified, of which we have objected to nine.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Over-70s Payment

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when the £100 payment for people aged 70 or over that was announced in the 2004 Budget statement will be made. [170531]

Malcolm Wicks: The intention is for the payments to be made automatically with the 2004–05 winter fuel payment, to those who are eligible and who do not need to claim it, before the end of the year. People who do not get a winter fuel payment will need to claim the one-off payment from the Department for Work and Pensions before 31 March 2005.

Child Support Agency

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when the Child Support Agency will be able to refund the money owed to the constituent of the hon. Member for Walsall, North, ref: 321042956341. [169296]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr David Winnick, dated 10 May 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked, when the Child Support Agency will be able to refund the money owed to the constituent of the hon. Member for Walsall North ref: 321042956341.

As individual cases are confidential, I will write to you separately about it. This is in line with Para 12, Part 2, of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Correspondence

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when the hon. Member for Walsall, North will receive a reply from the Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency to his letter of 24 March concerning a constituent, ref. PCO 130778. [172013]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to my hon. Friend with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. David Winnick, dated 10 May 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked when the honourable Member for Walsall North will receive a reply from the Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency to his letter of 24th March concerning a constituent, ref PCU 130778.

A full response to your letter of 24 March was issued on 7 May 2004. I apologise for the delay in providing this.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he intends to reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 1 April with regard to Mr. Alan McCabe. [172261]

Mr. Andrew Smith: I replied to my right hon. Friend on 4 May.

Disability Living Allowance

Mr. O'Hara: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of families containing one or more children in receipt of disability living allowance have incomes below 60 per cent. of median contemporary incomes *(a)* before and *(b)* after housing costs, excluding any disability living allowance received. [170643]

Maria Eagle: 30 per cent. of families with children, in receipt of disability living allowance have incomes below 60 per cent. of median contemporary income before housing costs. 42 per cent. of families with children, in receipt of disability living allowance have incomes below 60 per cent. of median contemporary income after housing costs.

Notes:

1. Figures are for 2002–03, the latest date for which data are available.
2. Estimates are for Great Britain.
3. Estimates relate to the household's status at the time they were interviewed for the FRS.
4. The estimates are based on sample counts, which have been adjusted for non-response using multipurpose grossing factors that control for tenure, council tax band and a number of other variables. Estimates are subject to both sampling error, and to remaining variability in non-response which is not corrected by the grossing regime.
5. The income measure used is weekly net (disposable) equivalised household income (that is to say income that is adjusted to reflect the composition of the household).
6. The question has been interpreted and presented as those families in receipt of disability living allowance, who have children. The alternative interpretation, which would look at families where a child is in receipt of disability living allowance, cannot be presented due to insufficient sample sizes of this group.
7. For the purpose of calculating whether a family is below 60 per cent. of median income, any DLA received has been excluded from the household income. The median income of the population is the same as that used in HBAI, and therefore has not been recalculated following deduction of disability living allowance.

Source:

Family Resources Survey (FRS).

Mr. O'Hara: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of *(a)* single people under pension age, *(b)* couples under pension age and *(c)* adults under pension age have incomes below 60 per cent. of median contemporary incomes (i) before and (ii) after housing costs, excluding any disability living allowance received. [170644]

Mr. Pond: The information requested is presented in the table:

	Percentage with incomes below 60 per cent. of median contemporary income
(i) Before housing costs	
(a) Single people under pension age	20
(b) Couples under pension age	13
(c) Adults under pension age	16
(ii) After housing costs	
(a) Single people under pension age	30
(b) Couples under pension age	16
(c) Adults under pension age	21

Notes:

1. Figures are for 2002–03, the latest date for which data are available.
2. Estimates are for Great Britain.
3. Estimates relate to the household's status at the time they were interviewed for the FRS.
4. Estimates for 'couples under pension age' include all individuals under SPA who cohabit with a partner.
5. The estimates are based on sample counts, which have been adjusted for non-response using multipurpose grossing factors that control for tenure, council tax band and a number of other variables. Estimates are subject to both sampling error, and to remaining variability in non-response which is not corrected by the grossing regime.
6. The income measure used is weekly net (disposable) equivalised household income (that is to say income that is adjusted to reflect the composition of the household).

Source:

Family Resources Survey (FRS).

Mr. O'Hara: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of *(a)* single female pensioners, *(b)* single male pensioners, *(c)* pensioner couples and *(d)* all pensioners have incomes below 60 per cent. of median contemporary incomes (i) before and (ii) after housing costs excluding attendance allowance or disability living allowance received. [170645]

Mr. Pond: The requested information is presented in the table.

	Percentage with incomes below 60 per cent. of median contemporary income
(i) Before housing costs	
(a) Single female pensioners	26
(b) Single male pensioners	21
(c) Pensioner couples	28
(d) All pensioners	27
(ii) After housing costs	
(a) Single female pensioners	25
(b) Single male pensioners	21
(c) Pensioner couples	30
(d) All pensioners	28

Notes:

1. Figures are for 2002–03, the latest date for which data are available.
2. Estimates are for Great Britain.
3. Estimates relate to the household's status at the time they were interviewed for the FRS.
4. Estimates for 'pensioner couples' includes all individuals over SPA who cohabit with a partner. 'Single pensioners' are defined as those over SPA.
5. The estimates are based on sample counts, which have been adjusted for non-response using multipurpose grossing factors that control for tenure, council tax band and a number of other variables. Estimates are subject to both sampling error, and to remaining variability in non-response which is not corrected by the grossing regime.
6. The income measure used is weekly net (disposable) equivalised household income (that is to say income that is adjusted to reflect the composition of the household).

Source:

Family Resources Survey (FRS).

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will extend eligibility for the higher rate of the mobility component of the disability living allowance to people who become disabled after the age of 65 years to enable them to benefit from the Motability Scheme. [170990]

Maria Eagle: No. It is normal for pensions and benefits schemes to contain different provisions for people at different stages of their lives, and the higher rate mobility component of disability living allowance is focussed on providing extra help to people who are severely disabled early, or relatively early, in life.

Based on the need for personal care, attendance allowance provides help with the disability-related extra costs of people who experience the onset of disability after age 65. This help is part of the wide range of support that the Government make available to older people so that they can have a decent and secure income in retirement and share fairly in the rising prosperity of the country.

Disabled Workers

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the measures introduced to improve the working conditions of disabled workers in South Ribble over the last seven years. [172141]

Maria Eagle: We have a number of measures in place nationally to help improve conditions for disabled people at work, as well as measures to improve their access to services generally. None of these are specific to South Ribble, but all are available to disabled people who live and work there.

From 1996, the employment provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act required most employers of 20 or more staff not to discriminate against, and to make reasonable adjustments for, disabled job applicants or employees; in December 1998, we reduced this threshold to 15 employees. From October this year, the small employer exemption will be removed and most currently excluded occupations, such as police officers, fire-fighters, and partners in business partnerships will be brought within the scope of the Disability Discrimination Act employment provisions.

Jobcentre Plus runs a number of specialist programmes providing help for disabled people, including New Deal for Disabled People, Workstep, Access to Work, the Job Introduction Scheme, and Work Preparation. All these programmes provide practical advice and support to disabled people and their employers to help overcome work related obstacles resulting from disability. Since 1997–98 there have been year-on-year increases in both numbers helped and programme spend.

To help people access appropriate help, Jobcentre Plus has established a network of Disability Service Teams. The teams are made up of Disability Employment Advisors, Access to Work Advisers and Occupational Psychologists; their services are accessed through local Jobcentres.

Since April 2003, disabled people in work have been receiving financial support through the Working Tax Credit. This is available if a person is working an average of at least 16 hours per week (self-employed or for an employer); and have a disability which puts them at a disadvantage in getting a job. 70,000 families (including over 32,000 adults without children) are benefiting from the disability element within the Working Tax Credit, compared to 38,000 who benefited from the old Disabled Person's Tax Credit.

Incapacity Benefit

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of incapacity benefit claimants covered by the new incapacity benefit pilot projects in *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05. [170459]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* We have projected that there will be approximately 14,000 new claims for incapacity benefits (Incapacity Benefit and Income Support on the grounds of incapacity) in the pilot areas during 2003–04, and 65,000[1] during 2004–05. The pilots will continue to the end of 2005–6 when we estimate that there will be approximately 66,000 new claims.

In addition, all the pilot provision is available to existing incapacity benefit recipients in the pilot areas, numbering approximately 193,000. Their participation is currently on a voluntary basis.

[1] The number of pilots in 2004–05 will increase from three to seven, hence the higher projection of new claims.

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of possible savings generated by the new incapacity benefit pilot projects in each year from 2004–05 to 2008–09. [170460]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* One of the purposes of the incapacity benefit pilot projects is to establish whether there is scope for savings to support further re-investment in this and other Government priority areas. We believe that the pilots have the potential to generate savings which will outweigh the projected pilot costs of approximately £40 million a year. However there has been limited previous success in this area on which to make a firm assessment of the financial implications.

The primary purpose of our agenda for reform of incapacity benefits is to help considerably greater numbers of those with health conditions and disabilities to achieve their aspirations to return to employment and to avoid long-term incapacity.

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the cost of extending the new incapacity benefit pilot projects to all incapacity benefit claimants. [170461]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* We estimate that the cost for a full year at national level of the provision now available to new claimants in the incapacity benefit reform pilots and the additional provision for existing recipients announced in the recent Budget and due to be introduced early next year, would be of the order of £700 million—£800 million.

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of *(a)* the start-up costs and *(b)* the annual running costs of the new incapacity benefit pilot projects, broken down by cost of (i) personal advisers, (ii) the new return to work credit, (iii) condition management courses and (iv) other costs. [170462]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* The start-up costs for the Incapacity Benefit Reform Pilots were all incurred in the 2003–04 financial year and amounted to £6,137,080.

The unconfirmed running costs for the Incapacity Benefit Reforms Pilots during 2003–04 are shown as follows and the latest estimates for the running costs from 2004 to 2006 are as outlined:

£

	2003–04	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
Personal advisers	625,895	3,020,839	3,160,150
Return to Work Credit	248,560	5,594,400	9,038,400
Condition Management Programme	887,500	8,651,211	8,202,00
Other costs	3,577242	22,733,550	19,599,450

The figures for the Personal Advisers also include some costs for processing Incapacity Benefit which cannot be separated out.

The majority of the 'other1 costs given above consist of estimated funding to help customers find and maintain employment, either directly through, for example, New Deals, Work Based Learning for Adults and Access to Work, in-work support and the adviser discretionary fund, or indirectly through better medical assessments, training and evaluation of the project.

These costs do not include the additional provision for existing clients announced in the recent Budget.

Incapacity Benefit (Rhondda)

Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in each ward in the Rhondda constituency have received incapacity benefit in each year since 1992. [170987]

Maria Eagle: The available information is in the table.

People claiming incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance in the Rhondda constituency broken down by ward

Ward name	*1998*	*1999*	*August 2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Cwm					
Clydach	475	460	425	435	430
Cymmer	800	780	780	800	805
Ferndale	610	585	600	570	575
Llwyn-y-pia	405	385	390	400	380
Maerdy	690	645	635	630	625
Pentre	675	660	660	650	645
Pen-y-graig	845	800	810	820	805
Porth	785	750	720	735	725
Tonypandy	455	450	435	440	450
Trealaw	585	595	575	620	575
Treherbert	915	910	865	820	780
Treorchy	955	935	900	905	910
Tylorstown	805	805	795	760	730
Ynyshir	490	490	465	480	475
Ystrad	835	820	815	845	820

Notes:

1. The figures are a snapshot of all claimants of incapacity benefit (including credits only cases) and severe disablement allowance at August each year.
2. Wards are based on 2003 ward boundaries.
3. All benefit counts have been rounded to a multiple of five to protect the confidentiality of individual claimants.

Source:

IAD Information Centre, Department for Work and Pensions.

Income-related Benefits

Joyce Quin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what percentage of employees in his Department are in receipt of income-related benefits. [168606]

Maria Eagle: The Department does not hold this information.

Jobcentre Plus

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will place in the Library copies of the *(a)* disabled access audit of 1 Steephill Road, *(b)* consultation document dated June 2002 and list of recipients, *(c)* specification of requirements for a Jobcentre Plus centre, as issued to his property advisors and *(d)* responses received to *(b)* relating to the Jobcentre Plus roll-out in the Isle of Wight. [169170]

Jane Kennedy: The available information has been placed in the Library.

No responses were received to the consultation document dated June 2002.

Mayor of London (Meetings)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on what dates he has held official meetings with the Mayor of London since July 2000; and what the subject of each meeting was. [171439]

Mr. Andrew Smith: Since July 2000, I have held no official meetings with the Mayor of London.

ME

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many ME sufferers were *(a)* successful and *(b)* unsuccessful in their applications for disability living allowance in the last 12 months. [171342]

Maria Eagle: For the year ending 30 November 2003, there were approximately 2,200 new awards for customers whose primary disabling condition is ME, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome or other Post Viral conditions. Information on unsuccessful claims to Disability Living Allowance by sufferers of ME is not available.[1]

[1] When inputting an unsuccessful claim to the computer system from which these figures are drawn, a disability code, which highlights the main disabling condition, is not input.

Note:
Figures taken from 5 per cent. samples. Figures are in thousands and rounded to the nearest hundred. From November 2002, the methodology for producing these figures was changed to allow statistics to be published much sooner. This has resulted in a small increase in the reported caseload. This is because some cases which have actually terminated but have not yet been updated on the computer system are now included.

Source:
IAD Information Centre.

Pension Credit

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much was spent on advertising the Pick it Up, It's Yours campaign in *(a)* national newspapers and *(b)* the regional and local press; and what the basis was for the decision on which publications would carry the advertisements. [170590]

Malcolm Wicks: The total cost of publicity for the Pick It Up It's Yours campaign in 2003–04 was £15,580,000. The cost for press advertising media was £6,086,146 which is broken down as follows:

	£
National press	4,752,598
Regional press	1,308,352
Other press	25,196

The Department uses the Government's publicity agency COI Communications to buy media. Media are selected on the basis of the most cost effective method of reaching the target audience.

Mr. O'Hara: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what proportion of *(a)* single men, *(b)* single women and *(c)* couples are expected to be entitled to pension credit in October; and how many of these will be entitled to (i) guarantee credit alone, (ii) savings credit alone and (iii) both guarantee and savings credit. [170642]

Malcolm Wicks: Estimates of the numbers of people eligible for pension credit, based on data from the Family Resources Survey for 2002–03, will be available later this month. The information will be placed in the Library.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department advertises pension credit in any language other than English. [172004]

Malcolm Wicks: Pension credit advertising has appeared in the following languages other than English:

TV—Welsh

Radio—Gujarati, Punjabi, Cantonese and Hindi

Press—Welsh, Bengali, Cantonese, Gujarati, Punjabi and Urdu.

Pensions

Valerie Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if the Government will make changes to the current system to ensure that all women have access to a basic state pension in their own right. [170966]

Malcolm Wicks: All women have access to a state pension. They become entitled to a basic state pension by paying, being treated as paying or being credited with national insurance contributions. The amount of basic state pension will depend on the number of qualifying years built up before they reach state pension age.

However, additional policies such as home responsibilities protection exist to enable people to acquire a higher amount of basic state pension.

Property Disregards

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for what reason the rules relating to property disregards are different for pensioners moved from income support to pension credit. [169455]

Malcolm Wicks: It was always our intention that the capital disregards on second properties should be the same in all income-related benefits.

Currently in Income Support, the main property occupied as the home is ignored unless any part of it could be reasonably sold off separately. The value of any second property is normally taken into account, but there are a number of exceptions. In particular, the value of a second property which is occupied by someone who is aged 60 or over or incapacitated and who is a relative of the Income Support claimant or their partner is ignored.

We have recently discovered that due to an oversight, this rule was not carried forward into Pension Credit legislation when the principal regulations were drafted. This means that the disregard only applies if the occupier is a close relative of the Pension Credit claimant themselves. We will make the changes needed to the legislation to ensure that this is corrected at the earliest opportunity.

Meanwhile, we will be considering extra-statutory payments to anyone who has lost out.

Recruitment

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost of recruitment of civil servants

for the Department was in each financial year since 1996–97, broken down by *(a)* delegated or contracted out recruitment procedures and *(b)* recruitment procedures carried out by the Department. [158175]

Maria Eagle: The majority of external recruitment at all levels within DWP is carried out on a direct basis by the Department. However, for a small number of vacancies, particularly of a specialist or senior nature, the services of a recruitment agency may be used.

The information is not collected centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Social Security Advisory Committee

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he will publish the Quinquennial Review into the Social Security Advisory Committee. [171855]

Mr. Andrew Smith: The Quinquennial Review into the Social Security Advisory Committee will be published in the next two weeks.

Statutory Maternity Pay

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many women have *(a)* requested and *(b)* received statutory maternity pay since its introduction; and if he will make a statement on the success of the take-up of this entitlement. [169297]

Mr. Pond *[holding answer 29 April 2004]:* The information is not available in the format requested.

Employers are not required to make returns on the numbers of women to whom they pay Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP). However, numbers are estimated from the returns employers make to the Inland Revenue for the SMP they recover.

Between 1987, when SMP was introduced, and 2001–02 it is estimated that approximately 4.1 million women have received SMP.

A recent survey found that 93 per cent. of eligible women received Statutory Maternity Pay.

Sure Start Maternity Grant

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many mothers in Battersea have *(a)* applied for and *(b)* obtained the Sure Start maternity grant. [167640]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested. The available information is in the tables.

Sure start maternity grants in South West Thames social fund district

	Applications	*Awards*
2000–01	1,360	1,165
2001–02	1,678	1,400
2002–03	1,952	1,487
2003 to October	1,494	978

Sure start maternity grants in South West Thames interim district

	Applications	*Awards*
November and December 2003	479	325

Sure start maternity grants in Lambeth, Southwark and Wandsworth Jobcentre Plus district

	Applications	*Awards*
January to March 2004	1,627	1,162

Notes:

1. Data is not available by Parliamentary Constituency. Battersea Parliamentary Constituency used to be part of South West Thames Social Fund District. This District was involved in a very complex set of interlocking boundary changes affecting most of Greater London and some neighbouring areas, which took place from April 2003 to January 2004. Changes affecting South West Thames Social Fund District happened in November 2003 and the district then became known as South West Thames interim district. Changes to this district occurred in January 2004, resulting in the formation of Lambeth, Southwark and Wandsworth Jobcentre Plus district. Battersea Parliamentary Constituency was part of South West Thames interim district and is now part of Lambeth, Southwark and Wandsworth Jobcentre Plus district. The three areas for which data is given above are thus different, so the data is not comparable.
2. Sure Start maternity grants were introduced on 27 March 2000. The very small number of cases for 1999–2000 has been excluded for data protection reasons.
3. Data is given for all applications and awards, irrespective of whether the application was made by the mother or her partner.

Source:

DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System.

Winter Fuel Allowance (Oldham, West and Royton)

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many senior citizens in Oldham, West and Royton have benefited from the winter fuel allowance since 1997. [170951]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of senior citizens in the Oldham, West and Royton constituency who have benefited from a Winter Fuel Payment in each year since 1999–2000 (including provisional figures for 2003–04) is in the table. Information relating to the 1997–98 and 1998–99 winters is not available.

	Payments made
1999–2000	15,840
2000–01	17,330
2001–02	17,270
2002–03	17,170
2003–04	17,160

Notes:

1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest 5.
2. Please note that the figures for 2003–04 refer only to the main payment run i.e. they do not include the late payment run figures. We estimate that there are approximately 100,000 people in Great Britain paid via late payment runs (0.8 per cent. of all payments). However, since late payment runs are mainly in respect of non-system cases whose claim had not been received by Qualifying Week, they are heavily skewed towards men aged 60.

Source:

IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. samples.

TREASURY

Child Benefit

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total funding allocation for his Department was in 2003–04 for child benefit. [170820]

Ruth Kelly: The funding provision for 2003–04 for child benefit can be found on page 524 in the Central Government Supply Estimates 2004–05, (published April 2004).

National Minimum Wage (Oldham, West and Royton)

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many workers in Oldham, West and Royton have benefited from the national minimum wage. [170946]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Meacher, dated 10 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question about the number of workers in Oldham, West and Royton who have benefited from the national minimum wage (NMW). (170946)

Estimates for Parliamentary Constituencies are not available.

However, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) calculates estimates of the number of jobs paid less than NMW rates for the United Kingdom and Government Office Regions. A guide to measuring low pay and associated articles and data can be found on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=5837&Pos=l&ColRank=l&Rank=272

Teenage Pregnancy

Tim Loughton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many teenage girls *(a)* below the age of 16 years and *(b)* over the age of 16 years fell pregnant in (i) 2003–04 and (ii) each of the previous five years. [171070]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Tim Loughton, dated 10 May 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many teenage girls *(a)* below 16 and *(b)* over 16 conceived in (i) 2003/4 and (ii) each of the previous five years. (171070)

For this purpose, teenagers are interpreted as the under 18 age group, in line with the target set by The Government Strategy on Teenage Pregnancy.

The table gives the number of conceptions among girls aged under 16, 16 and 17 in England and Wales for 1997 to 2001, the most recent year for which figures are available.

	Age at conception		
	Under 16	*16*	*17*
1997	8,271	14,058	21,029
1998	8,452	13,802	21,865
1999	7,945	13,334	20,749
2000	8,114	13,153	20,081
2001[1]	7,891	13,103	19,972

[1] Provisional.

Numbers of conceptions are estimated from registrations of births and notifications of abortions. Miscarriages before the 24th week of gestation are not included.

Average Earnings

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the average earnings of *(a)* women and *(b)* men in (i) Lancashire and (ii) the North West. [172070]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Lindsay Hoyle, dated 10 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what assessment has been made of the average earnings of *(a)* women and *(b)* men in (i) Lancashire and (ii) the North West. (172070)

Average earnings are estimated from the 2003 New Earnings Survey (NES) and are provided for full-time employees on adult rates of pay whose pay was unaffected by absence during the pay period, by their place of work. This is the standard definition used for MRS tables. The NES does not collect data on the self employed and people who do unpaid work.

The 2003 NES estimates that the total average weekly earnings of full-time adult employees in Lancashire were £471.30 for males and £357.40 for females, and in: the North West £483.10 for males and £367.90 for females. Please note that the former two estimates relate to the administrative county of Lancashire, which excludes Blackburn with Darwen unitary authority.

More detailed information on earnings in each of these areas is available in the published tables from the 2003 NES. The relevant estimates can be found in table A22.1 for males and A23.1 for females, and are available on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_labour/NES2003_Analyses_By_Region/NES2003_Analyses_By_Region.pdf

The NES, carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in Great Britain. It is a 1 per cent. sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes, but because of its sampling frame, it has difficulty capturing data on people with very low pay. It is therefore likely to under-represent relatively low paid staff earning below the tax threshold.

The New Earnings Survey publication criteria ensures that all estimates are undisclosive and of reliable quality. A number of estimates have been removed from the published tables for these reasons.

Butterfield Review

Norman Lamb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what effect the proposed merger of the Inland Revenue and HM Customs and Excise will have on *(a)* plans to establish an independent Customs and Excise prosecutions office and *(b)* the implementation of other recommendations in the Butterfield Review; and if he will make a statement; [171051]

(2) if he will make a statement on the implementation of the recommendations of the Butterfield Review; [171059]

(3) to what extent lawyers acting on behalf of HM Customs and Excise have relinquished responsibility for prosecutions resulting from Customs investigations; [171061]

(4) pursuant to his written ministerial statement of 8 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 72–3WS on the Butterfield Review, when he intends to establish an

independent Customs and Excise prosecutions office; what practical issues he is discussing with the Attorney-General regarding the creation of an independent Customs and Excise prosecutions office; and if he will make a statement. [171062]

John Healey: As indicated in the joint statements I made with the Attorney-General on 15 July and 8 December 2003, the Government have accepted the recommendations contained in Mr. Justice Butterfield's report in respect of Customs and Excise's investigative practices, and that offences investigated by Customs officers should be prosecuted by an independent prosecuting authority. These are being implemented.

Legislation will be required to establish fully the independent prosecuting authority and we aim to introduce this in the course of this year.

Prior to legislation being put in place, it is our aim to continue as far as possible the separation of the prosecution function from Customs and Excise begun following the Butler report of 14 April 2000. Various options are currently being examined with several steps already agreed, including appointing a new director for the organisation and amending the Memorandum of Understanding agreed on 9 January 2003—in line with the Gower Hammond report of 5 December 2000—between myself, the Attorney-General and the Commissioners of Customs and Excise. This Memorandum of Understanding concerns the conduct, resourcing and accountabilities for Customs and Excise prosecutions under the auspices of the Attorney-General as well as the arrangements for the prosecution of offences investigated by Customs officers. That Memorandum can be found at Appendix 9 of the Butterfield Report and makes it clear that since 1 April 2002 those lawyers who prosecute criminal cases arising from Customs investigations are accountable to the Attorney-General for the conduct of those prosecutions rather than to Treasury Ministers or the Commissioners of Customs and Excise. The amendments envisaged include the role of the new director.

Among the practical issues presently under discussion with the Attorney-General are the future relationship between the independent prosecuting authority, the new revenue department and the Serious and Organised Crime Agency (SOCA).

Credit Unions

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions he has had recently with the Association of British Credit Unions Ltd. on expansion of credit unions in the UK. [168800]

Ruth Kelly: Treasury Ministers and officials meet with representatives of ABCUL regularly to discuss a wide range of issues. As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings, as provided for under Exemption 7(b) of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. Treasury meetings are conducted in accordance with the Ministerial Code and the Civil Service Code, as appropriate.

Customs and Excise

Norman Lamb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) when HM Customs and Excise were first informed of the discovery of the informant record for Mr. Alfred Allington; and for what reasons the existence of this record was not referred to in the Butterfield Review; [171048]

(2) if he will make a statement on effects of excise diversion fraud on London City bonded warehouses; [171049]

(3) whether he intends to re-open the Butterfield Inquiry following recent court evidence concerning Mr. Alfred Allington's relationship with HM Customs and Excise; [171058]

(4) pursuant to his written ministerial statement of 8 December 2003, if he will make a further statement on the practices and procedures of disclosure, associated investigation techniques and case management in HM Customs and Excise criminal cases; [171060]

(5) when *(a)* he and *(b)* Ministers in his Department were first informed of the existence of the informant record for Mr. Alfred Allington; and if he will make a statement; [171074]

(6) how many prosecutions relating to London City Bond *(a)* have been reviewed, *(b)* are to be reviewed and *(c)* have been overturned. [171075]

John Healey: The effects of the excise diversion frauds involving the London City Bond warehouse, and the validity of HM Customs and Excise's practices and procedures of disclosure, associated investigation techniques and case management in criminal cases, were fully considered in independent reviews by Mr. John Roques and Mr. Justice Butterfield, both of which are available in the Library of the House. Recommendations arising from those reviews are being implemented, as announced most recently in the Written Ministerial Statements of 15 July and 8 December 2003 by the Attorney-General and I.

24 London City Bond-related cases have been reviewed. There are no further cases to be reviewed. 48 convictions, in 8 cases, have to date been overturned on appeal, of which 5 appeals (totalling 35 convictions) had been heard before the Customs and Excise Prosecutions Office launched its wider review of cases following the decision in November 2002 to offer no evidence in London City Bond-related cases before Liverpool Crown Court.

Customs has trawled all areas of the Department for any material of potential relevance. Where further disclosable material has been uncovered, it has been passed directly to the Metropolitan Police to assist their investigation into the circumstances of the collapse of the London City Bond cases, and to Mr. Justice Butterfield. That trawl, by Customs officials, brought to light the record relating to Mr. Alfred Allington at the end of June 2003; the documents were handed over to Mr. Justice Butterfield in mid July. The Customs and Excise Prosecutions Office informed the Attorney-General of the Alf Allington informant record issue on 20 January 2004, as part of a general briefing about the review of London City Bond-related cases. A copy of that submission was sent to me on that date. It would not be proper to comment on the significance of this

material, and whether it gives rise to any need to re-open Mr. Justice Butterfield's review, until any other proceedings to which it is relevant have been completed.

Employment (Oldham, West and Royton)

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the *(a)* change and *(b)* percentage change was in full-time permanent jobs in Oldham West and Royton from 1997 to 31 December 2003; [170903]

(2) how many new jobs have been created in Oldham West and Royton since 1997. [170904]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Meacher dated 10 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about full-time jobs and jobs created in Oldham West and Royton. (170903, 170904)

While statistics of jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes, in numbers of jobs, from year to year.

The attached table shows the information requested, relating to all jobs and full-time jobs, in Oldham West and Royton Parliamentary Constituency, for 1997 and the latest year available, 2002.

Information is not available about whether the jobs were permanent.

Number of full-time employees and total number of employees in Oldham West and Royton Parliamentary Constituency: 1997 and 2002

percentage

	Full-Time	*Total*
Number of employees		
1997	31,400	45,000
2002	32,100	45,300
Change from 1997 to 2002		
Absolute	700	300
Percentage	2.3	0.7

[1] Employee jobs only, not self-employed jobs

Source:

1997: Annual Employment Survey, rescaled 2002; Annual Business Inquiry (ABI)

Fuel Cell Technology

Mr. Todd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what fiscal incentives are available to UK companies involved in the development of fuel cell technologies; and if he will make a statement. [171264]

John Healey: The Chancellor announced in Budget 2002 that hydrogen would be exempt from fuel duty for a limited period, to encourage further development and early take-up. Budget 2002 also introduced enhanced capital allowances for investments in hydrogen fuelling infrastructure. In addition, companies developing fuel cell technologies can benefit from research and development tax credits, announced in Budget 2000. The Department of Trade and Industry is responsible for other measures to support the development of fuel cell technologies, including through the Advanced Fuel Cells Programme. The Carbon Trust, which is funded by revenue recycled from the Climate Change Levy, supports the development of innovative technologies.

Income Tax

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how income tax receipts as a percentage of the total tax take have varied over the last 20 years. [171310]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested can be found on the Inland Revenue website: www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/tax_receipts/table1–2.pdf Personal tax credits are classified as negative income tax in these statistics to the extent that they offset the income tax liability of the family. This affects the figures from October 1999 onwards. Total tax take is defined as net taxes and social security contributions. The data are not published as a series. However the figure for 2002–03 can be found in the Budget 2004 Financial Statement and Budget Report, Table C8.

Inland Revenue Guidance

Mr. Barnes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will arrange for the Inland Revenue to publicise the hardship provisions in its Code of Guidance on overpayments. [170096]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to the replies I gave my hon. Friend, the Member for Glasgow Anniesland (John Robertson) on 21 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 1259W and the hon. Member for North Norfolk (Norman Lamb) on 27 February 2004, *Official Report*, columns 570–71W.

Job Vacancies (Oldham, West and Royton)

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many job vacancies there were in Oldham West and Royton in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [170898]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Meacher dated 10 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about job vacancies in Oldham West & Royton. (170898)

According to Jobcentre Plus administrative records the number of unfilled vacancies in the Manchester travel-to-work area was 9,767 on average during 1997. This represents only a proportion of all the vacancies available, as not all vacancies are notified to Jobcentres.

Figures are not available for Oldham West & Royton alone because the vacancies are allocated to local Jobcentres, not according to constituency boundaries, and because of the practice of notifying some vacancies centrally with one Jobcentre taking vacancies for others in the same district.

Jobcentre vacancy statistics were withdrawn from National Statistics in September 2001 as a result of distortions to the data, which occurred following the introduction of new administrative procedures by Jobcentre Plus. Comparable figures for vacancies in 2003 are therefore unavailable.

Results from the ONS Vacancy Survey were released as National Statistics from July 2003, but are not available for local areas.

Productivity

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what action he is taking to *(a)* increase the productivity and *(b)* cut the costs of his Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies. [171882]

Ruth Kelly: The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced in the Budget that the Government are setting a stretching but realistic target for the whole public sector to deliver efficiencies of 2.5 per cent. a year over the three years of the 2004 Spending Review period. Meeting this target would deliver efficiency gains equivalent to £20 billion a year by 2007–08. The administration costs of all Departments are to be capped at or below the 2005–06 nominal level for 2006–07 and 2007–08. The Budget set out detailed proposals for meeting this target in relation to DWP, IR and HMCE.

All Departments continue to work closely with Sir Peter Gershon to prepare detailed efficiency proposals for consideration in the 2004 Spending Review. Departments' agreed efficiency programmes will be published in parallel with the Spending Review settlement.

Public Sector Employment

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much he expects employment in the public sector, excluding the areas of health and education, to change from financial year *(a)* 2004–05 to 2005–06 and *(b)* 2005–06 to 2006–07. [171259]

Mr. Boateng: A gross reduction of at least 54,000 civil servants by 2008 was announced in the Budget, and further reductions will be realised as efficiency plans are implemented. This will reflect back office workforce reductions and redeployment to the frontline.

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on variations in the workforce employed in the public sector in England over the last 20 years. [171312]

Mr. Boateng: Public sector workforce figures are set out in ONS Labour Market Trends (September) publication.

Public Spending

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what *(a)* change and *(b)* percentage change he expects in levels of public spending excluding health, education and defence (i) in 2004–05 compared with 2003–04 and (ii) in 2005–06 compared with 2004–05. [171243]

Mr. Boateng: The latest figures for spending in these years for education were set out in table 1.2 of Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses (PESA) 2004 (CM6201), and on every function in tables 3.8 and 3.9 of PESA 2004.

Statutory Paternity Pay

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many men have *(a)* requested and *(b)* received statutory paternity pay since its introduction; and if he will make a statement on the success of the take-up of this entitlement. [169299]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 29 April 2004]:* The statistics requested are not currently available.

Tax Credits

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he expects to complete the process whereby families in receipt of income support and jobseeker's allowance move on to the child tax credit. [169393]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 29 April 2004]:* I refer the hon. Member to my answer to the hon. Member for Tatton (Mr Osborne) on 11 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1645W.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in receipt of *(a)* income support and *(b)* jobseeker's allowance have been moved on to the child tax credit. [169395]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* I refer the hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member for Romford (Mr. Rosindell) on 11 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1645W.

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will compensate those people who have received tax credit payments above the level to which they were entitled because of administrative errors and who are to have future payments reduced as a result. [170050]

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what compensation is available to people whose *(a)* working tax credit and *(b)* family tax credit payments are improperly stopped; and if he will make a statement. [171090]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Members to what I said during the debate in the House on 7 July 2003, *Official Report*, column 860.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he expects awards for *(a)* child tax credit and *(b)* working tax credit in 2003–04 to be finalised. [170220]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave the hon. Member for Birmingham Northfield (Richard Burden) on 19 November 2003, *Official Report*, columns 1099–1100W.

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will make a statement on the payment of working tax credit from the start of the current financial year and the adequacy of computer systems; [171088]

(2) if he will make a statement on the payment of family tax credit from the start of the current financial year and the adequacy of computer systems. [171089]

Dawn Primarolo: The new IT systems for tax credits were introduced as planned. As at 5 April 2004, there are 6.0 million families benefiting from tax credits. The publication date of the next issue of tax credits statistics by the Office for National Statistics will be announced in due course.

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment has been made of hardship caused to families as a result of the way tax credit overpayments are being recovered. [165418]

Dawn Primarolo: Additional payments were made in 2003–04, to help ensure that paying back tax credits overpayments did not cause hardship. In addition,

because of the increased generosity of Child and Working Tax Credits the overall level of support to low and moderate income families is higher, reducing the risk of hardship.

The Inland Revenue's Code of Practice 26, "What happens if we have paid you too much tax credit?", sets out the rules that the Inland Revenue follows when adjusting an award to recover an overpayment.

As the Code sets out, the maximum amounts by which payments would be reduced is 10 per cent. for claimants receiving the maximum award; 100 per cent. for claimants receiving only the family element of Child Tax Credit and 25 per cent. for all other claimants.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the amounts of over-payments made to people through the working tax credit scheme; how many people have been overpaid; what arrangements are in place to enable people to manage to pay back these amounts; and if he will make a statement; [166041]

Mr. Wood: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will conduct a review of the *(a)* investigation and *(b)* recovery of over-payments of (i) child and (ii) working tax credits by the Inland Revenue; and if he will make provision for claimants to appeal against (A) over-payment decisions and (B) recovery actions. [167058]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* I refer the hon. Members to the replies I gave the hon. Member for South Down (Mr. McGrady) on 3 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 828W, and the hon. Member for Norfolk North (Mr. Lamb) on 22 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 664W.

Tax Evasion

Brian Cotter: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many prosecutions the Inland Revenue has attempted to bring under the Finance Act 2000 for income tax evasion; what the value was of the revenue the Inland Revenue has attempted to recoup; how many attempted prosecutions have been successful; and how much has been recouped by the Treasury as a result. [167510]

Dawn Primarolo: The Board of Inland Revenue has prosecuted, in total, 215 individuals since the introduction of the new offence in S144, Finance Act 2000. Most have involved charges of cheating the public revenue or false accounting. The total includes eight people who have been successfully prosecuted using the offence in section 144 of Finance Act 2000 of fraudulently evading income tax. There have been no acquittals in cases where charges were brought under that offence. In the eight cases successfully prosecuted, approximately £100,000 tax loss has been recouped.

There are presently a further eighteen cases where criminal proceedings involving the offence in Finance Act 2000 are in the course of being instituted.

Tax Returns

Mr. Flook: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many PAYE scheme notices were sent out by the Inland Revenue to companies it had been notified were dormant and would file nil returns in each tax year since 1997. [167585]

Dawn Primarolo: There are various PAYE scheme notices, such as reminders to pay and employers' end of year returns. No such notices should have been issued since 1997 where the relevant PAYE scheme record has been noted as "dormant". IR hold records for companies on a number of different IT systems. Some PAYE notices may have been issued for dormant companies where records held on other IR systems have been noted "dormant" but the PAYE scheme record has not. No numbers of such cases are available.

Mr. Flook: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many and what proportion of penalty notices following the 31 January 2004 deadline for filing tax returns were sent out by 7 February. [167586]

Dawn Primarolo: In line with previous years, 90.6 per cent. of self assessment tax returns for 2003–04 were filed on time. Over 1 million returns were filed electronically. The Inland Revenue issued 952,766 Late Filing Penalty Notices on 17 February 2004 for returns not submitted by the due date.

HEALTH

Drug Misuse (Liverpool)

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the number of drug addicts in Liverpool, Walton. [166986]

Miss Melanie Johnson: This information is not available because there is no longer a register of heroin addicts. The Home Office register of heroin addicts ceased in 1997 as resistance to register by heroin users meant the data were so inaccurate, it was unusable.

Agency Doctors/Nurses

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost was of agency *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses in (i) Preston and (ii) Chorley hospitals in each of the last three years. [148374]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The National Health Service does not separately record the cost of employing agency staff.

Agriculture Council

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health who will represent the UK Government at the meeting of the European Agriculture Council in Luxembourg on 26 and 27 April. [167173]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* I refer my hon. Friend to the response given to her by my hon. Friend, the Minister for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mr. Bradshaw), on 27 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 861W.

Anti-depressants

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the correlation between the number of prescriptions for anti-depressant drugs and recorded suicides in each of the last 10 years. [166858]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has not analysed any relationships between the number of prescriptions for anti-depressant drugs and recorded suicides in each of the last 10 years.

Asthma

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to commission research targeted at the needs of people whose asthma fails to respond to current treatments. [170237]

Dr. Ladyman: The National Health Service health technology assessment programme has commissioned a systematic review to examine the impact of psycho-educational interventions on health outcomes and costs in adults and children with difficult asthma. The report is expected for publication in early 2005.

The Medical Research Council (MRC) always welcomes high quality applications from the scientific community for support for research into any aspect of human health, including severe difficult asthma, and these are judged in open competition with other demands in funding. Awards are made according to their scientific quality and importance to human health. In 2001–02, MRC expenditure on its respiratory disorders portfolio was an estimated £11.9 million, which included work on asthma.

Bedside Televisions

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the cost of *(a)* fixing so that they turn off and *(b)* replacing the faulty bedside televisions that have been provided. [167606]

Mr. Hutton: The bedside televisions provided are not faulty; no fixing or replacement is required and no additional costs are involved. Patients can turn off screens or turn them to face the wall if they prefer.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which companies have contracted with NHS trusts to provide bedside televisions. [167607]

Mr. Hutton: Over 59,000 patients in 126 national health service hospitals have access to bedside televisions and telephones. The companies listed have contracts with NHS trusts to provide the service.

Patientline

Wandsworth Electrical Ltd.

Hospital Telephone Services

Kerfone

Premier Managed Payphones

Patientpal.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the cost to the NHS of providing bedside televisions for patients. [167659]

Mr. Hutton: The bedside televisions are provided at no cost to the national health service.

Private companies provide the televisions and bear the cost of installation, managing and running of them. As a result, the NHS has benefited from over £100 million of private sector investment.

Blood Transfusion

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will take steps to ensure that those prevented from giving blood as a consequence of precautions against the transmission of variant Creutzfeld-Jakob disease are not disadvantaged in the provision of *(a)* insurance, *(b)* mortgages and *(c)* other relevant financial services. [164281]

Ruth Kelly: I have been asked to reply.

Individual medical information can be relevant to applications for life and health insurance in particular. We are not aware of any specific issues arising in connection with those people who have had a blood transfusion since 1 January 1980, or in connection with anyone who has been prevented from giving blood as a consequence of precautions against the transmission of variant Creutzfeld-Jakob disease.

Cancer

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many consultants in cancer specialities were working in the NHS in England in each year since 1999. [167700]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of consultants working in cancer specialties in England in each year since 1999 is shown in the table.

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS): Consultants in the six main cancer specialties

Numbers (headcount)

England[1]	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*December 2003*
All main cancer specialties	3,362	3,528	3,721	3,913	4,169	4,240
of which:						
Clinical oncology	305	307	333	315	347	358
Clinical radiology	1,507	1,585	1,645	1,702	1,810	1,822
Haematology	510	527	556	588	609	632
Histopathology	836	865	915	968	1,021	1,036
Medical oncology	110	133	147	185	202	211
Palliative medicine	94	111	125	155	180	181

[1] Data as at 30 September each year, except December 2003 data, which is at 31 December.

Source:

Department of Health medical and dental workforce census

Cancer Patients Survey

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 12 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1684W, on the Cancer Patients Survey, when he expects to publish the analysis. [167534]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The analysis of the Cancer Patients Survey was published on 22 April 2004. Copies of the report have been placed in the Library and on the Department's website.

Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many forum members of the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health have resigned since its inception. [167994]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Since their establishment on 1 December 2003, 662 members of Patients' Forums have resigned, which represents a turnover of 11 per cent.

Consultancy Posts

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his policy is on matching the number of consultant vacancies to the number of qualified trainees. [167061]

Mr. Hutton: We are investing in future growth in the medical workforce by increasing both medical school places and specialist registrar training places. We have already exceeded the autumn 2005 England medical school intake target of 5,894, two years early. In autumn 2003, intake was 6,030 compared with 3,749 in autumn 1997 and as at 30 September 2003, there were 14,619 specialist registrars working in the national health service, an increase of 2,709 since September 1997.

A range of national recruitment initiatives is in place to support doctors looking for consultant vacancies most suited to them. A new website at: www.doh.gov.uk/consultantjobs hosts thousands of consultant vacancies in England for domestic specialist registrars as well as potential international consultant recruits. Similarly, the national roll-out of e-recruitment, an online recruitment service for the NHS, will allow doctors to search and apply for consultant vacancies on one website. This new service at: www.nhs.uk/jobs will streamline and modernise the process of recruitment of all NHS staff. In addition, the new consultant entry scheme facilitates the placement of specialist registrars looking for fixed term placements to known consultant vacancies.

Consultants

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the liability in the 2003–04 accounts of NHS Trusts of the implementation of the new consultant's contract. [168906]

Mr. Hutton: Funding for the consultant contract, based on the methodology agreed with the British Medical Association during the negotiations, was allocated to primary care trusts in full in December 2002 as part of main allocations. For 2003–04, additional funding worth 0.3 per cent. of allocations was allocated to primary care trusts for the implementation of the new consultant contract. We have given clear guidance to the National Health Service about how to manage costs within the financial envelope and how to manage funding flows, but decisions on how to spend this funding are made locally.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* headcount and *(b)* whole-time equivalent consultants there were in each year between 1979 and 1997 inclusive. [168995]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the table.

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS) consultants by year—numbers and whole time equivalents (wtes)—as at 30 September each year

	Number	Wte
1979	13,034	11,578.4
1980	13,276	12,045.1
1981	13,545	12,300.4
1982	13,672	12,438.9
1983	13,987	12,723.8
1984	14,259	13,016.9
1985	14,535	13,257.4
1986	14,838	13,505.7
1987	15,081	13,681.5
1988	15,385	14,052.1
1989	15,883	14,517.5
1990	16,525	15,011.4
1991	16,834	15,332.8
1992	17,279	15,695.9
1993	17,605	16,044.5
1994	18,155	16,537.5
1995	19,524	17,899.6
1996	20,402	18,602.6
1997	21,474	19,661.3

Notes:

1. Figures before 1987 exclude staff on KE payscales (district directors of public health) as data on these are unavailable before 1987.

2. In 1987 there were 68 such staff.

Source:

Department of Health medical and dental workforce census.

Continuing NHS Care

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 24 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 914–15W, on continuing NHS care, what information will be available centrally when the review is completed on *(a)* the number of people who should have been eligible for continuing NHS care who had been excluded and *(b)* the cost of reimbursing those people. [167940]

Dr. Ladyman: In due course, the Department expects information to be available centrally on the number of people granted recompense for being wrongly denied fully funded National Health Service continuing care and the aggregate cost of that recompense.

Correspondence

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when a response will be sent to the letter from the hon. Member for West Worcestershire to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Lord Warner, on 23 March. [168952]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 27 April 2004]:* A reply was sent to the hon. Member on 29 April 2004.

Drug Action Teams

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the key performance indicators are for Drug Action Teams. [171431]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Commission for Healthcare Audit and Inspection has included two performance indicators relating to drug action teams (and drug and alcohol action teams) in their performance rating assessment of national health service primary care trusts in England in 2003–04. They are:

drug misuse treatment—increase in drug misusers accessing treatment; and

drug misuse shared care—percentage of general practitioner practices in a shared care scheme for problematic drug misusers.

Foundation Trusts

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the public dividend capital was at 31 March of those NHS trusts becoming NHS foundation trusts on 1 April; whether in each case this is the initial public dividend capital of those foundation trusts; and what requests he has received for the issuing of additional public dividend capital to those foundation trusts under section 11 of the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003. [165729]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* The amount of public dividend capital (PDC) outstanding on 31 March 2004 at each of the national health service trusts that became NHS foundation trusts on 1 April 2004 is shown in the table. The information is taken from the Department's records. The amount of PDC shown in the annual accounts of these trusts is subject to audit and may differ for technical accounting reasons. The initial PDC of a NHS foundation trust is the same as the closing PDC of the predecessor NHS trust.

To date, no requests have been received from NHS foundation trusts for additional public dividend capital under section 11 of the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003.

£ million

NHS foundation trust	*Amount of PDC outstanding at 31 March 2004*
Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals	68,379
Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals	50,878
Moorfields Eye Hospital	27,810
Homerton University Hospital	77,160
The Royal Marsden	46,257
Bradford Teaching Hospitals	103,245
Stockport	65,686
Countess Of Chester Hospital	45,123
Royal Devon and Exeter	124,159
Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals	113,495
Total	722,193

GP Surgeries

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the maintenance backlog cost of general practitioner surgeries in the NHS in *(a)* England, *(b)* each strategic health authority and *(c)* each primary care trust in each year since 1997. [167413]

Mr. Hutton: There are some 10,500 general practitioner surgeries in England, of which 85 per cent. are either owner-occupied or rented by GPs, who are responsible for maintenance of their premises. The information requested is not held centrally and cannot be obtained without disproportionate cost.

Health Professionals (Training Costs)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the cost of training a *(a)* occupational therapist, *(b)* physiotherapist, *(c)* speech and language therapist, *(d)* district nurse and *(e)* health visitor. [169708]

Mr. Hutton: Information for England on the cost of training pre-registration occupational therapists, physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, excluding bursaries, and district nurses and health visitors are shown in the table.

Staff group	*2003–04 cost (£)*
Occupational therapist	20,420
Physiotherapist	20,980
Speech and language therapist	20,430
District nurse	23,600
Health visitor	23,600

Source:
Financial and Workforce Information Return (FWIR) November 2002.

Health Services

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the provision of NHS dental services in *(a)* the Huntingdon constituency and *(b)* Cambridgeshire. [170858]

Dr. Ladyman: The information relating to the provision of national health service dental services in the Huntingdon constituency and Cambridge have been placed in the Library.

Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) will have increased influence and control over the spread of NHS dental provision across their catchment area, and will have budgets devolved to them, so that the PCT will be able to keep the money locally for dentistry if a dentist leaves.

Nationally we have provided new investment totalling £90 million over the last year. £59 million will support access, and strategic health authorities have been advised of their shares and are working with their PCTs to address access issues. £30 million is to support information technology and the balance of £1 million will support organisational development locally.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of suspected cancer patients in the Huntingdon constituency saw an NHS consultant within two weeks in each of the last seven years. [170859]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of patients with suspected cancer who saw consultants within two weeks are as shown in the table for the two trusts within the Huntingdon constituency.

	Number of urgent GP referrals for suspected cancer	*Percentage seen by specialist with two weeks of referral*
Hinchingbrooke Healthcare National Health Service		
March 2002	468	99.8
March 2003	415	100.0
June 2003	499	100.0
September 2003	576	99.8
December 2003	593	100.0
Papworth hospital NHS Trust		
March 2002	7	100.0
March 2003	13	100.0
June 2003	8	100.0
September 2003	5	100.0
December 2003	5	100.0

Source:
Department of Health Statistics

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes there have been to NHS waiting list times in the last seven years for the residents of the Huntingdon constituency. [170860]

Dr. Ladyman: The table shows the changes in national health service waiting list times over the past seven years for the residents of Huntingdon constituency.

The total number of patients on the in-patient waiting list fell by 28,198 between the end of January 2004 and the end of February 2004 to 941,162. This is the ninth successive month the waiting list has been below a million.

Patients waiting for elective in-patient admission

Month-end NHS trust	*Total number of patients waiting for admission*	*Patients waiting for admission by months waiting*		
		Less than 3 months	*3–5 months*	*6–8 months*
March 1997				
Hinchingbrooke Health Care NHS Trust	8,106	4,026	2,092	1,220
Papworth Hospital NHS Trust	3,850	1,836	1,238	568
March 1998				
Hinchingbrooke Health Care NHS Trust	7,936	3,790	1,978	1,218
Papworth Hospital NHS Trust	4,428	1,826	1,470	688
March 1999				
Hinchingbrooke Health Care NHS Trust	6,628	3,846	1,666	772
Papworth Hospital NHS Trust	3,760	1,742	1,020	622
March 2000				
Hinchingbrooke Health Care NHS Trust	7,074	4,026	1,632	896
Papworth Hospital NHS Trust	3,836	1,628	1,146	598

Patients waiting for elective in-patient admission

Month-end/NHS trust	*Total number of patients waiting for admission*	*Patients waiting for admission by months waiting*		
		Less than 3 months	*3–5 months*	*6–8 months*
March 2001				
Hinchingbrooke Health Care NHS Trust	6,948	3,898	1,756	894
Papworth Hospital NHS Trust	4,906	2,342	1,602	736
March 2002				
Hinchingbrooke Health Care NHS Trust	8,192	4,244	2,320	1,086
Papworth Hospital NHS Trust	4,432	2,046	1,482	684
March 2003				
Hinchingbrooke Health Care NHS Trust	3,877	2,216	936	513
Papworth Hospital NHS Trust	2,104	1,323	584	178
March 2004				
Hinchingbrooke Health Care NHS Trust	3,494	2,282	944	268
Papworth Hospital NHS Trust	2,110	1,630	450	30
Huntingdonshire PCT	20	17	3	—

Month-end/NHS trust	*Patients waiting for admission by months waiting*			
	9–11 months	*12–14 months*	*15–17 months*	*18+ months*
March 1997				
Hinchingbrooke Health Care NHS Trust	758	10	—	—
Papworth Hospital NHS Trust	204	4	—	—
March 1998				
Hinchingbrooke Health Care NHS Trust	728	194	28	—
Papworth Hospital NHS Trust	404	34	6	—
March 1999				
Hinchingbrooke Health Care NHS Trust	290	54	—	—
Papworth Hospital NHS Trust	300	76	—	—
March 2000				
Hinchingbrooke Health Care NHS Trust	468	52	—	—
Papworth Hospital NHS Trust	360	104	—	—
March 2001				
Hinchingbrooke Health Care NHS Trust	326	66	8	—
Papworth Hospital NHS Trust	184	38	4	—
March 2002				
Hinchingbrooke Health Care NHS Trust	526	16	—	—
Papworth Hospital NHS Trust	220	—	—	—
March 2003				
Hinchingbrooke Health Care NHS Trust	212	—	—	—
Papworth Hospital NHS Trust	19	—	—	—
March 2004				
Hinchingbrooke Health Care NHS Trust	—	—	—	—
Papworth Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	—	—
Huntingdonshire PCT	—	—	—	—

Source:
DH form KH07

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* overseas doctors and *(b)* overseas nurses there were in Liverpool in (i) 1997 and (ii) 2003. [166949]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested on overseas doctors has been placed in the Library. The equivalent information on overseas nurses is not collected centrally.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the levels of elective admissions to the NHS in Wirral, South in the past five years. [166618]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Provider of treatment RBL Wirral Hospitals NHS Trust, count of finished elective (waiting list, planned and booked) admission episodes—NHS hospitals, 1998–99 to 2002–03

	Finished Admission Episodes
1998–99	36,667
1999–2000	29,759
2000–01	32,018
2001–02	33,351
2002–03	29,664

Notes:
1. A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
2. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e., the data are ungrossed).

Source:
Hospital episode statistics, Department of Health.

Hearing Aids

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will make a statement on the implementation of the modernising hearing aid services programme; [171091]

(2) what continuation funding will be available for the modernising hearing aid services programme after central funding ends in 2005; and if he will make a statement. [171092]

Dr. Ladyman: The modernising hearing aid services (MHAS) programme has resulted in the provision of digital hearing aids and the modernisation of services in two thirds of the audiology departments in England. By the end of March 2005, all audiology departments will have been through the programme. An extra £26.4 million capital and £12 million revenue is scheduled to be distributed to lead primary care trusts for the financial year beginning April 2005 as part of the general allocations.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of NHS hearing aids are digital in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* England; and if he will make a statement. [171093]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collected centrally.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made in Essex on the modernising hearing aid services programme. [171094]

Dr. Ladyman: Four of the five acute trusts in Essex have modernised audiology departments and are fitting digital hearing aids. Epping Forest Primary Care Trust (St. Margaret's Hospital) will commence fitting digital hearing aids in 2005.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects full take-up of NHS digital hearing aids to be achieved in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* England. [171095]

Dr. Ladyman: All audiology departments in England will routinely be fitting digital hearing aids by March 2005, two thirds are already doing so.

The Department is investing a further £94 million in the financial years 2003–04 and 2004–05. This is additional to a total of £30.75 million invested since the Modernising Hearing Aid Services (MHAS) project began in September 2000.

Essex Strategic Health Authority, and primary care and other trusts within Essex continue to work towards meeting the March 2005 target.

Hearing-impaired Patients

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures are in place to ensure that patients who are deaf or have hearing problems have full access to the NHS services by October. [170965]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department is working in partnership with the Disability Rights Commission on a range of measures to support the National Health Service in improving access to information and services, communications and levels of awareness of disability issues. These measures include, for example, developing health sector-specific practical guidance and promoting awareness of the access duties within the NHS.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to improve the way that the NHS communicates with patients who are deaf or who have a hearing impairment. [171013]

Dr. Ladyman: The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 requires service providers to make reasonable adjustments to the way they deliver their services so that disabled people can use them. In January 1999, the Department issued guidance to chief executives of National Health Service Trusts on providing good quality services meeting the needs of disabled people. This guidance contains a section explaining the needs of people who are deaf or who have a hearing impairment setting out a range of ways in which better communication can be supported. For example, the, guidance recommends that interpreters used for medical consultations should be appropriately qualified, that hospitals and health centres should maintain an up to date list of accredited sign language interpreters, and that letter headings, leaflets and information sheets should include text phone, fax and email numbers to facilitate responses from deaf people.

NHS organisations are responsible for their own compliance with the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act. However, the Department is working in partnership with the Disability Rights Commission on a range of measures to support the NHS in improving access to information and services, communications and levels of awareness of disability issues. These measures include, for example, developing health sector-specific practical guidance and promoting awareness of the access duties within the NHS.

Hunters Moor Hospital (Newcastle)

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many business cases have so far been *(a)* submitted and *(b)* rejected for a replacement neuro-disability centre for Hunters Moor Hospital, Newcastle; what the date was of the first such submission; and whether a business case has now been accepted. [168699]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Three business cases have been submitted.

The first outline business case was submitted in 1995. It was not progressed further because of changes in the time scale of implementing the Newcastle Strategic Review.

The second outline business case was submitted in 1998 to provide interim accommodation. It was rejected by the community health council. The former Newcastle City Health Trust withdrew the proposal and agreed to explore further options.

The third outline business case was developed following a period of public consultation. It was approved by Northumberland, Tyne and Wear Strategic Health Authority in 2003. The full business case is now being developed.

Internet Medicine Sales

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on his Department's monitoring of the sale of *(a)* licensed and *(b)* unlicensed medicines over the internet. [167803]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) works in co-ordination with world-wide enforcement bodies to address this area of criminal activity. The MHRA is a member of the Permanent Forum on International Pharmaceutical Crime (PFIPC). This forum was set up by the United Kingdom in 1998 to promote good practice and develop intelligence links and networks. Internet crime is a frequent topic for discussion.

An initiative to co-ordinate action within the European Community and pre accession countries was established this year to advise and assist prospective members and to raise awareness of issues relating to the internet.

An initiative is currently in progress to identify a commercially available internet monitoring software package for use by the MHRA.

In addition, the MHRA and the former Medicines Control Agency (MCA) has been involved with three initiatives involving the availability of medicines on the internet sponsored by other Government agencies and local authorities, such as the Office of Fair Trading, Inland Revenue and trading standards departments. These initiatives identified websites which appeared to be in breach of medicines legislation. The MHRA/MCA investigated the services offered by those websites and took appropriate action.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on his Department's policy on enforcing the General Medicine Council's ruling on the sale of medicines over the internet. [167804]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In November 1998 the General Medical Council (CMC) issued guidance to doctors on providing advice and medicine on line or by telephone. The GMC guidance promotes good medical practice but is not for the Government to enforce.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to seek to amend the law relating to sales of drugs over the internet; and if he will make a statement. [167805]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are no plans to amend medicines legislation relating to the internet. Legal controls on the retail sale or supply of medicines are set out in the Medicines Act 1968 and associated regulations.

These controls apply without distinction to medicines sold or supplied through internet transactions. Although there are strict legal controls in legislation on the sale, supply and advertisement of medicinal products within the European Community, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) accepts that the sale of medicines over the internet poses unique challenges to national authorities.

Along with counterparts in other member states and other enforcement bodies world-wide (including the Food and Drugs Administration), the MHRA continues to monitor developments. However, by its very nature, the internet, with its broad reach, relative anonymity and the ease of creating new websites (plus removing old ones) means that ensuring effective compliance with legislative requirements requires a global commitment.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many investigations have been carried out into the sale of unlicensed medicines via the internet by *(a)* the Medicines Control Agency for each year between 1997 and 2003 and *(b)* the Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency in the last year. [167808]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of internet investigations carried out by the Medicines Control Agency (MCA) and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) involving unlicensed medicinal products year-on-year since 1997 is shown in the table.

	Number of cases
1997–2001[1]	3
2001–02[1]	1
2002–03[1]	5
2003–04[2]	7

[1] Investigated by the MCA.
[2] Investigated by the MHRA.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many prosecutions against sellers of unlicensed medicines via the internet *(a)* have been undertaken, *(b)* have been successful and *(c)* are in preparation by (i) the Medicines Control Agency for each year between 1997 and 2003 and (ii) the Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency in the last year. [167809]

Ms Rosie Winterton: To date, there has been one successful prosecution, by the then Medicines Control Agency, relating to the sale of unlicensed medicines on the internet. This took place in 1999. No other such prosecutions have been brought.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency currently has two cases prepared for prosecution involving the sale of unlicensed medicines on the internet.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many employees are engaged in the Special Inquiry Unit of the Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency investigating drugs sales through the internet. [167810]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The work of the special enquiry unit of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) was absorbed into the mainstream criminal investigation unit in October 2001.

The MHRA currently employs 14 full time investigators. The investigators cover all allegations relating to breaches of medicines legislation and do not exclusively investigate sales via the internet.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what training is undertaken by employees of the Special Inquiry Unit of the Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency investigating drug sales through the internet. [167811]

Ms Rosie Winterton: All investigation officers in the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) receive training in how to undertake investigations into cases involving the internet. Also, specialist administrative staff involved in internet casework have received additional training in internet search techniques.

In addition, senior officers from the MHRA visited United States federal agencies in Washington at the end of last year as part of a familiarisation exercise on electronic investigative techniques currently in use in the United States. They received demonstrations of training and software packages on the market and in operation. Senior officers in the MHRA are in the process of evaluating which systems will be best suited to its needs.

Learning Disabilities

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money has been invested in the Learning Disability Development Fund; from what sources the funding comes; and if he will make a statement. [170197]

Dr. Ladyman: "Valuing People—a New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century" announced the creation of the learning disability development fund (LDDF) to provide central support for key aspects of the strategy. It was introduced in 2002–03.

The revenue allocations were £20.6 million in 2002–03, and £21.1 million in 2003–04. The capital allocations for both years were £20 million.

The revenue element of the LDDF is formed from that element of the old long stay adjustment within general health allocations which is released as former long stay patients die.

The LDDF capital is additional investment which resulted from the 2002 spending review.

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people with learning disabilities have access to a health facilitator; how many have received an health action plan, broken down by region; and if he will make a statement. [170199]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of people with learning disabilities with access to a health facilitator and a health action plan is not available.

Good practice guidance was issued in July 2002 on two key elements of the strategy for improving the health of people with learning disabilities: health action plans and health facilitation. This was followed up with a series of regional workshops. In the light of these the percentage 'Valuing People' support team has been working with local learning disability partnership boards to help them implement health action plans and health facilitation in their areas.

"Building on the Best", our response to the consultation on choice, responsiveness and equality in the national health service, published in December 2003, said that we will bring forward proposals during 2004 to offer disabled people the option of taking up an annual health check. We are considering how to take this forward in a way that will further support the health action planning process.

Long-term Care

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will, in the light of the recent Ombudsman's report on Mr. Curran, assess the criteria used by the Castle Point and Rochford Primary Care Trust to determine payment of the long-term health and care costs; and if he will make a statement on their consistency with the principle of free NHS care for those with serious health problems; [171717]

(2) if he will refund to families the costs they have been charged for the long-term care of their loved ones where these charges have been found to relate primarily to clinical care necessary because of severe illness; and if he will make a statement; [171731]

(3) if he will make it his policy to ensure that people with severe irreversible brain damage who need long-term health care are not required to pay for that care; [171733]

(4) if he will list the strategic health authorities under which the long-term care of people with Parkinson's disease is *(a)* funded under the NHS and *(b)* not funded under the NHS; [171734]

(5) if he will make a statement on the consistency among strategic health authorities' policies on paying for long-term care costs for people with Parkinson's disease and other serious health needs. [171735]

Dr. Ladyman: Recompense payments have been made, and will continue to be made, in cases where investigations have revealed that individuals were wrongly denied fully funded national health service continuing care. Eligibility for fully funded NHS continuing care is based on the individual's level of assessed health care needs, not on a condition specific basis. All strategic health authorities have recently reviewed their criteria and have provided the Department with evidence of the legal advice sought to ensure their criteria's compliance with the NHS' legal responsibilities.

Malnutrition

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many elderly people were diagnosed as suffering from malnutrition *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by health authority, in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [166009]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In the NHS Plan (2000) the Government made a commitment to reduce under nutrition by developing a hospital nutrition policy to

improve the outcome of care of patients by 2004. A number of measures and strategies are in place to manage, monitor and screen patients for under nutrition in hospitals, residential care and the wider community. Nutritional screening is recommended for the care of specific groups, such as those outlined in the national service framework for older people (2001).

Data from Hospital Episode Statistics showing the count of finished admission episodes to hospitals in England from 1997–98 to 2002–03 by the health authority of residence for malnutrition, where the primary diagnosis is malnutrition and the age on admission was 65 plus, are shown in the table.

Health authority of residence	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
QA2 Hillingdon HA	—	—	—	—	—	1
QA3 Kensington, Chelsea and Westminster HA	3	1	1	1	—	—
QA4 Enfield and Haringey HA	—	1	2	2	—	—
QA5 Redbridge and Waltham Forest HA	—	1	1	2	1	—
QA6 Bedfordshire HA	1	—	5	1	3	1
QA7 Berkshire HA	—	—	—	—	—	1
QA8 Buckinghamshire HA	—	1	—	1	—	1
QA9 Cambridge and Huntingdon HA	—	4	—	—	—	—
QAA Bexley and Greenwich HA	—	1	—	—	—	—
QAC Bromley HA	—	1	—	—	—	—
QAD Croydon HA	—	—	1	—	2	—
QAE East Kent HA	4	3	3	3	—	—
QAF West Kent HA	—	1	1	3	—	1
QAG Kingston and Richmond HA	—	1	2	—	5	—
QAH Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham HA	—	1	8	2	6	1
QAJ Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth HA	1	2	2	1	—	—
QAK East Surrey HA	—	2	1	—	2	6
QAL West Surrey HA	—	—	—	—	3	4
QAM East Sussex, Brighton and Hove HA	5	4	2	—	4	5
QAN West Sussex HA	1	—	1	2	2	2
QAP Barking and Havering HA	4	3	—	—	2	1
QAQ Barnet HA	1	—	—	2	—	—
QAR Brent and Harrow HA	—	—	—	1	—	—
QAT Camden and Islington HA	1	1	2	2	—	2
QAV Ealing, Hammersmith and Hounslow HA	2	—	1	4	2	1
QAW East London and The City HA	2	3	2	2	2	—
QAX North Essex HA	—	—	3	—	1	3
DAY South Essex HA	2	—	—	3	1	1
QC1 South Lancashire HA	—	—	—	—	4	—
QC2 Liverpool HA	—	—	1	—	—	—
QC3 Manchester HA	1	—	1	1	4	1
QC4 Morecambe Bay HA	—	—	—	1	2	1
QC5 St. Helens and Knowsley HA	—	—	1	—	1	1
QC6 Salford and Trafford HA	1	—	—	2	1	1
QC7 Sefton HA	1	—	1	—	—	—
QC8 Stockport HA	—	—	1	—	—	2
QC9 West Pennine HA	3	—	—	—	1	1
QCA East Norfolk HA	—	1	—	—	—	—
QCC Northamptonshire HA	—	1	1	—	—	—
QCD North West Anglia HA	—	1	—	—	—	—
QCE Oxfordshire HA	1	1	1	1	3	4
QCF Suffolk HA	1	3	4	3	2	1
QCG Barnsley HA	—	—	—	—	1	—
QCH North Derbyshire HA	1	1	—	—	—	—
QCJ South Derbyshire HA	—	1	2	2	—	1
QCK Doncaster HA	1	—	—	—	1	1
QCL Leicestershire HA	2	2	2	2	3	4
QCM Lincolnshire HA	1	—	—	—	—	3
QCN North Nottinghamshire HA	—	1	—	1	5	—
QCP Nottingham HA	—	2	1	6	6	2
QCQ Rotherham HA	—	1	—	—	—	1
QCR Sheffield HA	1	—	—	—	1	1
QCT Bury and Rochdale HA	2	1	—	1	1	—
QCV North Cheshire HA	—	1	—	—	—	1
QCW South Cheshire HA	1	2	—	—	—	1
QCX East Lancashire HA	1	1	—	1	4	1
QCY North-West Lancashire HA	1	4	2	1	1	3
QD1 North and Mid Hampshire HA	—	—	1	3	1	—
QD2 Portsmouth and South East Hampshire HA	—	—	1	1	—	—
QD3 Southampton and South West Hampshire HA	1	3	2	2	1	3
QD4 Isle of Wight HA	—	—	—	1	—	—
QD5 Somerset HA	1	4	1	3	—	—
QD6 South and West Devon HA	1	2	—	4	3	3
QD7 Wiltshire HA	1	2	—	—	1	1
QD8 Avon HA	2	—	1	4	1	—

Health authority of residence	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
QD9 Birmingham HA	2	5	2	2	1	4
QDA Wigan and Bolton HA	—	—	1	—	4	—
QDC Wirral HA	1	—	—	1	—	—
QDD Bradford HA	—	—	1	1	—	—
QDE County Durham and Darlington HA	4	2	1	1	—	2
QDF East Riding HA	2	—	1	3	2	1
QDG Gateshead and South Tyneside HA	1	2	1	1	3	1
QDH Leeds HA	7	4	—	—	1	1
QDJ Newcastle and North Tyneside HA	1	2	1	—	—	3
QDK North Cumbria HA	—	—	1	—	—	—
QDL South Humber HA	—	1	1	—	—	1
QDM Northumberland HA	2	4	—	1	—	1
QDN Sunderland HA	1	—	1	—	—	1
QDP Tees HA	—	3	1	2	—	—
QDQ Wakefield HA	2	—	—	1	1	—
QDR North Yorkshire HA	—	1	1	4	2	—
QDT Calderdale and Kirklees HA	—	2	2	—	1	—
QDV Cornwall and Isles of Scilly HA	2	2	—	1	3	—
QDW Dorset HA	—	—	2	2	—	—
QDX North and East Devon HA	—	—	1	—	1	2
QDY Gloucestershire HA	—	—	2	—	—	3
QEA Coventry HA	—	1	2	—	2	—
QEC Dudley HA	6	1	—	1	2	2
QEE Sandwell HA	4	1	—	—	—	1
QEF Shropshire HA	—	2	1	1	—	1
QEG Solihull HA	—	—	—	1	—	1
QEH North Staffordshire HA	3	5	1	—	3	1
QEJ South Staffordshire HA	—	—	2	—	2	1
QEK Walsall HA	—	—	—	—	1	—
QEL Warwickshire HA	2	4	—	3	1	—
QEM Wolverhampton HA	4	1	—	—	—	—
QEN Worcestershire HA	2	1	—	—	—	1
QEQ West Hertfordshire HA	1	1	2	1	—	—
QER Cambridgeshire HA	—	—	1	2	5	3
QET Norfolk HA	—	—	4	4	4	5
QEV Isle of Wight Portsmouth and Southampton HA	—	—	—	—	1	3
QEW Barnet Enfield and Haringey HA	—	—	—	—	2	1
QEX Hertfordshire HA	—	—	—	—	—	1
QEY Bexley Bromley and Greenwich HA	—	—	—	—	2	1
W Wales	—	—	1	—	—	—
Y Not known	3	—	—	—	—	1
Grand total	102	111	96	105	128	112

Maternity Services (Asylum Seekers)

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 29 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1217W, on maternity services (asylum seekers) what *(a)* maternity and *(b)* antenatal services will be available to women who have had their application for asylum refused. [171398]

Dr. Ladyman: Pregnant women whose application for asylum has been finally rejected will continue to be able to access National Health Service hospital antenatal and maternity services but they may be charged for any services provided, depending on how long they have been in the United Kingdom at the time their claim is turned down. In primary care settings, free treatment will be given only where, in the opinion of a health care professional, it is an emergency or is immediately necessary. In other circumstances, failed asylum seekers should be de-registered and should receive treatment (maternity medical services) only from General Practitioners practices on a private, paying basis.

Meningitis

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the meningitis risk to young people entering universities; and if he will make a statement. [170818]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The risk of meningitis in young people entering higher education has reduced substantially since the introduction of the MenC vaccine. The number of cases of meningitis C per year in all age groups has declined by over 90 per cent., since the vaccine was introduced.

Meningitis B still presents a risk, as there is no vaccine available to protect against this disease. In order to raise awareness of the signs and symptoms of meningitis, the Department distributes the 'Look out for your mate' leaflet which is targeted specifically at the student age group.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what immunisation advice he has given to young people due to enter higher education this year in respect of meningitis. [170821]

Miss Melanie Johnson: United Kingdom students entering higher education should have received MenC vaccine as part of the vaccination campaign. We

recommend that every effort should be made to ensure that all individuals are immunised even if they are older than the recommended age range, and that no opportunity should be missed.

Mental Health

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many mental health beds are occupied by people being treated for physical health conditions; [169038]

(2) what his policy is on mental health beds in hospitals being used for treating people for physical health conditions. [169039]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not centrally available. The Department monitors the average daily number of open and staffed beds in National Health Service hospitals. Figures can be sub-divided into different ward classifications, such as 'neonates and children' or into sectors such as 'mental illness'. However, it is not possible to provide the information requested using these figures.

The Department does not have a specific policy on the use of mental health beds being used for treating people for physical health conditions. The national service framework for mental health standard five envisages each mental health service user who is assessed as requiring a period of care away from their home to have timely access to an appropriate hospital bed or alternative bed or place. Strategic health authorities have a responsibility to ensure trusts' compliance with this standard.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when he expects to publish a timetable for the pre-legislative scrutiny committee stages of the Mental Health Bill; [169021]

(2) when the Government will publish the responses to the consultation on mental health. [169588]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A revised and completed Mental Health Bill will be brought forward for pre-legislative scrutiny in this session. The Government's response to consultation on the draft Mental Health Bill will be published prior to consideration of the revised Bill by the pre-legislative scrutiny committee.

Mumps

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what plans he has to appeal to all teenagers not vaccinated against mumps to be immunised; [167409]

(2) what guidance has been produced by his Department on inoculation against mumps for people who did not receive the MMR vaccine as children. [167414]

Miss Melanie Johnson: All children need two doses of measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine to ensure that they are properly protected against measles, mumps and rubella.

We advise that children who have either had no or one dose of MMR should be offered a further dose. In our information resources, we already advise young people to check that all their immunisations, including MMR, are up to date at the time they have their teenage immunisations. We also advise healthcare professionals that entry to higher educational establishments provides a further opportunity to check the immunisation history.

Nappies

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether his Department has received a copy of the recent report from the Women's Environmental Network on the economic and environmental costs of the promotion, use and disposal as clinical waste of disposable nappies within the National Health Service. [169044]

Dr. Ladyman: Officials at the Department have received and responded to the recent report from the Women's Environmental Network on the use of disposable nappies within the National Health Service.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate *(a)* the average unit cost of disposal as clinical waste of disposable nappies within the National Health Service and *(b)* the total cost to the NHS of the disposal of such nappies in the last year for which figures are available. [169045]

Dr. Ladyman: National Health Service trusts establish their own policy on the disposal of nappies and will decide whether to treat them as domestic waste, and therefore send them to landfill sites or clinical waste and therefore incinerate them. The cost of clinical waste involving disposable nappies is not collected centrally.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether officials of his Department have met officials of the Waste Implementation Programme of the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to discuss how best to identify and promote best practice in nappy use, promotion and disposal within the National Health Service. [169046]

Dr. Ladyman: Officials at the Department have not met officials of the waste implementation programme at the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs to discuss the use of nappies in the National Health Service. In July 2003 my hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health, met my hon. Friend the Minister of State for Environment and Agri-Environment (Elliot Morley), along with representatives from the Women's Environmental Network to discuss disposable nappy waste and the use of reusable nappies in the NHS.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will meet representatives of the Nappy Alliance to discuss policy and practice in the use of nappies within NHS facilities. [169047]

Dr. Ladyman: I will consider meeting representatives of the Nappy Alliance following a written request to the Department.

National Service Frameworks

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the children's national service framework will make reference to the good practice in continence services guidelines. [169051]

Dr. Ladyman: It is not intended that the children's national service framework will set standards for the treatment of specific conditions, but rather will outline what support should be available to children and their parents in managing a whole range of problems. In doing so it will emphasise the promotion of evidence-based clinical guidelines and provide examples of good practice.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects to publish the full national service framework for children. [169020]

Dr. Ladyman: The national service framework for children, young people and maternity services will be published this year.

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on progress towards the national service framework milestone for systems to explore user and carer experience in primary care trusts. [170618]

Dr. Ladyman: The responsibility for planning for and monitoring progress against this milestone of the national service framework for older people lies with strategic health authorities.

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will make a statement on progress towards the national service framework milestone for general practitioner practices in identifying, treating and managing patients at risk of stroke; [170621]

(2) if he will make a statement on progress towards the national service framework milestone for general practitioner practices in identifying and treating people who have had a stroke; [170622]

(3) if he will make a statement on progress towards the national service framework milestone for general practitioner practices to establish clinical audit systems for stroke; [170623]

(4) if he will make a statement on progress towards the national service framework milestone for general practitioner practices to use agreed protocols for rapid referral of patients with TIAs to local specialist services; [170626]

(5) if he will make a statement on progress towards the national service framework milestone for general hospitals caring for people with stroke to have a specialised stroke service. [170627]

Dr. Ladyman: The planning and priorities framework for 2003–06 contained as a key 'must do' target the provision of specialist stroke services in hospitals caring for people with stroke by April 2004. This target is being monitored as part of the quarterly monitoring process and information on progress at the end of March 2004 will be available in June. 2003–04 local delivery plans and subsequent discussions with strategic health authorities (SHAs) suggest that the target will be fully met. At December 2003, around three-quarters of hospitals had already met the target.

Planning for and measuring progress on all the other milestones in Standard 5 of the national service framework for older people, relating to the development of stroke services, is the responsibility of SHAs.

Neonatal Intensive Care

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the vacancy rate is for nurses in intensive care units for new born babies in each hospital trust in England; [169056]

(2) how many *(a)* nurses and *(b)* whole-time equivalent nurses work in intensive care units for new born babies. [169055]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

New Variant CJD

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many new cases of new variant CJD were reported in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [167073]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Annual cases of variant Creutzfeld Jakob disease by notification since 1999

	Reported cases
1999	16
2000	29
2001	21
2002	15
2003	15
2004[1]	0
Total	96

[1] As of 5 April 2004

NHS

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the written ministerial statement of 30 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 83WS, on NHS charges, what the cost of providing *(a)* sight tests, *(b)* dental check-ups and *(c)* prescription charges free on the NHS will be following the changes. [166430]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The estimated additional annual cost to the national health service in England following the changes to the National Health Service (Travel Expenses and Remissions of Charges) Regulations from 6 April 2004 is as follows:

provision of free sight tests—around £6,000;

provision of free dental treatment—around £70,000 (the additional cost of provision of free dental check-ups has not been identified separately; and

loss of prescription charge revenue—around £580,000.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his policy is on childcare provision for NHS staff. [162997]

Mr. Hutton: The National Health Service childcare strategy has a key role to play in the recruitment, retention and return of staff to the NHS.

The NHS Plan introduced the idea of a childcare strategy, as part of the improving working lives standard. National targets were set for 150 new on-site nurseries providing an additional 7,500 subsidised places, and for all NHS staff to have access to a childcare co-ordinator. Over £70 million has been made available for this over the three years from April 2001.

So far, 140 new nursery schemes, new builds or extensions to existing nurseries, have been opened or are in the pipeline, which will provide an extra 6,000 new nursery places for NHS staff. Further schemes are being considered.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children of NHS staff use NHS-provided childcare facilities. [163059]

Mr. Hutton: The national health service childcare strategy has a key role to play in the recruitment, retention and return of staff to the NHS.

We do not keep central figures on the numbers of NHS staff using NHS provided childcare facilities.

The NHS Plan introduced the idea of a childcare strategy, as part of the Improving Working Lives standard. National targets were set for 150 new on-site nurseries providing additional 7,500 subsidised places, and for all NHS staff to have access to a childcare co-ordinator. Over £70 million has been made available for this over the three years from April 2001.

So far, 140 new nursery schemes—new builds or extensions to existing nurseries—have been opened or are in the pipeline. These will provide an extra 6,000 new nursery places for NHS staff. Further schemes are being considered.

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of calls to NHS Direct were resolved by NHS Direct without the need for further NHS intervention in the last year for which figures are available. [162055]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Last year NHS Direct handled 6,427,321 calls and the proportion of these calls to NHS Direct that were resolved by NHS Direct without the need for further NHS intervention in the last year for which figures are available was 44.3 per cent.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what percentage of new nursing recruits into the NHS have been recruited through recruitment agencies which have not signed up to the Government's code of practice on ethical recruitment; [170315]

(2) what percentage of all nursing recruits into the NHS have been through recruitment agencies. [170316]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* This information is not held centrally.

National health service trusts should use only those commercial agencies which comply with the Code of Practice and which are listed on the Department's website.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the country of origin was of nurses recruited into the NHS from overseas in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [170317]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* The Department does not collect information on the country of origin of nurses recruited to the national health service.

The Nursing and Midwifery Council holds information on the number of admissions of nurses and midwives to the register by country. This information is available on the Council's website on www.nmc-uk.org.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what mechanisms are in place to ensure the Government can guarantee that no recruitment agencies are used by the NHS to recruit nurses which have not signed up to the Government's code of practice on ethical recruitment. [170318]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* National health service trusts should use only those commercial agencies which comply with the Code of Practice and which are listed on the Department's website.

Strategic health authorities (SHAs) are working with trusts to ensure they comply with the Code of Practice and only work with agencies who are compliant.

This is in line with the government policy as it is for primary care trusts in partnership with SHAs and other local stakeholders to determine how best to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS therapists were located in Heywood and Middleton in each of the last seven years. [168485]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

NHS hospital and community health services: qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff in the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority area as at 30 September each specified year

Headcount

	NHS hospital	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
	Total	5,701	5,796	5,956	6,248	6,589	7,029	7,170
5AA	South Manchester PCT	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	89	105	109
5CL	Central Manchester PCT	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	116	152	152
5CR	North Manchester PCT	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	71	82	89
5CX	Trafford South PCT	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	5	7	6
5F4	Heywood and Middleton PCT	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	2	1	3
5F5	Salford PCT	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	106	137	155
5F6	Trafford North PCT	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	2	4

NHS hospital and community health services: qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff in the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority area as at 30 September each specified year

Headcount

	NHS hospital	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
5F7	Stockport PCT	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	112	124	116
5HG	Ashton, Leigh and Wigan PCT	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	311	335
5HQ	Bolton PCT	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	163	191
5J5	Oldham PCT	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	122	133
5JX	Bury PCT	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	94	91
5JY	Rochdale PCT	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	137	144
5LH	Tameside and Glossop PCT	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	128	132
QC3	Manchester HA	0	0	0	1	[1]	[1]	[1]
QC6	Salford and Trafford HA	0	0	0	11	1	[1]	[1]
QC8	Stockport HA	0	0	1	3	[1]	[1]	[1]
QC9	West Pennine HA	1	1	1	2	4	[1]	[1]
QCT	Bury and Rochdale HA	1	1	11	12	10	[1]	[1]
QDA	Wigan and Bolton HA	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	4	[1]	[1]
RBU	Central Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	673	668	705	730	[1]	[1]	[1]
RBV	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	265	268	281	288	303	320	329
REX	Oldham NHS Trust	347	346	360	393	417	[1]	[1]
REZ	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	244	249	243	259	308	[1]	[1]
RJY	Wigan and Leigh Health Services NHS Trust	488	506	516	528	[1]	[1]	[1]
RM2	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	534	550	561	562	554	548	549
RM3	Salford Royal Hospitals NHS Trust	441	460	458	468	485	513	476
RM4	Trafford Healthcare NHS Trust	281	288	306	323	337	340	315
RM5	Mancunian Community Health NHS Trust	282	292	277	304	[1]	[1]	[1]
RMC	Bolton Hospitals NHS Trust	332	350	360	397	416	421	428
RMH	Mental Health Services of Salford NHS Trust	123	130	139	145	156	194	[1]
RMJ	Salford Community Healthcare NHS Trust	109	110	116	109	[1]	[1]	[1]
RMK	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	286	267	272	275	256	[1]	[1]
RMM	Community Healthcare Bolton NHS Trust	121	131	140	158	173	[1]	[1]
RMN	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	216	225	230	242	267	[1]	[1]
RMP	Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust	158	162	159	168	184	200	221
RMQ	Tameside and Glossop Community/Priority Services NHS Trust	140	140	148	160	159	[1]	[1]
RMS	Stockport Acute Services NHS Trust	292	286	295	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
RMT	Stockport Healthcare NHS Trust	180	177	186	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
RQ7	Manchester Children's Hospitals NHS Trust	187	189	191	211	[1]	[1]	[1]
RRF	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	615	276	289
RT2	Pennine Care NHS Trust	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	146	187
RW3	Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	923	1,045	1,115
RW6	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	900	853
RWJ	Stockport NHS Trust	[1]	[1]	[1]	499	396	420	400
RXV	Bolton Salford And Trafford Mental Health NHS Trust	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	213
TAA	Manchester Mental Health Partnership	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	120	[1]	[1]
TAE	Manchester Mental Health and Social Care Trust	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	141	135

[1] Not applicable.

Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses there were in Stalybridge and Hyde in each of the last seven years. [168772]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The table shows the number of doctors and nurses within the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority area, the number of general medical practitioners and practice nurses in Stalybridge and Hyde and the number of doctors and nurses in the Pennine Acute Hospitals National Health Service Trust (including its predecessor organisations) each year since 1997.

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS) Doctors[1] General Medical Practitioners (excluding retainers)[2] Qualified Nursing, Midwifery and health visiting staff and Practice Nurses employed by Unrestricted Principals and Equivalents (UPEs)[3] for Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority and specified organisations

Numbers (headcount)

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Greater Manchester							
Doctors[1]	5,322	5,441	5,634	5,695	5,834	5,951	5,965
of which:							
HCHS Doctors[1]	3,837	3,957	4,124	4,172	4,315	4,440	4,384
General Medical Practitioners (excluding retainers)[2]	1,485	1,484	1,510	1,523	1,519	1,511	1,581

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS) Doctors[1] General Medical Practitioners (excluding retainers)[2] Qualified Nursing, Midwifery and health visiting staff and Practice Nurses employed by Unrestricted Principals and Equivalents (UPEs)[3] for Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority and specified organisations

Numbers (headcount)

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Nurses	19,551	19,834	19,818	20,087	20,213	20,982	21,609
of which:							
Qualified Nursing, Midwifery and health visiting staff	18,678	18,907	18,767	19,163	19,258	20,053	20,674
Practice Nurses	873	927	1,051	924	955	929	935
Tameside with Glossop PCG							
Doctors[1]	[4]	[4]	114	114	[4]	[4]	[4]
Nurses	[4]	[4]	89	72	[4]	[4]	[4]
Tameside and Glossop PCT							
Doctors[1]	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	118	127	138
Nurses					82	422	425
Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust							
Doctors[1]	118	124	129	146	180	178	193
Nurses	581	688	698	666	962	930	908
Pennine Care NHS Trust							
Doctors[1]	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	68	81
Nurses	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	637	797

[1] Excludes Hospital Medical Hospital Practitioners and Hospital Medical Clinical Assistants, most of whom are GPs working part time in hospitals.
[2] All Practitioners (excluding retainers) include Restricted Principals, Assistants, GP Registrars, Salaried Doctors (Para. 52 SFA), PMS Other, Flexible Career Scheme GPs and GP Returners.
[3] UPEs include GMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs and PMS Salaried GPs.
[4] Not available.
Notes:
1. Headcount Practice Nurse figures are estimated for these years.
2. Data as at 30 September every year except GP as at 1 October 1997–99.
Sources:
Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics.
Department of Health Medical and Dental Workforce Census.
Department of Health Non-medical Workforce Census.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* therapists and *(b)* scientists were located in Burnley in each of the last seven years. [167952]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data relating to the numbers of therapists and scientists on a constituency basis is not gathered centrally. The data shown in the table relates to National Health Service organisations serving the Burnley area.

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Cumbria and Lancashire SHA area	3,352	3,486	3,595	3,706	3,758	3,893	4,279
Of which:							
Total of specified organisations—Burnley	624	637	675	698	733	701	759
5G8 Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale PCT	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	116	124
REU Burnley Health Care NHS Trust	360	374	374	389	403	277	[1]
RMB Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust[2]	264	263	301	309	330	308	[1]
RXR East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	635

[1] Not applicable
[2] Mental Health elements transferred to Lancashire Care Trust from 1 April 2002.
Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* therapists and *(b)* scientists were located in Preston in each of the last seven years. [168112]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data relating to the numbers of therapists and scientists on a constituency basis is not gathered centrally. The data shown in the table relates to national health service organisations serving the Preston area.

NHS hospital and community health services: All qualified scientific, therapeutic & technical staff in the specified organisations as at 30 September

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Cumbria and Lancashire SHA area	3,352	3,486	3,595	3,706	3,758	3,893	4,279
of which:							
Total of specified organisations—Preston	589	628	651	682	637	956	1,097
5HD Preston PCT	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	93	112
RJU Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust [1]	211	218	216	222	169	n/a	n/a

NHS hospital and community health services: All qualified scientific, therapeutic & technical staff in the specified organisations as at 30 September

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
RMF Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	378	410	435	460	468	n/a	n/a
RW5 Lancashire Care NHS Trust	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	260	259
RXN Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	603	726

[1] Mental Health elements transferred to Lancashire Care Trust from 1 April 2002.
n/a—not applicable
Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses there were in Preston in each of the last seven years. [168113]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information on the number of national health service doctors and nurses is not gathered on a constituency basis. The tables show information based on NHS organisations serving the Preston area.

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS) Doctors[1] and General Medical Practitioners (excluding retainers) for Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority and specified organisations serving the Preston area

As at 30 September

	All Doctors[1]						
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Cumbria and Lancashire SHA	3,173	3,283	3,263	3,380	3,350	3,413	3,494
Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care [2]	201	211	219	239	250	238	n/a
Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services [2]	61	62	69	74	67	n/a	n/a
Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust [2]	211	232	238	280	232	230	n/a
Communicare NHS Trust [2]	30	31	31	30	24	n/a	n/a
Guild Community Healthcare NHS Trust [2]	47	50	49	48	53	n/a	n/a
North Sefton and West Lancashire Community NHS Trust [2,3]	n/a	n/a	41	44	16	n/a	n/a
Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	106	115	123	118	142	n/a	n/a
Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	312	339	316	355	348	n/a	n/a
Lancashire Care NHS Trust	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	108	101
Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	484	482
Preston PCG	n/a	n/a	67	69	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rossendale PCG	n/a	n/a	33	31	n/a	n/a	n/a
Preston PCT	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	73	93	102

[1] Excludes Hospital Medical Hospital Practitioners and Hospital Medical Clinical Assistants, most of whom are GPs working part-time in hospitals
[2] Mental Health elements transferred to Lancashire Care Trust from 1 April 2002
[3] Service for West Lancashire: includes services provided at West Lancashire until 31 March 1999 and excludes services transferred to Mersey Care 1 April 2001
n/a—not available
Note:
Data as at 30 September every year except GP as at 1 October 1997–99

Qualified Nursing, Midwifery & health visiting staff and Practice Nurses employed by Unrestricted Principals and Equivalents (UPEs) for Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority and specified organisations serving the Preston area

As at 30 September *numbers (headcount)*

	Nurses						
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Cumbria and Lancashire SHA	13,359	13,400	13,859	13,494	13,794	15,011	15,049
Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care [2]	1,260	1,274	1,527	1,169	1,206	1,161	n/a
Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services [2]	845	865	871	868	910	n/a	n/a
Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust [2]	1,382	1,369	1,358	1,364	1,536	1,185	103
Communicare NHS Trust [2]	472	483	509	522	387	n/a	n/a
Guild Community Healthcare NHS Trust [2]	394	436	464	446	455	n/a	n/a
North Sefton and West Lancashire Community NHS Trust [2,3]	n/a	n/a	453	475	72	n/a	n/a
Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	701	746	775	772	603	n/a	n/a
Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	1,272	1,234	1,264	1,256	1,410	70	69
Lancashire Care NHS Trust	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,002	1,021
Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,915	1,928
Preston PCG	n/a	n/a	49	56	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rossendale PCG	n/a	n/a	22	22	n/a	n/a	n/a
Preston PCT	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	193	233

[1] UPEs include GMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs and PMS Salaried GPs.
[2] Mental Health elements transferred to Lancashire Care Trust from 1 April 2002
[3] Service for West Lancashire: includes services provided at West Lancashire until 31 March 1999 and excludes services transferred to Mersey Care 1 April 2001
n/a—not available

Note:
Data as at 30 September every year except GP as at 1 October 1997–99
Sources:
Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics
Department of Health Medical and Dental Workforce Census
Department of Health Non-medical Workforce Census

NHS/Foundation Trusts

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public dividend capital has been issued by his Department to NHS trusts in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; and how much is estimated to be issued in 2004–05 to (i) NHS trusts and (ii) Foundation trusts. [168946]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 27 April 2004]:* The information requested is shown in the table. The forecast split of public dividend capital (PDC) between national health service trusts and NHS foundation trusts for 2004–05 will be refined during the year as better information becomes available on NHS foundation trusts spending plans and in year starts.

£ million

	Total PDC issued/forecast		
Financial year	*PDC to NHS trusts*	*PDC to NHS foundation trusts*	*Total*
2002–03	1,434	0	1,434
2003–04	1,833	0	1,833
2004–05[1]	2,634	150	2,784

[1] Estimate.

Nurses

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* headcount and *(b)* whole-time equivalent nurses there were in each year between 1979 and 1997 inclusive. [168994]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the table.

Between 1983, the first comparable year with current information, and 1997, the number of qualified nurses increased by 62,515. Since 1997, the number of qualified nurses employed in the National Health Service has increased by 67,503.

NHS hospital-based and community[1] qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff including Practice Nurses employed by Unrestricted Principals and Equivalents[5] in England as at 30 September each specified year[9]

	Whole-time equivalent	*Headcount*
1979	[1,4]161,359	[1,4,8]190,243
1980	[1,3]167,097	[1,3,8]196,361
1981	[1,3]179,144	[1,3,8]206,029
1982	[1,2,3]185,913	[1,2,3,8]212,512
1983	224,971	[8]256,341
1984	229,646	[8]262,908
1985	236,340	[8]271,382
1986	239,271	[8]274,670
1987	241,981	[8]279,552
1988	245,404	[8]284,242
1989	249,240	296,937
1990	250,080	298,966
1991[6]	252,010	[8]293,774
1992[6]	255,691	[8]297,351
1993[6]	251,456	[8]293,379
1994[6]	247,883	305,784
1995[7]	256,567	316,893
1996[7]	256,891	316,515
1997	256,093	318,856

[1] Figures for 1979–1982 are hospital staff only and are therefore not directly comparable with later years
[2] 1982 data is as at 31 December
[3] Figures taken from 1985 HPSSS
[4] Figures taken from 1982 HPSSS
[5] UPEs includes GMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs and PMS Salaried GPs
[6] Figures for 1991 to 1994 may not be fully comparable with other data due to under-reporting of fundholding practice staff by FHSAs.
[7] Includes estimated data for Buckinghamshire.
[8] Headcount Practice Nurse figures are estimated for these years.
[9] All Practice nurse data as at 1 October
Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census
Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics
Department of Health and Social Security Health and Personal Social Services Statistics (HPSSS)
Digest of Health Statistics

Obesity

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the NHS spent on medical research into obesity in each of the last 10 years. [169050]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Management of much of the research supported by national health service research and development funding is devolved and expenditure at project level is not held centrally by the Department. Research relating to obesity is usually carried out in the context of wider programmes.

Paddington Health Campus

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health further to the Minister of State for Health's answer of 23 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 695, on Paddington Health Campus, when he expected to make an announcement about the future of the campus scheme before the end of March; and when he now expects to make an announcement. [166572]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* Discussions on the future of the Paddington Health Campus are now reaching a conclusion and it is envisaged that the North West London Strategic Health Authority will shortly be in a position to issue a statement on the investment needed to modernise the health economy in North West London.

Paediatric Provision

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many paediatric *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses (i) are working in the NHS and (ii) were working in the NHS in each of the last seven years, broken down by (A) those working full-time, (B) those working part-time and (C) gender. [169019]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the tables.

NHS hospital and community health services: qualified paediatric nurses in England by nature of contract as at 30 September each specified year

Headcount and percentage headcount

	All staff	Full-time	Part-time	Unknown	Percentage full-time	Percentage part-time
2003	18,437	10,011	6,998	1,428	58.9	41.1
2002	18,014	9,898	6,734	1,382	59.5	40.5
2001	17,640	9,423	6,367	1,850	59.7	40.3
2000	16,922	9,241	6,155	1,526	60.0	40.0
1999	16,689	9,185	5,888	1,616	60.9	39.1
1998	16,266	9,093	5,645	1,528	61.7	38.3
1997	15,341	8,891	5,356	1,094	62.4	37.6

Note:
Percentages are based on staff whose contract is known.
Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.

NHS hospital and community health services: qualified paediatric nurses in England by gender as at 30 September each specified year

Headcount and percentage headcount

	All staff	Male	Female	Unknown[1]	Percentage male	Percentage female
2003	18,437	721	16,288	1,428	4.2	95.8
2002	18,014	711	15,921	1,382	4.3	95.7
2001	17,640	668	15,122	1,850	4.2	95.8
2000	16,922	654	14,742	1,526	4.2	95.8
1999	16,689	632	14,442	1,615	4.2	95.8
1998	16,266	598	14,140	1,528	4.1	95.9
1997	15,341	576	14,765	0	3.8	96.2

[1] Percentages are based on staff whose gender is known. The gender of bank staff is not collected.
Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.

Hospital, public health medicine and community health services (HCHS): medical staff within the paediatric group of specialties by nature of contract and gender 1997 to 2003

Numbers (headcount)

	1997			1998			1999		
	All staff	Male	Female	All staff	Male	Female	All staff	Male	Female
England as at 30 September each year									
All staff	4,344	2,134	2,210	4,542	2,186	2,356	4,750	2,196	2,554
of which									
Whole time	3,600	1,849	1,751	3,747	1,901	1,846	3,914	1,908	2,006
Maximum part-time	64	49	15	54	42	12	50	38	12
Part-time	520	115	405	593	130	463	643	142	501
Honorary	160	121	39	148	113	35	143	108	35
Consultant	1,227	789	438	1,299	827	472	1,355	845	510
of which									
Whole time	945	633	312	1,012	674	338	1,059	690	369
Maximum part-time	64	49	15	54	42	12	48	37	11
Part-time	125	30	95	153	44	109	163	46	117
Honorary	93	77	16	80	67	13	85	72	13

	2000			2001			2002			2003		
	All staff	Male	Female	All staff	Male	Female	All staff	Male	Female	All staff	Male	Female
England as at 30 September each year												
All staff	5,027	2,281	2,746	5,127	2,351	2,776	5,608	2,563	3,045	5,960	2,728	3,232
of which												
Whole time	4,093	1,988	2,105	4,101	2,024	2,077	4,472	2,225	2,247	4,804	2,400	2,404
Maximum part-time	52	36	16	47	33	14	63	44	19	67	49	18
Part-Time	705	128	577	807	174	633	860	153	707	892	142	750
Honorary	177	129	48	172	120	52	213	141	72	197	137	60
Consultant	1,443	891	552	1,507	914	593	1,695	1,031	664	1,807	1,087	720
of which												
Whole time	1,101	725	376	1,093	725	368	1,235	818	417	1,294	858	436
Maximum part-time	50	36	14	47	33	14	59	42	17	65	49	16
Part-time	190	44	146	263	71	192	269	65	204	301	62	239
Honorary	102	86	16	104	85	19	132	106	26	147	118	29

Source:
Department of Health medical and dental workforce census.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many paediatric trainees started in the NHS in each of the last five years, broken down by sex. [169018]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of paediatric trainees in each of the last five years, broken down by gender is shown in the table.

Hospital, public health medicine and community health services (HCHS) doctors in training within the paediatric group

Numbers (head count)

		Of which	
	All staff	*Male*	*Female*
England as at 30 September each year			
1999	2,838	1,143	1,695
2000	2,936	1,137	1,799
2001	2,875	1,135	1,740
2002	3,049	1,227	1,822
2003	3,258	1,320 1	1,938

Source:
Department of Health medical and dental workforce census.

Patient Records

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list those NHS trusts which do not yet use electronic patient records. [167703]

Mr. Hutton: Most hospitals now have existing patient administration systems and limited or stand alone clinical systems. By the end of 2005, all National Health Service trusts will have some integrated functionality through electronic records to support patient care as part of the NHS care records service. This will begin to be rolled out alongside the electronic appointment booking service from summer 2004, with phased implementation to provide richer functionality over time to 2010.

Patients Passports

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his statement of 22 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 594, what the basis was for the statement that a policy of patients' passports paying for operations in the private sector would divert £2 billion of taxpayers' money away from the national health service. [164648]

Mr. Hutton: The Government calculate that the deadweight cost to the Exchequer of subsidising those who already pay for operations and other care in the private sector would be £2 billion per annum. The patient passport policy, whereby a voucher would cover 60 per cent. of the national health service cost of an operation in the private sector would cost an estimated £1 billion. This has been calculated using data on the number and distribution of private sector treatments, together with 2003 NHS reference costs to estimate the subsidy per procedure. A further £1 billion would be required to fund tax relief on national insurance contributions and income tax for company and private schemes. This is based on projections for company and private schemes from the Inland Revenue and Association of British Insurers.

The £2 billion figure does not contain any estimate of the additional administration costs which would be required to operate such policies.

Prescription Pre-payment Certificates

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will introduce a monthly instalment scheme for the prescription prepayment certificate. [167597]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The prescription prepayment certificate (PPC) scheme is designed to be simple so that it can be administered easily and with the minimum of cost. To introduce payment by instalments would inevitably increase the administrative costs involved. This could lead to higher PPC fees and so reduce the potential savings and make the certificates less attractive for those who continue to make use of them.

However, we are, with the Prescription Pricing Authority, currently considering the implications of introducing such a scheme, including the practicalities of payment collection.

Prison Health Service

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 27 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 961W, on the Prison Health Service, what issues had been raised by local services concerning the existing local protocols for ambulance and paramedic access. [171267]

Dr. Ladyman: Feedback from local services highlighted the scope to strengthen protocols for ambulance and paramedic access to prisons in three specific areas:

ensuring that ambulances are called promptly to incidents within prisons when required, and that there are clear arrangements for doing so in emergencies without the need first to consult prison health care staff;

distinguishing between access for an ambulance vehicle and access for a paramedic to attend the patient; and

taking account of the potential impact of new European Committee for Standardisation Regulation for Ambulance Vehicles (British Standard Specification EN 1789), given the need for a suitably risk assessed Prison Service escort to attend with the vehicle.

Scanners

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* MRI scanners and *(b)* PET scanners there are in England; and how many of these scanners have been bought (i) directly by the NHS and (ii) through alternative funding arrangements. [167712]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There are approximately 221 magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scanners and four positron emission tomography (PET) scanners installed in the National Health Service in England. In addition, there are approximately 75 MRI scanners and eight PET scanners installed in non-NHS institutions in England.

Of the 221 NHS MRI scanners, it is estimated that just over 100 were purchased directly by the NHS. Approximately 60 were purchased through central capital programmes funded by the New Opportunities Fund (NOF) and the Department. Approximately 60

were purchased through other arrangements, including lease arrangements, managed service contracts and charitable funding.

This information is not held centrally for PET scanners.

By the end of 2004, central cancer capital funding will mean that there will be approximately 277 MRI scanners in the NHS in England. In addition, on 8 April 2004, the Department launched a procurement from the private sector to provide an extra 80,000 mobile MRI scans per year for the NHS for five years.

Sexual Health Services

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures his Department is taking to ensure that sexual health services and contraception advice for young people are made more accessible; and if he will make a statement. [171170]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Government are working to improve access to sexual health services and contraception advice for young people through both the "Teenage Pregnancy Strategy and the National Strategy for Sexual Health and HIV."

The first ever "National Strategy for Sexual Health and HIV" (2001) (which links closely to the Government's teenage pregnancy strategy) identifies young people as a priority group for action. The Department's 'Sex Lottery' and the teenage pregnancy (RUthinking) media campaigns are raising awareness among young people of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and how to avoid them. We are also tackling the most common STI through our national chlamydia screening programme, which already covers a quarter (84) of primary care trusts in England. Further details on the Strategy and its implementation are available from the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/sexualhealthandhiv/.

The teenage pregnancy strategy aims to tackle the high levels of teenage pregnancy. Increasing and improving access to contraception and sexual health advice services is also a very important part of this work.

Stroke Services

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how the stroke milestone in the older people's National Service Framework is defined; and how many hospitals have access to *(a)* peripatetic specialised teams and *(b)* a team in place in the hospital. [171077]

Dr. Ladyman: Standard 5 of the national service framework (NSF) for older people sets out the requirements for a specialised stroke service.

The Department is monitoring on a quarterly basis the number of hospitals that have stroke services and the number of these that have introduced specialised stroke services. The NSF makes it clear that all specialised stroke services should be co-ordinated through an integrated team, although the exact make up of that team will bedetermined locally. This more detailed information is not collected centrally.

Telecommunications Masts

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to review and publish further health research evidence relating to the impact of *(a)* mobile phone masts and *(b)* mobile phone use subsequent to the report of Sir William Stewart. [167845]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The health implications of mobile phones and base stations were reviewed in a report issued in January 2004 by the National Radiological Protection Board's (NRPB) advisory group on non-ionising radiation (Documents of the NRPB, Vol 14, No. 2, 2003). The report, entitled, "Health Effects from Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Fields", concluded that:

> "The weight of evidence now available does not suggest that there are adverse health effects from exposures to RF (radiofrequency) fields below guideline levels, but the published research on RF exposures and health has limitations, and mobile phones have only been in widespread use for a relatively short time. The possibility therefore remains open that there could be health effects from exposure to RF fields below guideline levels; hence continued research is needed."

More specifically, for base stations it concluded:

> "Exposure levels from living near to mobile phone base stations are extremely low, and the overall evidence indicates that they are unlikely to pose a risk to health."

The report is available on the NRPB website at www.nrpb.org. The advisory group will continue to review the scientific literature both national and international that is relevant to the issue of mobile telephony and health.

The mobile telecommunications and health research (MTHR) programme reports on progress at its open seminars. The majority of projects are due to be completed in time for the seminar expected in November 2005. A few remaining projects may take up to three years longer depending on their complexity. Descriptions of these projects can be found on the website at www.mthr.org.uk.

In addition, the World Health Organisation (WHO) electromagnetic fields project is expected to publish a health risk assessment of radiofrequency effects in 2007, which will be available on the WHO website at www.who.int/peh-emf.

University Medical Training

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures the Government is taking to increase the number of British university trained *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses in the NHS. [167730]

Mr. Hutton: We have invested significantly both in the national health service and higher education. The medical school intake in England has increased by more than 2,250 since 1997, an increase of over 60 per cent., and, as a result, we have exceeded the autumn 2005 intake target two years early. We have created four new

medical schools, opened four new centres of medical education, three of which are associated with established medical schools, significantly increased the capacity of most other medical schools and introduced graduate-entry four-year courses.

There has been an increase of almost 8,000 nurses and midwives entering pre-registration training between 1996–97 and 2002–03, a 53 per cent, increase. Latest figures suggest a further increase of around 1,800 nurses and midwives entering pre-registration training in 2003–04.

Responsibility for Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland universities and numbers of students in undergraduate medical and nursing pre-registration training is a matter for the devolved administrations.

MRI Scans

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time for an MRI scan in each strategic health authority was for each year since 1997. [167710]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data on waiting times for diagnostic tests, including Magnetic Resonance Imaging, are not collected centrally.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of women in Burnley with suspected breast cancer saw a specialist within two weeks in each of the last five years. [167957]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected on a constituency basis. The information shown in the table relates to the National Health Service organisations serving the Burnley area.

Waiting times for 1st consultant outpatient appointment for suspected breast cancer following urgent GP referral

		Seen within two weeks	
	NHS Trust	*Percentage*	*Number*
1999–2000	Blackburn Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	82.6	19
1999–2000	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	10
2000–01	Blackburn Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	96.2	50
2000–01	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	53
2001–02	Blackburn Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	100.0	84
2001–02	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	89
2002–03	Blackburn Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	100.0	84
2002–03	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	114
2003–04	East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	209

Note:
East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust was formed from the merger of Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust and Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust on 1 April 2003.
Source:
DH Form QMCW

Wanless Report

Mr. Maples: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funds will be made available to implement the Wanless Report recommendations. [169271]

Mr. Hutton: In his 2002 budget, my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, accepted the conclusions of the report and announced an historic five-year settlement for the national health service, which represented a real terms increase in spending of 7.3 per cent. a year from 2003–04 to 2007–08. This will take total NHS expenditure to over £90 billion by 2007–08.

Warrington Hospital

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advances have been made in coronary care in Warrington Hospital since 1997; and what further plans are in progress. [168706]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In June 2002, 24 people were waiting over nine months for heart surgery in the Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority area. Today, no-one is waiting for over nine months. Warrington coronary care unit will be relocated to the accident and emergency department in June to provide an improved pathway for patients. Warrington Hospital will benefit also from a new cardiac catheterisation laboratory that is being jointly funded by the New Opportunities Fund and the Department of Health.
Source:
Department of Health and North Cheshire Hospitals National Health Service Trust.

Whooping Cough Vaccine

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the NHS is able to provide mercury-free whooping cough vaccine for babies in the UK. [167768]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The United Kingdom uses a wholecell containing whooping cough vaccine (which contains thiomersal) because this vaccine offers the best protection against the disease. Whooping cough is a serious disease in young babies that can lead to death. The acellular whooping cough vaccine (which is thiomersal-free) does not provide the same high level of protection. The UK will move to thiomersal-free vaccines as soon as an equally effective alternative to the current vaccine becomes available.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 11 May 2004

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Department Annual Report

Norman Lamb: To ask the Leader of the House how much the production of his Office's latest annual report cost; how many copies were printed; how many copies of it were sold at its cover price; to whom copies of the report have been provided free of charge; and how many copies were provided free of charge. [171151]

Mr. Hain: My office does not produce an annual report. Its functions are included in the Privy Council Office's Departmental Report, details of which can be found on the Department's website (www.privy-council.co.uk/output/page40.asp).

Departmental Procurement

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Leader of the House what percentage of the *(a)* crockery, *(b)* cutlery and *(c)* glassware procured by his Office over the last five years is of British manufacture. [170804]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Leader of the House of Commons was established in June 2003. Since then only a small amount of crockery and glassware has been purchased, and no cutlery. All the crockery was of British manufacture.

In line with current Government policy the decision to purchase goods for the Office is taken on value for money grounds: restricting purchases to British-only goods would not necessarily achieve this.

As a trading nation the UK has commitments under both EC and WTO procurement rules to ensure our access to export markets, and a 'Buy-British' policy would make UK companies less competitive by closing down likely export markets. One of the five principles underlying the EC Treaty is one of non-discrimination on the grounds of nationality and this would also exclude a 'Buy-British' policy. In these days of global markets it is increasingly difficult to determine whether goods are British.

House Facilities

Bob Spink: To ask the Leader of the House what assessment he has made of the implications of the Independent Monitoring Commission Report for the use of House facilities by Sinn Fein. [170658]

Mr. Hain: The Government has already taken steps in respect of the financial assistance payable to Sinn Fein and the PUP, in line with the recommendation of the Independent Monitoring Commission. The IMC's recommendations made no mention of parliamentary facilities. We hope the next report on paramilitary activity, due in the autumn, will reflect significant progress. But we will need to consider the implications of that report at that time.

Sinn Fein Members

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Leader of the House how much has been paid to Sinn Fein since the decision by the House to pay allowances to Sinn Fein hon. Members who have not taken the oath. [171739]

Mr. Hain: Since 8 January 2002, Sinn Fein Members have been able to claim against the incidental expenses provision, staffing allowance and additional costs allowance. They can also claim certain free travel for themselves, their families and their staff; they can use centrally-provided computer equipment on loan without charge, and they can draw on centrally purchased stationery.

Figures showing what each Member has spent against the allowances will be publicly available from the autumn of this year. Figures for the years in question are currently being compiled and checked by the House authorities.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Tyrannical Regimes

10. **Mr. Allen:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to take further steps to improve international law and the structures of the UN to end tyrannical regimes. [171838]

Mr. Rammell: We are working with the UN Secretary-General's High Level Panel to improve the UN response to all threats to global and human security. The UN's International Tribunals and the International Criminal Court have shown that there is no impunity for the perpetrators of crimes against humanity. We also need to do more to develop an international consensus in favour of humanitarian intervention where it is justified.

Middle East

14. **Mr. Blunt:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on Mr. Sharon's disengagement plan and the realities on the ground to be taken into consideration in future negotiations. [171842]

Mr. Rammell: The UK welcomes Prime Minister Sharon's proposed withdrawal of all settlements from Gaza and four from the West Bank. We hope it will go ahead. As the Prime Minister said on 19 April, it is a statement of fact that final status negotiations cannot ignore the reality on the ground. But all final status issues, including borders and refugees, can be decided only by negotiations between the parties.

18. **Richard Burden:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which Israeli settlements in the west bank, Gaza, east Jerusalem and the Golan Heights are regarded as legal by the UK Government. [171846]

Mr. Rammell: We consider all settlements in the Occupied Territories to be illegal.

Iran

15. **Hugh Robertson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on bilateral relations with Iran. [171843]

Mr. Straw: Our policy towards Iran is one of constructive but critical engagement. We aim to support Iran's efforts to reform while continuing a robust dialogue on matters of concern such as Iran's nuclear programme, human rights record, and attitude to the fight on terrorism and the Middle East Peace Process. Ministers are in close contact with Iranian leaders on all these issues of concern; I last met my Iranian counterpart in London on 22 April.

17. **Julie Morgan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what support he has offered to President Khatami to reduce use of torture and repression in Iran. [171845]

Mr. Rammell: We remain seriously concerned at human rights violations in Iran, including the alleged use of torture. We welcome the statement by the head of the Iranian judiciary on 28 April that torture is forbidden and that confessions extracted through torture are not legal. We hope this will be reflected in practice throughout Iran. Ministers have raised human rights concerns with their Iranian counterparts bilaterally on many occasions and we have done so through the EU/Iran Human Rights dialogue. The EU has made clear that its relations with Iran can move forward only if Iran takes action to address our concerns in areas such as human rights.

Cyprus

16. **Mr. Love:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affair what assessment he has made of the results of the referendums in Cyprus. [171844]

Mr. MacShane: We respect the outcome of both referendums and the right of the Greek Cypriots to say "no". However, we hope they will take time to reflect on the decision they made and consider whether it was the right one.

The reunification of Cyprus remains the Government's objective. But there is no immediate prospect of a resumption of talks. We await the UN Secretary General's report on his Good Offices mission to Cyprus, which we expect later this month.

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the prospects for re-unification of Cyprus. [171776]

Mr. MacShane: I draw my hon. Friend's attention to my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary's written statement on 28 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 44–46WS.

Iraq

19. **Tom Brake:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has held with Mr. Paul Bremer on the handover of sovereignty to the Iraqi governing council from the coalition provisional authority. [171847]

Mr. Rammell: The Foreign Secretary has discussed the political transition process with Ambassador Bremer during his visits to Baghdad, but the handing over of sovereignty to the Iraqi Governing Council has never been coalition policy. The coalition is committed to handing over sovereignty on 30 June to an Iraqi Interim Government, whose structure and composition will be decided by the UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser, Lakhdar Brahimi after consultation with a wide range of Iraqis.

20. **Mr. Wareing:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the most recent findings of the Iraq survey group. [171848]

Mr. MacShane: The most recent published findings of the Iraq Survey Group were contained in the report of the leader of the Group, Charles Duelfer, on 30 March, a copy of the unclassified version of which was placed in the Library of the House. There is nothing that I can add to the Written Statement made by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on 31 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 94WS.

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made with investigations into Iraq's mass graves following the recommendations of the UK forensic team which visited Iraq last summer. [167870]

Mr. Rammell: Since the recommendations were made the UK has seconded four UK forensic experts to the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) who have been leading CPA efforts on mass graves. A Mass Grave Action Plan has been produced, which details how to deal with the hundreds of reported mass grave sites. A centralised system for reporting potential sites has been set up in co-ordination with the Human Rights Ministry. Around a quarter of reported sites have been assessed. Training seminars have been held in anthropology, archaeology, surveying, crime scene management and scene searching to build Iraqi capacity to undertake mass grave exhumations. A full equipment list for exhumations has been completed and equipment is on order. In addition, the Government has funded a forensic NGO, Inforce, to produce standard protocols and operating procedures to enable Iraqis and international teams to undertake this work to the same standards.

Unfortunately, the mobility of the forensic team was severely restricted by the upsurge in violence and kidnappings in Iraq in early April. Security problems have been a major hindrance to them in doing their jobs, which include an unusually high level of travel outside of Baghdad. We have therefore withdrawn them temporarily from Iraq. The forensic team will be able to continue some of this work from outside Iraq. We hope they and other teams will be able to resume work on mass grave sites in Iraq shortly.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his Answer of 27 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 965W, on Iraq, if he will place a copy of the Transitional

Administrative Law (TAL) agreed by the Iraqi Governing Council on 8 March, and the annexe to the TAL, in the Library. [171123]

Mr. Rammell: A copy of the Transitional Administrative Law has been placed in the Library of the House. The annexe will be added once it is completed.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the Answer of 27 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 964–65W, on Iraq, who will be consulted; what the consultation process will be prior to 30 June; and who will be eligible to vote to elect the Advisory Council. [171158]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: UN Special Envoy Lakhdar Brahimi is leading consultations with a wide variety of Iraqis on the formation of an Interim Government. He is returning to Iraq this week to continue his consultations. He aims to make his recommendations on the structure and personnel of the Interim Government by 31 May. He will also continue consultations on his proposal for a National Conference to be held after 30 June, including the best method of selecting delegates to the Conference. The Conference will elect the Advisory Council, which will advise and monitor Ministers until elections to a Transitional National Assembly in January 2005.

North Korea

22. **Mr. Hammond:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will condemn north Korea's decision to ban south Korean aid supplies crossing the land border during the recent emergency. [171850]

Mr. Rammell: We regret any unnecessary delay to the urgent provision of emergency humanitarian aid to victims of the Ryongchon explosion. We understand that the DPRK authorities have since decided to allow shipments of relief materials over land from south Korea and that these began on 7 May.

Zimbabwe

23. **Mr. Wiggin:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the arrest of the former Zimbabwean Finance Minister, Mr. Chris Kuruneri. [171851]

Mr. Mullin: We understand that Mr. Kuruneri is alleged to have externalised foreign currency. His arrest and the investigations into the allegations against him are a matter for the Government of Zimbabwe.

Burma

24. **Mr. David Stewart:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the human rights situation in Burma and the representations he has made about the treatment of Aung San Suu Kyi. [171852]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We remain deeply concerned about the human rights situation in Burma. The UK co-sponsored a widely supported resolution at the UN Commission on Human Rights on 21 April which condemned human rights violations in Burma. We fully support the efforts of Sergio Pinheiro the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Burma and regularly call on Burma's military regime to co-operate fully with him.

I have repeatedly called on the Burmese regime to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi from house arrest.

Belarus

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the Council of Europe's reports on the human rights situation in Belarus. [171129]

Mr. Rammell: The issues raised in the two Council of Europe reports on Belarus remain of serious concern. We welcome the reports and support their recommendations. Together with EU partners we will respond to the findings of the reports and consider what measures to take in light of the recommendations.

China

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Chinese Government concerning the arrest of the North Korean refugee Kang Byong-sop. [171525]

Mr. Rammell: The EU carried out a demarche on North Korean border crossers in February 2004 specifically to request safe passage to a third country for the Kang family. The case was also raised at the EU/China Human Rights Dialogue in February. However, the Kang family was repatriated to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in March.

I raised the issue of China's treatment of DPRK border crossers with Zhang Zhijun, Deputy Director of the International Department of the Chinese Communist Party, when we met in March. I also expressed concern about the treatment of the Kang family to Choe Tae Bok, a senior DPRK official, when he visited London during that month. Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials have made official representations to the Chinese and DPRK Ambassadors in London and also the Chinese authorities in Beijing about the repatriation. We expect the EU to take follow-up action shortly.

Departmental Procurement

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what percentage of the *(a)* crockery, *(b)* cutlery and *(c)* glassware procured by his Department over the last five years is of British manufacture. [170799]

Mr. Rammell: 97 per cent. of all crockery, cutlery and glassware is British manufactured.

Embassies

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the annual overall running cost was for the UK embassy in *(a)* Washington and *(b)* Paris in 2003–04; and how many staff were employed in each of these embassies. [170819]

Mr. Rammell: Final running cost figures for financial year 2003–04 will not be available until November 2004 at the earliest. I will send them to the hon. Member when they are. The number of staff at each post are as follows:

	FCO UK	*OGD[1] UK*	*FCO LE[2]*	*OGD LE*
Washington	63.00	20.00	158.50	16.15
Paris Embassy	46.00	15.00	151.80	4.40

[1] Other Government Department
[2] Locally employed.

The figures reflect the total number of full-time equivalents and include part time positions.

Internet Child Pornography

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what steps his Department has taken to export the UK model of co-operation between Government, police and industry to tackle child pornography on the internet; [166800]

(2) what measures his Department is taking to increase international co-operation among law enforcement agencies to combat child pornography on the internet. [166802]

Paul Goggins: I have been asked to reply.

While the Government have actively encouraged, and worked towards, the development of a partnership approach between the various agencies and organisations which deal with tackling child abuse on the internet in the UK, how this issue is dealt with by other jurisdictions is a matter for each individual country to consider. The Government have promoted the success of multi agency co-operation to tackle child abuse on the internet, using examples such as the Task Force on child protection on the internet, in speeches, at conferences, in the international fora it operates within, through ministerial and officials' visits overseas, and to the many visitors it receives with a relevant interest in this issue.

There are a variety of mechanisms to assist in furthering international co-operation between law enforcement agencies on this issue. This may be through the provision of equipment and training to overseas law enforcement by UK agencies, or by the development and hosting of specialist training courses or conferences. For example, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and National Crime Squad recently co-funded a conference for international law enforcement experts, NGOs and officials concerning child abuse and the internet. The National Crime Squad is also engaged in a global initiative with partner countries currently comprising Canada, USA, Australia and Interpol which seeks to establish new and imaginative ways of combating and reducing child abuse on line, seeking to produce a virtual police presence which will ultimately make the internet a safer place.

A problem for all law enforcement agencies is the identification of children featured in child abuse images. As part of a G8 strategy on Protecting Children from Sexual Exploitation on the Internet, the UK is leading the development of an international (not restricted to G8 countries) Child Image Database, housed at Interpol. It aims to act as a global repository of images of child abuse with the capacity to carry out automated analysis. It will be a significant tool for international law enforcement contributing to the identification of victims and offenders and analysis of images. The strategy also seeks to promote mechanisms for sharing information and best practice internationally to further protect from exploitation online.

Kashmir

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Indian Government regarding elections for the Indian Parliament in Jammu and Kashmir this year. [171380]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The elections have been discussed with Indian Government Ministers in general terms but we have not made any formal representations to them regarding the current elections for the Indian Parliament in Jammu and Kashmir.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with his counterparts in Pakistan and India regarding peace negotiations in Kashmir. [171381]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Both my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I have discussed the recent moves towards dialogue between India and Pakistan with our counterparts in both countries during visits to the region between December 2003 and March 2004. The Foreign Secretary also issued a statement welcoming the breakthrough in relations between the two countries following the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation Summit on 6 January. A copy of the statement is available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website: www.fco.gov.uk/policy/news/press-releases. We continue to take every opportunity to encourage the Indian and Pakistani Governments to build confidence through peaceful engagement that will, in time, lead to the resolution of all their outstanding differences, including over Kashmir.

Ministerial Visits

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list visits made by each Minister in the Department between December 2003 and April 2004, broken down by *(a)* date, *(b)* constituency visited and *(c)* cost. [171571]

Mr. Straw: For details on overseas visits by Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Ministers please refer to my answer to the hon. Member for Castle Point (Bob Spink) on 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1440–43W.

No central record of costs for UK travel by FCO Ministers is kept. During the period December 2003 to April 2004, FCO Ministers made the following visits within the UK:

The right hon. Jack Straw MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

	Destination	*Purpose of trip*
16 January 2004	Cheltenham	Visit to GCHQ
29 April 2004	Leeds	To speak at the Leeds University Centenary Dinner.

Denis MacShane, Minister of State

	Destination	Purpose of trip
4 December 2003	London and Tunbridge Wells	To promote awareness of EU enlargement
7 January 2004	Edinburgh	Appear before the Scottish Parliament European Affairs Committee
8 January 2004	Perth, Glasgow and Dundee	To promote awareness of EU enlargement
2 March 2004	Oxford	To promote awareness of EU enlargement

Mike O'Brien, Minister of State

	Destination	Purpose of trip
15 January 2004	Stratford-on-Avon	Address the British Chambers of Commerce Annual International Trade Conference
5 February 2004	Bosworth	Meetings with members of Muslim communities
9 March 2004	Glasgow	Foreign and Commonwealth Office Partnerships and Network Development Unit Seminar
11 March 2004	Cambridge	Address the International High Technology Transfer Event
24 April 2004	Blaby	British-American Business Council Spring Conference Dinner

Chris Mullin MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State

	Destination	Purpose of trip
11 February 2004	Reading	Visa Road Show
10 March 2004	Bradford	Visa Road Show
25 March 2004	Cheltenham	Attendance with HM Queen at the opening of the new GCHQ Building

Bill Rammell MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State

	Destination	Purpose of trip
21 March 2004	Warwick	Policy Forum
3 April 2004	Reading	UNA Conference at Reading University

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, Minister of State:

No UK visits were made between December 2003 and April 2004.

Myanmar

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the EU Common Position on Myanmar/Burma. [171115]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The EU is willing to support national reconciliation in Burma, leading to the restoration of democracy and respect for human rights in Burma.

The EU shares the view of a number of international partners that the best interests of the people of Burma continue to be served, in current circumstances, by a balanced approach of carefully targeted measures against those responsible for the obstruction of reform and progress, together with humanitarian support to ensure that the ordinary people of Burma do not suffer as a result of the damaging policies of their Government.

In these circumstances, the EU has decided to maintain the existing measures, as set out in the Common Position for 12 months. The EU stands ready to react proportionately to future developments in Burma, positive or negative, and will keep the situation under review.

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will press the UN for a full implementation of the resolutions that the General Assembly has passed on Myanmar/Burma. [171116]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We welcome the recent adoption of a resolution by the UN Commission on Human Rights criticising Burma's human rights record. The British Government encourages all the appropriate bodies of the UN to help bring about national reconciliation, respect for human rights and democracy in Burma. We fully support the efforts of the UN Secretary General's Special Representative to Burma, Tan Sri Razali Ismail, and the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights, Sergio Pinheiro, and call on Burma's military regime to co-operate fully with them.

Paper Recycling

Mr. Breed: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what percentage of copying paper used by the Department in 2002–03 was from recycled sources; and how much post consumer waste this paper contained. [171812]

Mr. Rammell: 93 per cent. of copying paper supplied throughout the Department in 2002–03 contained at least 80 per cent. post consumer waste. This was reported in the Sustainable Development in Government 2nd Annual report 2003.

Mr. Breed: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what percentage of paper for printed publications used by the Department in 2002–03 was from recycled sources; and how much post consumer waste this paper contained. [171813]

Mr. Rammell: Our Publications and Print Services departments used a number of different papers in this period and the information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost as detailed records were not kept. Current guidelines in our Publications and Print Services departments stipulate 75 per cent. post consumer waste content for publications paper.

Mr. Breed: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when his Department expects to implement in full the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post consumer waste. [171815]

Mr. Rammell: We aim to meet the copying paper target by the autumn of this year.

From the beginning of May this year we have been meeting the publications paper target.

Mr. Breed: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the Department's main suppliers of *(a)* copier paper, *(b)* stationery, *(c)* envelopes and *(d)* paper for reports; and what the (i) name of each paper used and the (ii) recycled and post consumer recycled content is in each case. [171816]

Mr. Rammell: Copier paper is supplied by the Sappi Heritage Paper Company. We do not have details of the names of each kind of paper used but it contains 80 per cent. recycled content of which 100 per cent. is post consumer waste

Stationery is supplied by Banner. We purchase numerous stationery items and our records do not allow for analysis of recycled content across the board. Banner has a strong environmental record, having been awarded the British Office Supplies and Services Federation Environmental Certificate every year since 1996. Many of the stationery items available to Foreign and Commonwealth Office customers have a high recycled content.

Envelopes are supplied by Banner. All the envelopes are 80 to 100 per cent. recycled content with 60 to 85 per cent. post consumer waste.

Premier Paper is our main supplier of paper for reports. We buy a variety of papers from them. Our Publications and Print Services teams' guidelines stipulate a minimum recycled content of 75 per cent. post consumer waste for publications paper.

Sudan

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the human rights situation in Sudan and what steps his Department is taking to encourage progress towards peace. [171117]

Mr. Mullin: We are seriously concerned about the human rights situation in Darfur, western Sudan. Civilian protection there remains a major concern, with reports of systematic attacks on civilians, including rape, pillage and destruction of livelihoods. The promotion of human rights throughout Sudan, through advocacy with the Government and support for NGOs, remains one of our priorities. We welcome the recent signing of a humanitarian ceasefire agreement. We are working with the parties and other members of the international community to try to get the ceasefire monitoring mechanism on the ground as soon as possible.

Good progress has been made at the Sudanese peace talks in Kenya. Both sides have said that the peace process is irreversible and they are hopeful on reaching a final agreement very soon.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what peace proposals are being taken forward to bring an early end to conflict in Darfur, Sudan. [171388]

Mr. Mullin: The 8 April Ceasefire Agreement provides for a Commission to monitor the ceasefire, and for a role for the international community. We are in close contact with the parties and other members of the international community to try to help set up such a monitoring mechanism as quickly as possible. Officials attended an African Union (AU) meeting about this in Addis Ababa on 19–20 April, and since then we have discussed the matter with the US and in the EU. An AU reconnaissance mission to Chad and Darfur began on 7 May. The mission includes representatives from the EU, the US and the UN, as well as the AU.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

British Wildlife

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what financial support her Department provides to charities working with Britain's wildlife. [169881]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department's principal direct support to charities working with Britain's wildlife is the Environmental Action Fund. In the period 2002–05, £4,115,782 has been provided to voluntary bodies to undertake 23 biodiversity projects. Other voluntary bodies working with Britain's wildlife have received funding for understanding and awareness projects, including education for sustainable development. Full details of the Environmental Action Fund grants can be found at: www.defraweb/environment/eaf/index.htm

Voluntary bodies working with biodiversity in England also receive support from the funding provided to the Department's conservation agencies, English Nature, Environment Agency and Forestry Commission.

In addition, the Department provides funding—usually through contractual arrangements—or voluntary wildlife bodies for particular purposes such as research and monitoring. Examples of funding of this sort in 2003–04 included £248,145 for the National Biodiversity Network, £72,981 for a mammal monitoring project and £25,000 to the Bat Conservation Trust to run a helpline and set up a database.

Civil Servants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list for each civil service grade within her *(a)* Department and *(b)* Department's executive agencies, the total number of staff employed, broken down by (i) gender, (ii) ethnic group and (iii) age group; and how many are registered disabled. [166391]

Alun Michael: Data on staffing levels in the Civil Service are collected by the Cabinet Office and published in Civil Service Statistics. A copy of Civil Service Statistics 2002 is available in the Library, and at www.civil-service.gov.uk/statistics. The 2003 edition will be published in summer 2004.

Data on staff in Defra and its Agencies for 2004 have been placed in the Library of the House.

Co-operative Party

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the Minister for Rural Affairs is a member of the Co-operative Party. [170756]

Alun Michael: Yes. I am proud to have represented the Co-operative Party as well as the Labour Party since I was first elected as a Cardiff City Councillor in 1973 and as a Member of Parliament since 1987, in accordance with the long-standing formal agreements between the two parties at national level. I am one of 30 Labour and Co-operative MPs currently serving in the House of Commons and I represent Wales on the Party's National Executive Committee.

Electric Shock Dog Collars

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the welfare implications of the use of electric shock collars for dogs. [170190]

Mr. Bradshaw: The scientific evidence concerning the welfare implications of the use of electric shock collars for dogs is not conclusive. In the absence of conclusive evidence it would not be appropriate to make an assessment but we will carefully consider any further evidence that is produced.

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received on electric shock collars for dogs; and if she will make a statement. [170191]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department has received a number of representations both in support of and in opposition to the use of electric shock collars for dogs.

Fly-tipping

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effect on fly-tipping of *(a)* the Landfill Directive and *(b)* the most recent rise in landfill tax. [167515]

Margaret Beckett: No formal assessment has been made of the effect on fly-tipping of implementing the Landfill Directive in England and Wales, or the £1 increase in the landfill tax rate for a tonne of active waste that occurred on 1 April this year. However, Defra is commissioning a comprehensive research project looking at the causes and incentives of illegal waste disposal that will result in a good practice guide focusing on pro-active, preventative policies. We expect the results of the research to be available in late 2005.

Defra launched a consultation on its proposed Fly-Tipping Strategy on 23 February 2004.

National Assembly for Wales

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions *(a)* she and *(b)* her ministerial colleagues held with National Assembly colleagues on each day in the week up to and including 24 February; and on which topics. [158359]

Margaret Beckett *[holding answer 3 March 2004]:* My Ministerial colleagues and I have regular discussions with National Assembly colleagues, those of the Scottish Parliament and Northern Irish Ministers across a wide range of topics.

Radioactive Contamination (Chernobyl Accident)

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farms in England, comprising what land areas and in what locations, still have restrictions applied to them in respect of land use as a result of the residual radioactivity from the Chernobyl nuclear accident. [169877]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I have been asked to reply.

There have been no restrictions on land use as a result of the Chernobyl accident. However, restrictions have been placed on the sale, movement and slaughter of sheep in areas affected by the Chernobyl accident, to prevent contaminated sheep meat from entering the food supply.

The number of farms and area of land affected, as of 30 April 2004, are as follows:

Number of farms—nine

Land area (ha)—12,100

Location—West Cumbria.

Rolls-Royce Marine Power Operations

Judy Mallaber: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) how many representations have been received on the Environment Agency's proposed decision document relating to the operation of Rolls Royce Marine Power Operations, Derby in the consultation closing in January; and when she will reach a decision on their proposals; [171376]

(2) whether objections have been received to the Environment Agency's proposed new authorisations for Rolls Royce Marine Power Operations, Derby and the related decision to end authorisation of disposal of radioactive waste at Hills Quarry, Crich in the consultation ending in January 2004. [171377]

Mr. Morley: Ministers have received 17 representations in response to Rolls Royce Marine Power Operation's applications for disposal of radioactive waste from the company's nuclear fuel production plant and the Neptune Reactor, Raynesway, Nuclear Licensed sites. These were all in relation to the disposal of solid low-level radioactive waste at Hilts Quarry landfill site.

Ministers are currently considering the Agency's proposed decision document. An announcement will be made shortly.

Sites of Scientific Interest

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidelines she issued to English Nature prior to English Nature's recent assessment of sites of special scientific interest. [171071]

Mr. Bradshaw: English Nature assesses the condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) according to common standards agreed for the UK through the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), and not on the basis of Government guidelines. Detailed standards for individual habitats and species are also prepared through the JNCC.

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what English Nature's policy is regarding informing relevant landowners of its intention to conduct assessments of sites of special scientific interest. [171072]

Mr. Bradshaw: English Nature will seek permission from an owner before entering onto land within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) to make a condition assessment. In the rare cases where permission is refused, or where ownership cannot be ascertained (four out of 4,699 assessments of SSSI units in 2003–04), English Nature has power of entry onto land to carry out condition assessments.

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what English Nature's policy is on allowing relevant landowners *(a)* to see the information it holds on sites of special scientific interest and *(b)* to comment on it before it is published. [171073]

Mr. Bradshaw: The English Nature website gives information on the conservation interest of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), and their condition. The ecological and geological information on SSSIs is generally available from English Nature, on request, under the Environmental Information Regulations. Owners and occupiers are welcome to offer comments on the information on SSSIs on the website. There is a comments section on the website, under the heading 'Contact Us'.

Tobacco

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 28 April 2004 to question no.167068, to what uses the tobacco grown in EU countries is put; and what proportion was exported from the EU in the last period for which figures are available. [171184]

Alun Michael: Tobacco grown in the EU is used in the manufacture of tobacco products for consumption within the EU and for export.

In 2002, production of tobacco in the EU was 334,000 tonnes. EU exports of raw tobacco to third countries were 189,131 tonnes (about 57 per cent. of EU production).

Sources:
1. Production data—FAO statistical database.
2. Trade data—Eurostat.

Woodcraft Folk

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what Government funding is provided to the Woodcraft Folk; what the purpose of that funding is; and what its constitution and governance arrangements are. [170752]

Alun Michael: The records for Defra's main funding streams to voluntary organisations show no payments to the Woodcraft Folk. We do not keep records of payments from other parts of Government.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the relationship is between the Woodcraft Folk and the Co-operative Party. [170757]

Alun Michael: As I was not aware of any relationship I have consulted the General Secretary of the Co-operative Party who has confirmed that there is no connection between the Party and the Woodcraft Folk.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Sea Bass

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make it his Department's policy to source all sea bass used in catering outlets for which his Department is responsible from hand-line fishermen rather than pair trawlers. [167540]

Yvette Cooper: The purchasing policy of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister reflects the Government's policy. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on 30 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1344W.

Deprivation Indicators (Newcastle)

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the deprivation indicators for the electoral wards in the City of Newcastle as designated in 2003. [171157]

Yvette Cooper: There are 37 indicators underpinning the Index of Multiple Deprivation. These fall into seven separate dimensions of deprivation (income, employment, health, education, barriers to housing and services, crime and living environment). Further details on these indicators can be found in the full report on the Indices of Deprivation 2004, which is available at www.odpm.gov.uk/indices.

While the Indices of Deprivation 2000 was produced at ward level, the new Indices—The Indices of Deprivation 2004—have been produced at Super Output Area, lower layer.

A decision was taken to explore another base geography for the Indices to overcome the problems associated with frequent ward boundary changes and the inconsistency in the size of wards. This new base geography is intended to be more stable over time and more consistent in size. The decision to use Super Output Areas was taken after an extensive period of consultation.

Super Output Areas cover between 1000 and 3000 people and are, in most cases, smaller than wards. They allow us to better identify small pockets of deprivation and provide a richer picture of local variations in deprivation. They will also help to ensure that the Government continues to focus its efforts on tackling disadvantage at those areas most in need.

Electoral Commission Report

Sue Doughty: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he received the report by the Electoral Commission on Guildford Borough Council Elections of 1 May 2003, The Integrity and Security Report; and when and in what form he will publish the report. [171747]

Phil Hope: I refer the hon. Member to the answers given on 29 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1226W. The statutory evaluation report referred to is the only report that the Electoral Commission has published on the all-postal pilot election held in Guildford in May 2003.

Fire Service (Gloucestershire)

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) if he will make a statement on plans to remove the fire control from the Gloucestershire Tri-Service Centre at Quedgley; [172365]

(2) what assessment he has made of the likely impact on the performance of the Fire Service of a move away from the Gloucestershire Tri-Service Centre at Quedgley; and if he will make a statement. [172366]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister announced on 4 March the Government's response to the consultation exercise on regional fire and rescue control rooms. The regional control centres will be able to communicate effectively with police and ambulance controls as well as with each other. They will provide a unified, resilient national network and enable enhanced service delivery by all Fire and Rescue Authorities. No decisions have yet been made on the location of the new regional control centres, and there are no specific plans in respect of any existing control rooms.

Homelessness (Easington)

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many homeless persons applications were made to the District of Easington Council in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002 and *(c)* 2003; and how many were accepted and housed in each year. [170118]

Yvette Cooper: Information reported to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister by Easington District Council in relation to its activities under homelessness provisions of Housing Acts is in respect of households rather than persons. A summary of the latest data supplied by Easington DC is tabled as follows.

Decisions taken by Easington DC in respect of applications by homeless households

	Applications	*Acceptances*[1]	*Housed*[2]
2001	166	81	49
2002	343	178	117
2003	756	337	81

[1] Acceptances refer to eligible households found to be unintentionally homeless and in a priority need category.

[2] The number of accepted households initially placed in temporary accommodation arranged by the local authority, or which accepted a placement in settled accommodation (such as a "Part 6" offer or a Qualifying offer of an assured shorthold tenancy). Excludes "homeless at home" cases.

Source:

ODPM quarterly P1E homelessness returns.

Green Belt

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 30 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1331W, on Green Belt, how many applications for development on Green Belt land have been refused planning permission since 1 May 1997. [172481]

Keith Hill: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Housing Stock Transfer

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what conditions must be fulfilled before a council may apply to transfer management of its housing stock to an arm's length management organisation; and whether the council is required to demonstrate that it is performing to the Government's satisfaction. [172283]

Keith Hill: A local authority requires the approval of the Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister under section 27 of the Housing Act 1985 to enter into an agreement for its housing stock to be managed by an Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO). The criteria for approval are set out in "Guidance on Arms Length Management of local authority housing" issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in March 2003. The performance of the local authority is not a relevant criterion, though the performance of the ALMO must be rated at least 2* (good) by the Housing Inspectorate to qualify for additional funding.

Milton Keynes

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when the last meeting of the Inter-regional Board on the Milton Keynes growth area was; what issues were discussed; and what the outputs were. [170142]

Yvette Cooper: The Milton Keynes and South Midlands growth area Inter-regional Board convened for the first time on 11 February 2004. The board contains senior representatives from the key organisations involved in delivering the MKSM growth proposals, and is designed to provide top-level oversight. The board is chaired by my noble Friend Lord Rooker and is scheduled to meet around three times a year. All meetings are open to the public. At the initial meeting the board discussed a number of issues, including infrastructure delivery and the MKSM public examination. The minutes of the meeting and news release are available on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website.

Roadside Advertising

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the cost to local authorities of administering schemes of roadside and roundabout advertising. [172106]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not made such an assessment.

Telecommunications Masts

Mr. David Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many planning applications for mobile phone masts have been refused in Essex in the last 12 months; and if he will list the *(a)* applicants and *(b)* sites. [171097]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

However, during September and October every year the mobile network operators write to every local authority with details of their network rollout for the year ahead. When they write to the local authority they also provide details of their existing sites within the local authority area. The hon. Member may want to contact the network operators for copies of their plans.

Timber

Ms Walley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether his Department plans to contribute financially to the establishment of the second phase of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [167616]

Phil Hope: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Minister for the Environment on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 31W.

DEFENCE

Iraq

Mr. Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on reports that the US Army has been firing on ambulances in Falluja. [171251]

Mr. Ingram: We are not aware of any incidents of Coalition Forces firing on ambulances.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps have been taken since the end of the Iraq war to monitor levels of uranium in *(a)* milk and *(b)* drinking water. [166869]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence will provide advice on carrying out risk assessments on depleted uranium (DU) within urban areas and on long-term monitoring of DU in the environment, to the United Nations Environment Programme.

Al Yamamah Contracts

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions his Department has had with BAE Systems regarding the proposed disposal of its shipbuilding business; and if he will make a statement. [170750]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence has had one approach from BAE Systems to discuss procedure. However, no proposals have been received from the company regarding change of ownership or control of its ship building business.

Army Air Corps (Medical Care)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many medical personnel are based at *(a)* AAC Aldergrove, *(b)* AAC Hereford, *(c)* AAC Wattisham, *(d)* AAC Middle Wallop and *(e)* AAC Netheravon, broken down by (i) service, (ii) rank and (iii) specialisation. [169987]

Mr. Caplin: The following tables detail the medical personnel based at AAC Aldergrove, AAC Wattisham, AAC Middle Wallop and AAC Netheravon broken down by service, rank and specialisation. I am withholding information for AAC Hereford under exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Service	*Rank*	*Number*	*Specialism*
AAC Aldergrove			
Army	Lieutenant Colonel	1	Medical Officer
	Captain	1	Occupational Health Nurse
	Sergeant	1	Combat Medical Technician
RAF	Wing Commander	1	Medical Officer
	Flight Lieutenant	1	Medical Officer
	Flight Sergeant	1	Medical Admin
	Sergeant	1	Medical Admin
	Sergeant	1	Pharmacy Technician
	Sergeant	1	Practice Nurse
	Corporal	2	Medical Admin
	Corporal	1	Practice Nurse
	Junior Technician	1	Environmental Health Technician
	Medical Assistants	6	Medical Assistants
Civilian		1	Civilian Medical Practitioner
		1	Practice Nurse
		2	Physiotherapists
		2	Admin Officers
		3	Admin Assistants
AAC Wattisham			
Army	Lieutenant Colonel	1	Consultant Aviation Medicine
	Major	1	Specialist Aviation Medicine
	Sergeant	1	Combat Medical Technician
	Corporal	4	Combat Medical Technician
	Lance Corporal	5	Combat Medical Technician
Civilian		1	Civilian Medical Practitioner
		1	Practice Nurse
		2	Locum Physiotherapists

Service	Rank	Number	Specialism
AAC Middle Wallop			
Army	Lieutenant Colonel	1	Consultant Aviation Medicine
	Major	1	Specialist Aviation Medicine
	Sergeant	1	Combat Medical Technician
	Corporal	1	Combat Medical Technician
	Lance Corporal	2	Combat Medical Technician
Civilian		2	Civilian Medical Practitioner (part-time)
		1	F Grade Nurse
		1	E Grade Nurse
		1	Locum Physiotherapist
		7	Civilian Medical Technicians
AAC Netheravon			
Army	Lieutenant Colonel (TA)	1	Consultant Aviation Medicine
	Colonel (Retired)	1	Regimental Medical Officer
	Sergeant	1	Practice Manager
	Corporal	1	Combat Medical Technician
	Lance Corporal	1	Combat Medical Technician

Atomic Weapons Establishment

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on current and future research and development projects to be undertaken by the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston, Berkshire. [170210]

Mr. Ingram: The research and development activities undertaken at AWE are designed to ensure the safe stewardship of the UK's stockpile of Trident warheads and our ability to maintain the capability necessary to meet the policy described in the 1998 Strategic Defence Review. As indicated in Paragraph 3.11 of the Defence White Paper of December 2003 (Cm 6041–1), this includes the need to take appropriate steps to ensure that the range of options for maintaining a nuclear deterrent capability is kept open until decisions are required on whether to replace Trident. This policy is consistent with our international treaty obligations. Research and development activities fall under four principal headings: computer simulation; hydrodynamics; high energy density plasma physics; and materials ageing. The precise nature and scope in the future of such programmes will depend on the outcome of the processes referred to in the December 2003 Defence White Paper.

Civilian Staff

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many full-time equivalent, permanent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilian staff are employed by his Department in the UK, excluding Trading Funds, Royal Fleet Auxiliaries and those on career breaks, long-term sick leave and secondments; what the equivalent figures were in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [170449]

Mr. Caplin: The number of full-time equivalent, permanent and casual, industrial and non-industrial civilian staff employed by the Ministry of Defence, excluding Trading Funds, Royal Fleet Auxiliaries and those on career breaks, long-term sick leave, secondments etc. as at the latest available date and for the last three years is as follows.

Number

	1 March 2004[1]	*1 April 2003*	*1 April 2002*	*1 April 2001*
Permanent non-industrial	62,560	59,910	58,270	58,700
Permanent industrial	13,800	14,370	16,490	18,890
Permanent total	76,370	74,280	74,760	77,580
Casual total	260	1,140	1,500	1,200
All staff	76,630	75,420	76,260	78,780

[1] The increase in the numbers between 1 April 2003 and 1 March 2004 reflects an increase in the number of civil servants falling under the categories detailed in the question, rather than an increase in the total number of civilians working for the Ministry of Defence.

Note:

The figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Contract Cancellations

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what expenditure was incurred by his Department at the cancellation of *(a)* Counter Anti-Radiation Missile Suite, *(b)* Mine Detection and Neutralisation and *(c)* Microwave Landing System in 2003–04 cash terms. [170559]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my reply in the Library of the House.

Defence Personnel (Vale of York)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many departmental *(a)* civilian and *(b)* service personnel are based at (i) RAF Leeming, (ii) RAF Linton on Ouse, (iii) AAC Dishforth and (iv) Alanbrooke Barracks. [170002]

Mr. Caplin: Reliable data are not available centrally (except at Government Office Region level) and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Defence Projects

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will name *(a)* customer one and *(b)* customer two for the (i) Advanced Air-Launched Anti-Armour Weapon, (ii) Advanced Short Range Air-to-Air Missile, (iii) Airborne Stand-Off Radar Astute Class Submarine, (iv) Attack Helicopter WAH-64 Apache,

(v) Conventionally Armed Stand-Off Missile, (vi) Typhoon Extended Range Ordnance/Modular Charge System and (vii) Hercules C-130J projects. [170745]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will name *(a)* customer one and *(b)* customer two for the (i) Future Strategic Tanker Aircraft, (ii) Ground Based Air Defence, (iii) Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System, (iv) Indirect Fire Precision Attack, (v) Light Forces Anti-Tank Guided Weapon Systems, (vi) Next Generation Anti-Armour Weapon and (vii) Terrier projects. [170746]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will name *(a)* customer one and *(b)* customer two for the (i) High Velocity Missile System, (ii) Landing Platform Dock (Replacement), (iii) Merlin HC Mk 3 Helicopter, (iv) Merlin HM Mk1 Helicopter, (v) Multi-Role Armoured Vehicle, (vi) Nimrod Maritime Reconnaissance and Attack Mk 4, (vii) Seawolf Mid-Life Update, (viii) Spearfish Heavyweight Torpedo and (ix) Sting Ray Lightweight Torpedo projects. [170747]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will name *(a)* customer one and *(b)* customer two for the (i) Swiftsure and Trafalgar Class Submarine Update, (ii) Tornado GR1 Mid-Life Update, (iii) Challenger II, (iv) A400M, (v) Landing Ship Dock (Auxiliary) (formerly Alternative Landing Ship Logistic), (vi) Beyond Visual Range Air-to-Air Missile, (vii) Typhoon Aircrew Synthetic Training Aids, (viii) Future Joint Combat Aircraft and (ix) Short Term Strategic Airlift projects. [170748]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will name *(a)* customer one and *(b)* customer two for the (i) Sonar 2087, (ii) Successor Identification Friend or Foe, (iii) Trojan and Titan, (iv) Type 45 Destroyer, (v) Skynet 5 Support Vehicle, (vi) Battlefield Light Utility Helicopter, (vii) Future Aircraft Carrier and (viii) Future Integrated Soldier Technology projects. [170751]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Sea Bass

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make it his Department's policy to source sea bass used in catering outlets *(a)* in the armed services and *(b)* for which his Department is responsible from hand-line fishermen rather than pair trawlers. [167543]

Mr. Ingram: All food for use by the armed forces is sourced through a central food supply contract with a bespoke price list. Sea bass is not currently listed and is not supplied under the contract.

Defra supports the sourcing of sea bass from sustainable fisheries and handlining, as an relatively low impact method of fishing, can play a part in ensuring fisheries remain sustainable. However, the last report in 2003 by the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas on sea bass advised that the level of exploitation of the stock at that time was sustainable and did not recommend closure of the offshore pair trawl fishery. There are currently no restrictions at a United Kingdom or Community level on the method of fishing that can be used to target bass. In addition, to address the dolphin bycatch problem associated with the pair trawl fisher, Defra-funded trials of a separate grid device to reduce dolphin bycatch are currently taking place, with the co-operation of the fishing industry.

In these circumstances, I do not believe that recommending a specific source of supply for bass could be justified at this stage.

Equipment Contracts

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what the date of contract signature for the *(a)* Typhoon Aircrew Synthetic Training Aids, *(b)* Future Joint Combat Aircraft, *(c)* Short Term Strategic Airlift, *(d)* Sonar 2087, *(e)* Successor Identification Friend or Foe, *(f)* Trojan and Titan, *(g)* Type 45 Destroyer and *(h)* Skynet 5 projects are; [170555]

(2) what the date of contract signature for the *(a)* Spearfish Heavyweight Torpedo, *(b)* Sting Ray Lightweight Torpedo, *(c)* Swiftsure and Trafalgar Class Submarine Update, *(d)* Tornado GR1 Mid-Life Update, *(e)* Challenger II, *(f)* A400M *(g)* Landing Ship Dock (Auxiliary) and *(h)* Beyond Visual Range Air-to-Air Missile projects are; [170556]

(3) what the date of contract signature for the *(a)* Hercules C-130J, *(b)* High Velocity Missile System, *(c)* Landing Platform Dock (Replacement), *(d)* Merlin HC Mk 3 Helicopter, *(e)* Merlin HM Mk 1 Helicopter, *(f)* Multi-Role Armoured Vehicle, *(g)* Nimrod Maritime Reconnaissance and Attack Mk 4 and *(h)* Seawolf Mid-Life Update projects are; [170557]

(4) what the date of contract signature for the *(a)* Advanced Air-Launched Anti-Armour Weapon, *(b)* Advanced Short Range Air-to-Air Missile, *(c)* Airborne Stand-Off Radar, *(d)* Astute Class Submarine, *(e)* Attack Helicopter WAH-64 Apache, *(f)* Conventionally Armed Stand-Off Missile, *(g)* Typhoon and *(h)* Extended Range Ordnance/ Modular Charge System projects are. [170558]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my reply in the Library of the House.

Equipment Costs

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the forecast cost was on 31 March 2003 for the Landing Ship Dock (Auxiliary) and Support Vehicle. [170359]

Mr. Ingram: Forecast costs for the Landing Ship Dock (Auxiliary) and Support Vehicle programmes were excluded from the published Major Projects Report 2003, due to commercial sensitivity. The situation remains unchanged. Negotiations with the Landing Ship Dock

(Auxiliary) contractor are continuing, and the Support Vehicle Preferred Bidder is yet to be announced. I am, therefore, withholding this information under Exemption 7 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what the forecast costs on 31 March 2002 were for *(a)* Spearfish Heavyweight Torpedo, *(b)* Advanced Short Range Air-to-Air Missile, *(c)* Extended Range Ordnance/Modular Charge System, *(d)* Swiftsure and Trafalgar Class Submarine Update, *(e)* Landing Platform Dock (Replacement), *(f)* Hercules C-130J and *(g)* Seawolf Mid-Life Update; [170360]

(2) what the forecast costs on 31 March 2001 were for *(a)* Short Term Strategic Airlift, *(b)* A400M *(c)* Beyond Visual Range Air-to-Air Missile, *(d)* Type 45 Destroyer Successor Identification Friend or Foe, *(e)* Landing Ship Dock (Auxiliary), *(f)* Typhoon Aircrew Synthetic Training Aids, *(h)* Trojan and Titan Future Joint Combat Aircraft and *(i)* Sonar 2087. [170361]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my reply in the Library of the House.

Equipment Service Dates

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the forecast in-service dates on 31 March 2001 were for *(a)* A400M Beyond Visual Range Air-to-Air Missile, *(b)* Successor Identification Friend or Foe, *(c)* Typhoon Aircrew Synthetic Training Aids, *(d)* Trojan and Titan and *(e)* Future Joint Combat Aircraft. [170362]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the forecast in-service dates were on 31 March 2003 for *(a)* Sting Ray Lightweight Torpedo, *(b)* Multi-Role Armoured Vehicle and *(c)* Future Joint Combat Aircraft. [170364]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the forecast in-service dates were on 31 March 2002 for *(a)* Spearfish Heavyweight Torpedo, *(b)* Advanced Short Range Air-to-Air Missile and *(c)* Future Joint Combat Aircraft. [170365]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Future Joint Combat Aircraft

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 22 March to the hon. Member for Chorley, *Official Report*, columns 548–49W on the Future Joint Combat Aircraft programme, what the original *(a)* estimated cost and *(b)* delivery date of the Joint Strike Fighter was; and what the current projected final cost is. [170470]

Mr. Ingram: The original estimated cost at the time of the US Defense Acquisition Board approval of the Systems Demonstration and Development phase of the Joint Strike Fighter was $33 billion. The current projected final cost of the phase is $41 billion.

The original estimated delivery date, based on the Short Take Off/Vertical Landing variant of the aircraft, was 2010.

IT Outsourcing

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when, during the process to outsource IT support and provision across his Department, he will provide to trade unions, *(a)* a risk strategy, *(b)* a scoping study, *(c)* an up to date procurement strategy, *(d)* a personnel impact study, *(e)* an intelligent customer strategy and *(f)* information on a public service comparator; and if he will make a statement. [168288]

Mr. Ingram: As previously agreed with the Council of Civil Service Unions (CCSU), a meeting is being arranged at a mutually convenient date to review the key risks identified within the Defence Information Infrastructure (DII) programme and their management. This meeting should have taken place by mid May. The DII Business Prospectus provides a comprehensive description of the intended scope of the programme. This was made available to the TUs on 3 April 2003.

A copy of the Procurement Strategy Review Note was made available to the TUs on 3 April 2003. At the request of the CCSU, on 13 February 2004 a copy of comments provided by HM Treasury on the Review Note was also provided.

A copy of the report produced at the end of the Personnel Impact Study was made available to TUs on 24 June 2003.

The work on the Intelligent Customer Strategy is in its early stages with the plan for its production currently being formulated. It was agreed with the CCSU at a meeting on 16 February 2004 that they would be directly involved in its development. The plan should be sufficiently developed by 7 May to allow the TUs to see and comment on it.

As the CCSU is aware, the work on the Public Sector Comparator is reaching a state of maturity that will enable it to be communicated to the TUs. Again, this is expected to be done by 7 May.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he will make it his policy to ensure that there is an in-house bidder for the support and provision of IT across his Department. [168292]

Mr. Ingram: No. A significant proportion of the Department's IT provision has been outsourced in recent years as part of wider initiatives to make greater use of the private sector in the provision of public services. The Department's policy is that when services already delivered under outsourcing arrangements are re-competed or rationalised, in-house bids should not normally be invited because the associated requirement for substantial reinvestment in management, training and support systems makes it unlikely that an in-house option would represent value for money. Where no in-house bid is invited, an estimate of the costs of a public sector option or a "status quo" option would normally be made, in order to provide a value for money benchmark.

Joint Strike Fighter

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the current weight of the standard take-off vertical

landing version of the Joint Strike Fighter is; what the required weight at in-service date is; and if he will make a statement. [170353]

Mr. Ingram: Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) requirements are defined in terms of aircraft performance, which is the product of many factors, including weight, drag, and engine thrust. At current engine thrust and drag values, the Short Take Off/Vertical Landing variant of the JSF is some 3300 lbs overweight to meet its stipulated overall performance levels. Work is in hand in the United States to examine options to ensure that the overall performance requirements are met, addressing all possible options including a significant reduction in aircraft weight. This work will not mature in detail until early 2005, although an interim assessment of likely outcome in summer 2004 will enable performance against the United Kingdom's Key User Requirements to be preliminarily evaluated at that time.

Media

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what contacts *(a)* Defence Ministers and *(b)* departmental staff had with the Deputy Political Editor of *The Sun* in the seven days prior to 6 May; [172580]

(2) whether his Department authorised *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* spokesmen to disclose to (i) *The Times*, (ii) *The Sun* and (iii) other media that an announcement is shortly to be made concerning deployment to Iraq of Royal Marines; [172582]

(3) if he will investigate the *(a)* ministerial and *(b)* departmental origins of stories in (i) *The Times* and (ii) *The Sun* on 6 May claiming to confirm a forthcoming announcement that Royal Marines are to be deployed to Iraq. [172583]

Mr. Hoon: All contacts with the media are conducted in accordance with the Ministerial Code, the Civil Service Code, the Code of Conduct for Special Advisers and Guidance on the Work of the Government Information Service. No decisions have been taken on the deployment of additional troops to Iraq. Should a decision be taken to commit additional forces to Iraq, I shall inform the House in the usual way.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the effect on service morale of imminent deployment plans to conflict zones being published in the Press. [172581]

Mr. Hoon: When decisions are taken on operational deployments units are informed in the proper manner, through the chain of command. Recent press comment has focused on speculation concerning the Royal Marines. Morale in the Royal Marines remains very good. The Royal Marines continue, as is usual, to focus on their professional preparations for a full range of training and operations. Media speculation does however, have a considerable impact on the morale of young Service families, particularly, as happened on this occasion, when wives and children are accosted by journalists outside schools.

Procurement Contracts (Scotland)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 11 March, *Official Report*, column 1654W, on Procurement Contracts (Scotland), what the average duration of the contract terms directly placed by his Department with companies based in Scotland was in each of the last four financial years; and what the *(a)* 10 longest and *(b)* 10 shortest running contracts were; and what the total value was of *(a)* and *(b)*. [170433]

Mr. Ingram: Data necessary to respond fully to this question prior to financial year 2003–04 are not held centrally. However, in respect of these earlier years I am able to offer the following information based on the numbers of the new contracts previously reported:

of the 724 new contracts let with companies based in Scotland during 2000–01, 205 of these contracts lasted less than one year and these 205 contracts had an average value of £9,000. 104 of the new contracts let with companies based in Scotland in 2000–01 were still running in 2003–04, and these 104 contracts had an average value of £15 million;

of the 604 new contracts let with companies based in Scotland during 2001–02,180 of these contracts lasted less than one year and these 180 contracts had an average value of £18,000. 110 of the new contracts let with companies based in Scotland in 2001–02 were still running in 2003–04, and these 110 contracts had an average value of £102 million;

of the 600 new contracts let with companies based in Scotland during 2002–03, 292 of these contracts lasted less than one year and these 292 contracts had an average value of £410,000. 308 of the new contracts let with companies based in Scotland in 2002–03 were still running in 2003–04, and these 308 contracts had an average value of £20 million.

Details of new contracts let with companies based in Scotland during 2003–04

Contracts	
Number of new contracts	458
Total value of these new contracts	£204 million
Most valuable new contract let	£40 million
Total value of the 10 longest contracts	£53 million
Total value of the 10 shortest contracts	£0.058 million
Average duration of all new contracts let	[1]282 days

[1] Refers to the average (mean) number of calendar days

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 11 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1654W, on Procurement Contracts (Scotland), what the total projected annual cost of the procurement contracts his Department placed with companies based in Scotland in *(a)* 2002–03, *(b)* 2001–02 and *(c)* 2000–01 was for each of the 10 years following the placing of the contracts; what the actual total cost was of the contracts placed in (i) 2002–03, (ii) 2001–02 and (iii) 2000–01 for the years for which information is available; and if he will make a statement. [170434]

Mr. Ingram: The information requested in respect of the total projected annual cost of procurement contracts placed by the Ministry of Defence with companies based in Scotland is not held centrally. These data could be provided only at disproportionate cost (Exemption 9 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information).

Details of total payments made against contracts placed with companies based in Scotland up until 2003–04 are as follows.

£ million

	Value of payments made in:			
	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Contracts let before 2000-01	480	410	290	170
Contracts let during 2000-01	50	110	70	50
Contracts let during 2001-02	—	50	150	100
Contracts let during 2002-03	—	—	100	300
Contracts let during 2003-04	—	—	—	50
Total	520	570	610	670

Note:
The figures are exclusive of VAT and have been rounded to the nearest £10 million.

Refuelling Tanker Aircraft

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether CV(F) will carry air-to-air refuelling tanker aircraft; and if he will make a statement. [170351]

Mr. Ingram: The primary aircraft operating from CVF will be the future Joint Combat Aircraft (JCA), a role which will be undertaken by the Short Take Off Vertical Landing variant of the Joint Strike Fighter. Should analysis prove it necessary, a refuelling capability could be provided by embarked JCA aircraft adapted for the task. There would be no requirement for the carrier to operate a different aircraft type for refuelling operations.

Royal Tournament

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has *(a)* to reintroduce the Royal Tournament, *(b)* stage similar events and *(c)* support a private venture of a similar nature; and if he will make a statement. [169176]

Mr. Ingram: There are no plans to reintroduce the Royal Tournament, the ending of which was announced by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence on 25 October 1999, *Official Report*, columns 696–97W. Nor have we any plans to support a private venture of a similar nature.

The Department has, however, continued to mount major set-piece events to demonstrate the capability of the armed forces. Under the umbrella of 'Defence 2000', the armed forces have helped stage the Royal Military Tattoo in 2000, the International Festival of the Sea in 2001, and the Queen's Golden Jubilee Celebrations in Portsmouth in 2002. The department has also continued to participate in a wide variety of smaller events such as open days, ships visits, county shows and showcase events such as the Edinburgh Military Tattoo and the Fairford Royal International Air Tattoo (RIAT). We have also increased our presence in local communities and schools with the Service and Ministry of Defence Presentation Teams.

The recent high level of operational commitments and the associated demands they have placed on Service personnel and their families, have caused us to review our continued involvement in events that could be regarded as discretionary. The large set-piece events of 'Defence 2000' have proved to be particularly demanding. Following our decision not to proceed with the planned events for 2003 and 2004, we have taken the opportunity to review our future strategy. As a result, we have now concluded that we will gain the greatest benefit by focusing our resources on supporting the well established single-service events such as RIAT, specific commemorations such as the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar, and by making better use of our contribution to the many smaller events that take place across the length and breadth of the UK. These events, which tend not to be as manpower intensive, have proved to be excellent vehicles for cementing the relationship between the armed forces and local communities, and have done much to raise the overall profile of the Services.

By building on these events, I am fully confident that the current high profile of the armed forces will be maintained. We have therefore decided not to continue with the Defence 2000 Series.

Submarines

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* expected and *(b)* latest possible in-service dates for the V class SSBN are; and if he will make a statement. [170328]

Mr. Ingram: No decisions have been taken on the decommissioning dates of the Royal Navy's Vanguard class nuclear submarines.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his policy is regarding ownership of the United Kingdom's submarine building capability. [170749]

Mr. Ingram: The only United Kingdom facilities currently engaged in submarine building are those owned by BAE Systems Marine Ltd. at Barrow-in-Furness. The Government's special share in BAE Systems Marine Ltd. ensures that decisions affecting the ownership of these facilities cannot be taken without Government consent.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Seaport/Airport Security

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of UK *(a)* seaports and *(b)* airports will have radiation detection equipment installed by 1 July. [169962]

Ms Blears: We have implemented a Programme of work to introduce screening equipment at UK ports for detecting the illicit importation of radioactive materials that could be used by terrorists. By 1 July 2004 screening equipment will be in place at a number of major UK ports of entry. This is an on-going programme based on prudent contingency planning which is planned to be completed by March 2007. It would not be in the interests of national security to give details of the implementation programme.

Air Weapons

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many gas-cartridge air weapons have been *(a)* surrendered to the police and *(b)* granted section 1 Firearms Certificates since the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 became law; and how many gas-cartridge weapons he estimates remain in circulation. [170721]

Caroline Flint: No running total has been kept centrally of the number of self-contained gas cartridge weapons surrendered or entered on a firearms certificate. This information is currently being collated by the police. In the absence of any previous requirement to record details of ownership it is not possible to say how many remain in circulation.

Ambulance Service

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy to ensure that ambulance drivers who are engaged in work of an urgent or emergency nature are neither penalised nor prosecuted for speeding; and if he will make a statement. [171035]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* Provision already exists in law to protect drivers of vehicles being used for an ambulance purpose from prosecution for excess speed offences. This exemption is contained under section 87 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Car Stereos

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the use of Regulation 97 of the 1986 Road Vehicle Regulations to combat noise pollution emanating from car stereos. [170208]

Caroline Flint: Regulation 97 of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 provides that no motor vehicle shall be used on a road in such a manner as to cause any excessive noise which could have been avoided by the exercise of reasonable care by the driver. I understand from the Association of Chief Police Officers that the police find the provision effective to deal with noisy car stereos. When enforcing the offence, police officers will give an oral warning to the driver, issue a fixed penalty notice or report for prosecution as appropiate.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the powers available to the police to combat noise pollution emanating from car stereos. [170209]

Caroline Flint: Regulation 97 of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 prohibits the use of a vehicle emitting avoidable excessive noise.

If in a particular case playing a stereo at excessive volume amounted to driving without reasonable consideration for others contrary to Section 3 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and was causing or was likely to cause alarm, distress or annoyance, the driver may be liable to having his vehicle seized by the police under the provisions of Section 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002.

Care Custody System

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what level of integration of data he expects among the *(a)* Care Custody systems, *(b)* Police National Computer, *(c)* fingerprint database, *(d)* DNA database and *(e)* firearms database. [170725]

Caroline Flint: The NSPIS Custody and Case Preparation system will be interfaced with the Police National Computer. This interface will allow for the core data held on the NSPIS Custody and Case Preparation system to be transferred to the Police National Computer and for it to be automatically updated.

The fingerprint, DNA and firearms databases will be integrated via the Police National Computer. Integration with the Police National Computer will allow for cross-checking in each of those databases.

Citizenship

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether those seeking British citizenship are required *(a)* to know the words of the National Anthem and *(b)* have knowledge of the flags and patron saints of the nations of the United Kingdom; and if he will make a statement. [165330]

Mr. Browne: This knowledge is not currently required for registration or naturalisation as a British citizen. However, registrars and local authorities are encouraged to play the National Anthem at Citizenship Ceremonies.

When brought into force, the provisions of section 1 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 will require applicants to demonstrate "sufficient knowledge" of life in the United Kingdom. Details of precisely what this will entail have yet to be finalised, but the focus will be on the practical knowledge new citizens will need to participate fully in UK society.

Crime (Liverpool)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the work of the Street Crime Unit in Liverpool. [170565]

Ms Blears: Robbery in Merseyside fell by 5 per cent. in 2002–03, compared to 2001–02. This has been achieved by effective partnership working across all agencies. Overall strategic, management of street crime is carried out by the Multi Agency Group. At an operational level, this is supported by Joint Agency Groups and the Robbery Reduction Team. In the Robbery Reduction Team, police and Crown Prosecution Service are co-located and the Premium Service is provided.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what changes are necessary to ensure the Liverpool Unit achieves the full benefits of co-location. [170566]

Ms Blears: The benefits can be seen in reductions in robbery in Merseyside. There were 5 per cent. fewer robberies in Merseyside in 2002–03 than in 2001–02. Merseyside aims to provide a good quality of prosecution, using the Premium Service approach. This involves the Crown Prosecution Service working closely with the police, with whom they are co-located, from an early stage of investigation to facilitate incisive progression of cases through the courts, with their co-operation.

Drug Misuse

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what public funds were spent on tackling drugs misuse in Sittingbourne and Sheppey in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* 2003–04. [170290]

Caroline Flint: Breakdown of financial allocation to local constituencies is not available to the Home Office. Funding is allocated to Drug Action Team (DAT) areas, in this case Kent DAT.

The period 1997–98 pre-dates National Drug Strategy, accounting procedures mean that the 1997 figures are no longer available and that 1998 figures are not accessible by the DAT.

In 2003–04 the total drugs allocation was £7,591,564. In order to ensure consistency figures supplied are based on funding streams associated with the National Drug Strategy and are readily verifiable. These funding streams are specifically targeted at tackling the harm caused to individuals, families and communities by the misuse of drugs. Other mainstream funding is made available at a local level, this varies and both in amount and origin as a result it is not possible to provide robust financial information.

£

	2003–04
Partnership Capacity	124,425
Treatment Pooled Budget	4,780,000
Through Care After Care Pump Priming	35,000
Building Safer Communities[1]	1,858,242
Young people	793,897
Total	7,591,564

[1] Contains non drug elements

Emergency Services

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his policy is with regard to drivers of emergency service vehicles who are captured on speed cameras contravening speed limits. [170736]

Caroline Flint: Vehicles being used for fire brigade, ambulance or police purposes are exempt from speed limits when observation of the limit on any specific occasion would hinder them fulfilling their purpose.

The exemption is contained in section 87 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The exemption is not automatic. Speeding is dangerous and a driver in an emergency vehicle who exceeds the speed limit unnecessarily will be liable to a fixed penalty or prosecution.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy to recompense *(a)* police authorities, *(b)* fire and rescue authorities and *(c)* health trusts, for the annual costs of dealing with the paperwork which is triggered by their emergency vehicles captured on speed cameras contravening speed limits. [170737]

Caroline Flint: There are no plans to make it policy to recompense theemergency services for the costs of processing fixed penalty notices for speeding. Emergency service vehicles are already exempt from speed limits when to observe the limit on a particular occasion would hinder their purpose. The exemption is however not automatic. The police enforce speed limits for everyone's safety on the road and where such a vehicle exceeds the limit unnecessarily a fixed penalty may be appropriate.

We are however working closely with the Association of Chief Police Officers to ensure that emergency service vehicles caught speeding by automatic camera are not followed up unnecessarily when they can rely on this exemption.

Fingerprints

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his policy is regarding the recording of fingerprints for police use regardless of criminal conviction; and if he will make a statement. [170332]

Ms Blears: Under section 64 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, as amended, fingerprints taken from a person in connection with the investigation of an offence may be retained after they have fulfilled the purposes for which they were taken, but shall not be used by any person except for purposes related to the prevention or detection of crime, the investigation of an offence or the conduct of a prosecution.

Identity Cards

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what percentage of UK residents have been a victim of identity fraud in each of the last five years. [170327]

Mr. Browne: It is not a criminal offence for a person simply to use another identity. However, false identities are often used to facilitate other offences such as deception and money laundering.

The police do not generally record incidents of identity fraud because prosecutions are recorded for the offences facilitated by false identities.

However, members of CIFAS, the UK's Fraud Prevention Service for the private sector, identified 74,000 cases of identity and impersonation fraud in 2002 and 101,000 in 2003.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the communication strategy to ensure engagement with the public regarding identity cards will be completed. [170528]

Mr. Browne: The identity cards communication strategy is an ongoing activity to ensure that the main audiences with an interest in the Identity Cards programme are kept up to date on progress and are informed how the programme may affect them. The communication strategy to engage the public will be regularly reviewed and developed alongside the programme's design, development and implementation to prepare for the roll-out of the first identity cards from 2007–08.

Jean-Marie Le Pen

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received concerning the recent visit of Jean-Marie Le Pen to the UK; and if he will make a statement. [169402]

Caroline Flint: None. It is a long-standing tradition in this country that people are free to gather together and to demonstrate their views provided that they do so within the law. Racism in all its forms damages communities and deserves the severest condemnation.

London Crime

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on crime trends within the Metropolitan Police Authority area. [170492]

Ms Blears: The most recent figures published by the Home Office, for the year 2002–03, show that the total number of recorded crimes for the Metropolitan Police Service increased by 2 per cent. compared to the previous year, but that the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) inflated the figures in 2002–03 by 12 per cent.

I understand that the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis recently published recorded crime statistics for the Metropolitan Police Service which showed a decrease in total recorded crime of 2 per cent. for the year ended March 2004, as compared with the previous year.

The national crime statistics for all police forces for 2003–04 are due to be published in July.

Mr. Hade Solemanpour

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what basis he refused a request to extradite to Argentina Mr. Hade Solemanpour, the former Iranian Ambassador to Argentina; and if he will make a statement. [167613]

Caroline Flint: The Argentinean request for Mr. Solemanpour's extradition was not supported by prima facie evidence sufficient to meet the requirements of UK law or of the treaty between our two countries. Accordingly, it was decided on 11 November not to issue an Order to Proceed against Solemanpour and to cancel the warrant for his provisional arrest.

National Identity Register

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in what circumstances the police could use the National Identity Register to establish an individual's identity without their consent. [170259]

Mr. Browne: The draft Identity Cards Bill published on 26 April provides that disclosure from the National Identity Register may be made to the police where it is in the interests of national security or for purposes connected with the prevention or detection of crime or for other purposes specified by order made by the Secretary of State.

Disclosure of an audit trail of when an individual's entry in the National Identity Register has been checked could be authorised for purposes only connected with the prevention or detection of serious crime. Disclosure of information to Scottish police forces is not permitted in connection with crimes which are within the legislative competence of the Scottish Parliament.

Parliament Square Demonstrations

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to offer alternative locations to demonstrators in Parliament Square. [169254]

Caroline Flint: None. It is open to demonstrators in Parliament Square to move to another location to continue their demonstration, provided they do so within the law.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with Westminster City Council regarding noise created by demonstrators in Parliament Square. [169255]

Caroline Flint: None. However, the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis tells me that there have been a number of discussions between the Metropolitan Police and Westminster Council on the use of byelaws to control noisy demonstrations in Parliament Square.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with the Metropolitan Police regarding the policing of the demonstrators in Parliament Square. [170214]

Mr. Blunkett: I have regular bilateral meetings with the Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis where current issues about the policing of London are discussed.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many days on average his Department took in Session 2002–03 to give a substantive answer to a parliamentary question for ordinary written answer; and what the greatest number of days taken to answer such a question was. [155924]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office does not maintain records in such a way that provides the information in the format requested without incurring disproportionate cost. The last published performance figures for the Home Office from 2001–02 showed that 39 per cent. of all PQs were answered within parliamentary deadlines.

Every effort is made to reply to parliamentary questions within the parliamentary deadlines wherever possible. Consequently the Home Office is currently in the process of introducing a new PQ system, the electronic parliamentary questions system (ePQS) to better monitor and manage the Department's performance.

The ePQS monitoring system has identified the bottlenecks in the PQ process and remedial action is being taken. As is usual with the introduction of any new IT system, performance has shown an initial decline. The benefits of ePQS are now being realised across the Department and performance is improving.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many *(a)* Ordinary Written and *(b)* Named Day Questions his Department received in (i) the 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary session up to the most recent date for which figures are available, broken down by month; [170772]

(2) what proportion of *(a)* Ordinary Written questions to his Department were answered within five sitting days of tabling and *(b)* Questions for a Named Day received a substantive answer on that day in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary session up to the most recent date for which figures are available, broken down by month. [170773]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office does not maintain records in such a way that provides the information in the format requested without incurring disproportionate costs. During the period 2002–03 the Home Office received 7115 Parliamentary Questions. The Department has received 4040 Parliamentary Questions so far this session. The published performance figures for 2002–2003 showed that 37 per cent. of all Parliamentary Questions were answered within Parliamentary deadlines.

Every effort is made to reply to Parliamentary Questions within the Parliamentary deadlines wherever possible. Consequently, the Home Office is currently in the process of introducing a new PQ system, the electronic Parliamentary Questions System (ePQS) to better monitor and manage the Department's performance.

The ePQS monitoring system has identified the bottlenecks in the PQ process and remedial action is being taken. The benefits of ePQS are now being realised across the Department

Prisons (Racial Incidents)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many racial incidents were reported by prisoners during *(a)* 2002 and *(b)* 2003; and what assessment he has made of the thoroughness and effectiveness of the subsequent investigations. [155252]

Paul Goggins: For the period 2002–03, 5,089 racist complaints were recorded across all establishments (excluding the results of 14 women's prisons and Wormwood Scrubs where information was not available within the time scale of this question), of which 1,360 (26 per cent.) were substantiated.

The substantiated complaints are broken down as follows:

Staff on Prisoner complaints (277 substantiated)

Prisoner on Prisoner complaints (666 substantiated)

Prisoner on Staff complaints (384 substantiated)

Staff on Staff complaints (33 substantiated).

These figures are based on the recorded incidents logged by all establishments but further individual breakdown is not available.

The responsibility of ensuring that investigations are carried out effectively rests with the Governing Governor of each establishment, or the Head of Group for Headquarters units. As part of their responsibilities the Race Relations Management Teams in each establishment, are involved in monitoring the investigations of racist complaints and their outcomes. The training for those carrying out incident investigations has been adapted to include specific details on how to deal with a race related complaint.

The outcomes of these investigations range from extra training, disciplinary action, adjudication punishments for prisoners and, for five members of staff within this period, dismissal.

It has been recognised in the joint Prison Service/CRE Race Equality Action Plan that further improvements need to be made with regard to the quality and thoroughness of the investigations of racial incidents and complaints.

Consideration is currently been given to how independent/external agencies might provide some assessment of thoroughness in the handling of racial incidents. The formalisation of all racial incidents is also being looked at to ensure all issues are dealt with in establishments. There is also work being carried out to overhaul the current Racial Incident Reporting process.

Racial Harassment

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what powers preventing racial harassment have been introduced since 1997; and how many times these powers have been used in Sittingbourne and Sheppey. [170457]

Fiona Mactaggart: Prior to 1997 the Race Relations Act (RRA) 1976 already prohibited discrimination on racial grounds. The RRA did not specifically refer to harassment, but it was clear from case law that racial harassment was a type of detriment capable of amounting to the kind of less favourable treatment prohibited by the Act.

As part of its fulfilment of its obligations under the EC Race Directive the UK amended the Race Relations Act 1976 (by virtue of the Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003) so as to make it unlawful to harass a person, on grounds of race or ethnic or national origins, in the areas of activity covered by the 1976 Act.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 created new and separate offences where the offences of causing fear and violence or of causing harassment, alarm or distress under the Public Order Act 1986, or the offences of harassment or putting in fear of violence under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 were racially aggravated.

Figures for the number of prosecutions in Sittingbourne and Sheppey for this type of offence are not centrally available. Kent police figures for harassment offences (published by the Home Office under the requirements of S95 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991) show a total of 339 recorded offences of this type in the Kent police area over the period 1999–2000 to 2001–02.

Road Safety

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been prosecuted in Sussex for use of mobile telephones while driving since the recent changes to the law were introduced; and what revenues have been collected in penalties from such prosecutions. [169861]

Caroline Flint: The specific offence of driving while using a hand held mobile phone came into effect on 1 December 2003. Use of a hands free mobile phone is not an offence.

Data on police action (written warnings, fixed penalty notices and court proceedings) for the new offence of driving while using a hand held mobile telephone will not be available until the autumn of 2004.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his strategy is for enforcing legislation on the use of mobile phones while driving. [171096]

Caroline Flint: When use of a mobile phone while driving amounts to some other offence, such as failing to exercise proper control, it has always been enforced as that. Such enforcement will continue when appropriate. The specific new offence of using a hand-held mobile phone while driving is designed to provide a simple, objective method of enforcement and prosecution, which does not depend in the same way on judgments of a driver's degree of control of a vehicle or carelessness. The Association of Chief Police Officers have welcomed it as such. How offences are enforced is an operational matter for individual chief officers of police.

Sexual Offences

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs has to appoint a working group on drug rape; and if he will make a statement. [171025]

Caroline Flint: The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) keeps under review all drugs and their associated harms and risks. Currently, the ACMD has no plans to establish a specific Working Group on drug rape. However, if the issue requires the ACMD's consideration it can be raised as an agenda item at either the full Council meeting of the ACMD or at the meeting of the ACMD's Technical Committee. Previously, the ACMD have acted on this issue as highlighted through its recommendation that Gammahydroxybutrate (GHB), which is viewed as a 'date rape' drug be made a controlled drug under Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

Although the ACMD is not specifically dealing with this issue at the moment there is an Interdepartmental Ministerial Group on Sexual Offending. The purpose of the Group (broadly) is to promote and co-ordinate cross-government action on tackling sexual offending, and provide appropriate support for the victims of sexual crime. Furthermore, under s.61 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is an offence to administer a substance with the aim of stupefying/overpowering a person to engage in sexual activity. This is punishable by a prison sentence of up to 10 years.

Terrorism

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much is being spent on the advertising campaign on promoting anti-terrorism launched by the Metropolitan police on 22 March. [165885]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* The costs for the "Life Savers" campaign is estimated at £266,000.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will extend his powers to detain people he reasonably believes to be linked to terrorist groups to *(a)* groups other than al-Qaeda which pose a threat to United Kingdom security, *(b)* United Kingdom nationals who acquired nationality through (i) marriage and (ii) other routes, other than by birth, and *(c)* all United Kingdom nationals. [169797]

Ms Blears: Part 4 of the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 was introduced to enable the detention of foreign nationals believed to be associated with terrorism but who cannot be removed from the country. My right hon. Friend, the Home Secretary has no plans at present to extend these immigration powers.

The Part 4 powers, however, lapse in November 2006. The question therefore arises as to what could or should replace them. The Discussion Paper "Counter-Terrorism Powers: Reconciling Security and Liberty in an Open Society", published on 25 February invites those with an interest in these issues to contribute their ideas to this debate by 31 August.

Travellers

Mr. Michael Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions he has had with the Association of Chief Police Officers regarding travellers. [170129]

Ms Blears: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary has regular meetings with the Association of Chief Police Officers and other police organisations.

Issues concerning travellers are covered in these meetings.

Websites

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost in *(a)* financial and *(b)* other terms was in (i) each financial year since 1997 and (ii) 2003–04 until the latest date for which figures are available of (A) developing and (B) maintaining (1) his Department's website and (2) each website for which his Department is responsible; and how many (C) unique hosts and (D) hits there were in each month for each website in (iii) each financial year since 1997 and (iv) 2003–04 until the latest date for which numbers are available. [155855]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information is as follows.

Costs (Home Office) and page impressions

The available information is shown in the table. For 1998 to 2001, it reflects expenditure on the corporate Home Office website only. Figures for 2001 onwards include all known Home Office funded web properties excluding Criminal Justice System (CJS) Online.

	Cost (£)	*Number of page impressions*
1997–98	Not separately identified	Not available
1998–99	Not separately identified	Not available
1999–2000	40,614	9,066,894
2000–01	58,170	16,495,939
2001–02	1,576,214	3,830,772
2002–03	11,643,356	[1]6,099,197
2003–04	[illegible]381.82	[3]32,690,512

[1] These figures include the cost of the site volcomgrants.gov.uk but no statistics of use are available.
Caveats
As they have evolved, the Home Office websites have used the most suitable statistical analysis software available. The figures shown above therefore represent the most accurate information available to us at the time of each reported statistic.
Because members of the website team have not been employed exclusively on this work throughout the period, their costs have been excluded from this table.
Information is not held centrally on websites that are managed independently of the main site.
Unique Hosts
42 including IND (main IND site, working in Britain and UK nationality sites) and Crime Reduction (38 excluding these) at March 2004. Figures not kept for previous years.
[2] To 5 March 2004, (excludes IND and Crime Red).
[3] To January 2004.

The available information shown in the table for 1998 to 2001 reflects expenditure on the corporate Home Office website only. Figures for 2001 onwards include all known Home Office funded web properties excluding CJS Online.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Advisers/Consultants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies spent on external consultants and advisers in each of the last three years. [171872]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 27 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 941W.

Children

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the work of Plan UK in setting up day care centres in the Philippines to serve children of working parents. [171695]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Through our Civil Society Challenge Fund DFID channels £246,669 of funding to an Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) project in the Philippines with Plan UK. This four year project has been running for two years. The project appears to be progressing well albeit a little more slowly than anticipated due to increased demands on partner organisations as a result of new legislation. A mid-term evaluation is scheduled to take place this year.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what representations he has received about the activity of girls in Nepal highlighting the problems of school attendance, alcohol consumption and smoking. [171696]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Girls' education and school attendance in Nepal is a serious challenge. Around 25 per cent. of girls of primary school age are out of school, and only 3.25 per cent. of fully trained teachers are female. With other donors, DFID is planning to help the Government implement their Education for All basic and primary education programme. The main aim of the programme will be get an additional 477,000 children into school by 2009. Particular attention will be paid to recruiting more female teachers, and using block grants and other incentive measures to encourage schools to increase enrolment of girls.

With regards to alcohol consumption and smoking, data on girls in Nepal is very thin and DFID is not actively involved in this area.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what study he has made of the role of children in Haiti in highlighting domestic violence. [171700]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: While DFID has itself made no study of the role of children and domestic violence in Haiti, the UK Government welcome the concern expressed for the countries 2.7 million children. Haitian children have seen their standards of health, education and protection, already among the lowest in the world, drop even further following the violent events earlier this year. The prevailing insecurity in Haiti continues to make children especially vulnerable to abuse and violence within the community and family structure.

In recognition of this, the UK has provided £500,000 in support of the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), as part of a £1.9 million emergency assistance package approved in April. This is in addition to funds channelled through the EC for emergency assistance to the Haitian population.

UNICEF's primary goal in Haiti, as elsewhere, is to protect and strengthen the rights of children. This is done through a series of activities tailored to local requirements, such as: awareness raising campaigns to discourage and prevent violence against children (particularly street children and domestic servants), the resumption of schooling and support to community groups for women and children.

Given the evolving humanitarian situation, the UK has adopted a flexible approach with respect to its funding, enabling UNICEF to allocate UK resources to immediate priorities for children. In addition, the UK has ensured that its emergency strategy has informed and complemented that of the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO), for the benefit of Haitian communities.

DFID's Civil Society Challenge Fund has also funded a project (£190,000, over five years) on Victims of Violence in Haiti which aims to support women through the constitution of a medical/psychological unit for victims of domestic violence.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what representations he has received about the activity of ex-child combatants in campaigning against the use of child soldiers in Sierra Leone. [171701]

Hilary Benn: I have not received any representations on this specific issue. In the past, DFID has provided core funding to the Office of the (UN) Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (OSRSG/CAAC), whose programme has included advocacy work using ex-child combatants. This was not, however, specific to Sierra Leone.

Ethiopia

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the development role that his Department is taking in Ethiopia. [172266]

Hilary Benn: The problems facing Ethiopia are immense. Almost one-half of its 70 million people live below the national poverty line. Hunger, HIV/AIDS and the need to provide basic services pose enormous challenges. On current plans, DFID is increasing expenditure from £19 million during 2003–04 to £85 million in 2005–06. This will include substantial direct budget support—while also targeting assistance to critical areas such as the struggle against food insecurity and HIV/AIDS and the need to improve basic education and health services. While our focus is on the long-term, we also continue to respond to immediate humanitarian needs as they arise.

In addition to providing direct assistance to reduce poverty in Ethiopia, DFID officials are promoting more coordinated and poverty-focused donor activity. We are also involved in wider issues that could threaten development—such as the need for peace and security in the region.

EU Peace Facility for Africa

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the involvement of his Department is in the EU's Peace Facility for Africa. [171678]

Hilary Benn: The Department for International Development has supported the European Union's establishment of a Peace Facility for Africa. DFID is engaged in discussions in the Council leading up to the approval of the Facility. DFID's support is in line with the G8-Africa Joint Action Plan and the Prime Minister's commitment to African peacekeeping.

Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what technical support his Department plans to provide to *(a)* the Angolan Ministry of Finance, *(b)* Sonangol and *(c)* Endiama to help implement the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. [172081]

Hilary Benn: The UK Government are active in promoting greater transparency in revenue management in oil, gas and mining through the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI).

DFID has provided an expert to participate in the World Bank's Public Expenditure Management and Financial Accountability Review (PEMFAR), which is to make recommendations on how Angola can adopt transparent, internationally accepted practices in oil revenue management. If Angola is committed to increasing the transparency of their oil revenue management, DFID stands ready to provide further help in implementing EITI in collaboration with the World Bank. DFID would expect implementation to include engagement with Civil Society and with all the oil and mining companies operating in Angola—including Sonangol.

Given its size and growing importance we would expect the Government of Angola to initially focus on the oil sector, hopefully followed by the diamonds sector.

Health Targets (Africa)

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development for what reasons his Department is off course to meet its health targets in Africa, as noted on page 180 of the 2004 Departmental Report. [171685]

Hilary Benn: DFID's Public Service Agreement indicators for health in Africa are linked to internationally agreed targets. DFID is one of a range of organisations which have made a commitment to these targets—others include national governments, other bilaterals and multilaterals.

Targets to reduce child mortality and improve maternal health are particularly ambitious and challenging for sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Many countries are seriously off- track and on current trends neither of the goals will be met by 2015.

Child mortality has multiple and complex causes. Four diseases are responsible for nearly half of all child deaths, and malnutrition is an underlying cause for many of the rest. But other factors, such as economic decline, inequality, inadequate education for girls, lack of access to safe water and sanitation, and in some countries the HIV/AIDS epidemic plays a role too. Several African countries have also experienced conflict and civil unrest, which restrict progress in reducing child mortality rates.

There has been little movement in rates of maternal mortality since 1990 and very recent progress is not easy to assess, due to lack of accurate data. Improving access to skilled care during delivery, and emergency obstetric care, where necessary, are key to reducing maternal mortality. The main constraints are weak and under-resourced health systems, in particular, the lack of appropriately skilled staff. Inadequate financing for health is a key constraint; current levels of spending in low-income African countries are way below what is needed to achieve the health targets. Addressing the broader determinants of poor health, and increasing health spend and the coverage and utilisation of interventions proven to reduce child and maternal mortality are both needed in order to make faster progress.

DFID is stepping up efforts to tackle the child and maternal health targets and is working with partners to make progress on increasing access to effective health services, including comprehensive reproductive health services, particularly for poor people. DFID is working to tackle the shortage of skilled health workers and also contributes to interventions in other sectors: education, transport, and sanitation, which are also needed to bring improvements.

Effective action requires, above all, political will to act. Great gains are likely when commitment to targets is translated into national poverty reduction strategies and budgets.

India

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the value of the work of young filmmakers in India in drawing attention to *(a)* industrial pollution, *(b)* early marriage, *(c)* child labour and *(d)* prostitution. [171702]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Effective communication is an essential development tool. In India, we have not specifically assessed the role of young filmmakers in drawing attention to environmental and social issues. DFID supports awareness-raising and advocacy on social issues through a variety of media, in line with the objectives in our recently published Country Assistance Plan.

Infant Mortality

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the under five mortality rates for each of the 16 African countries covered by the Millennium Development Goal. [171679]

Hilary Benn: DFID's Public Service Agreement (PSA) sets objectives and interim targets to 2006 to help monitor progress in meeting the MDGs. The PSA focuses on key countries and the 16 key Sub-Saharan Africa countries are listed as follows with their associated under five child mortality rates (per 1000 live births) for 2001.

Under 5 Mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)

PSA Key Countries (Sub-Saharan Africa)	
Year 2001	
Congo, Democratic Republic	205
Ethiopia	172
Ghana	100
Kenya	122
Lesotho	132
Malawi	183
Mozambique	197
Nigeria	183
Rwanda	183
Sierra Leone	316
South Africa	71
Sudan	107
Tanzania	165
Uganda	124
Zambia	202
Zimbabwe	123

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the change in the under five mortality rate has been since 1997 in countries receiving his Department's health care assistance in *(a)* Asia and *(b)* sub-Saharan Africa. [171686]

Hilary Benn: The following table gives the change in under-five mortality rates between 1995 and 2001 in our main partner countries in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. These are the countries listed in our Public Service Agreement. Data for 1997 is not available from standard international sources so the nearest available date, 1995, is provided instead.

Although progress has been mixed, many countries have seen improvements in under-five mortality rates. In Bangladesh, Indonesia and Nepal these improvements have been dramatic with reductions of a quarter or more over the six-year period. On average there has been more progress in Asia than Africa.

DFID provides assistance to the health sector through various different mechanisms. These include direct funding to the health sector and health projects, funding to the general government budget, and indirect funding to health related sectors and multi-lateral and Non-Government organisations. This makes it difficult to accurately identify all countries receiving our health care assistance, and our main partner countries are considered the most useful set for this purpose.

	Under-5 mortality rate Per 1,000 live births		
Country	*1995*	*2001*	*Percentage difference*
Asia			
Bangladesh	[1]116	77	-34
Indonesia	66	45	-32
Nepal	120	91	-24
China	46	39	-15
Pakistan	125	109	-13
Vietnam	43	38	-12
India	104	93	-11
Afghanistan	257	257	0
Cambodia	120	138	15
Average	111	99	-11
Sub-Saharan Africa			
Malawi	216	183	-15
Uganda	145	124	-14
Rwanda	210	183	-13
Ghana	112	100	-11
Mozambique	215	197	-8
Sudan	115	107	-7
Ethiopia	183	172	-6
Lesotho	140	132	-6
Nigeria	187	183	-2
Sierra Leone	317	316	0
Congo, Democratic. Republic.	205	205	0
Zambia	202	202	0
Tanzania	164	165	1
South Africa	65	71	9
Kenya	111	122	10
Zimbabwe	90	123	37
Average	167	162	-3

[1] 1993

Source:
World Development Indicators 2003

International Finance Corporation

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the Department's stake is as a shareholder in the International Finance Corporation. [172507]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The United Kingdom's capital stock in the International Finance Corporation is valued at US$121,015,000 that is equal to 5.3 per cent. of the total capital stock; this confers a voting power of 121,265 votes equal to 5.04 per cent. of total voting power.

Iraq

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what the total value of *(a)* exports from and *(b)* imports to Iraq was in the 12 months immediately before the start of the recent conflict; [171205]

(2) what his estimate is of the total value of *(a)* imports to Iraq and *(b)* exports from Iraq in 2003–04. [171209]

Hilary Benn: Iraq oil exports through the Oil For Food programme (OFF) before the 2003 conflict were in the region of $10 billion per year. Imports, again through OFF, were approximately equal to exports less the administration costs of OFF and 5 per cent. of oil revenues which were set aside as reparations resulting from the 1991 Gulf War. Any trade outside OFF would have been illegal and unrecorded.

Iraq's current oil exports are around 1.7 million barrels per day, which at present oil prices are expected to earn around $16 billion over a year. Reliable data on other exports and imports since the opening of Iraq's borders to trade after the 2003 conflict are not available.

Microbicides

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans he has for further funding to ensure the Microbicide Development Programme Phase III effectiveness trials of candidate microbicides are completed and facilitate future product development. [171260]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID is strongly committed to research and development and is proud to be the first government donor on microbicides. Women friendly technologies including microbicides will be an essential component of an effective HIV response enabling women to take control of their lives.

Even an only partially effective microbicide to prevent sexual transmission of HIV could prevent 2.5 million deaths from AIDS every three years. DFID welcomes the fact that five clinical field trials of different microbicide candidates will be launched in 2004. It will be important to complete these trials in order to identify the most effective product.

DFID is providing a grant of £16 million over five years (2001–2006) for the Microbicide Development Programme (MDP), co-ordinated by the Clinical Trials Unit of the Medical Research Council (MRC), and Imperial College. The programme is investigating the effectiveness of promising microbicide products, involving research centres in five African countries. DFID support accounts for over half of the projected costs.

DFID has been in discussion with other donors concerning support to the current generation of phase III trials, including the MDP. At a meeting on microbicides in Washington last month, strategies were discussed for ensuring the completion of trials, how best to utilise the data collected and how to ensure new candidates were being brought into early clinical studies. DFID's forthcoming strategy on HIV/AIDS will set out how the department will work, including with other donors, to further the development of technologies to combat HIV/AIDS, including microbicides.

Poverty Environment Partnership

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the members of the Poverty Environment Partnership. [171688]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Poverty Environment Partnership is an organised donor network, with an open membership which includes bilateral and multilateral agencies, research institutes, and development banks with an interest in the issues. At the most recent meeting, which was held in February 2004, the membership was as follows:

Bilateral donor countries/agencies:

Belgium, Canada (CIDA), Denmark (DANIDA), Finland, Germany (GTZ), Ireland, Netherlands (DGIS), Norway, Sweden (SIDA), Switzerland (SDC), USAID, UK (DFID)

Multilateral agencies:

World Bank, Asian Development Bank, African Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, International Monetary Fund, European Comission (DG ENV and DG DEV), United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Environment Programme, Food and Agriculture Organisation, World Health Organisation.

Non-governmental Organisations/research organisations:

Netherlands Institute for International Relations, Stockholm Environment Institute, World Resources Institute, World Wide Fund for Nature, IUCN—the World Conservation Union.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when the analytical methods referred to on page 179 of the 2004 Departmental Report for the integration of poverty-environment issues into Poverty Reduction Strategy processes will be *(a)* finalised and *(b)* published. [171689]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Relevant analytical methods for the integration of poverty-environment issues into Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS) and other development planning processes are being produced by DFID unilaterally and in conjunction with other members of the multi-donor Poverty Environment Partnership. Much of this work is formally published, although some comprises "working documents" which will be refined and tested in the field prior to more formal dissemination.

Examples of formal publications, which comprise analytical methodology and innovative developments within the issue, include "Linking Poverty Reduction and Environmental Management" (published July 2002), DFID Environment Guide (published June 2003), Environmental Fiscal Reform (to be published June 2004), OECD-DAC Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment (to be published late 2004).

Examples of work that is on-going but which will not be formally published in the near future include DFID's work on the contribution of environmental resources to economic growth, and the extent to which environmental issues are a good entry point for tackling wider issues of pro-poor governance and democratic change.

However, all work that is not formally published is still publicly available on DFID's website.

Primary School Education

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what percentage of children is enrolled in primary school in *(a)* Bangladesh, *(b)* China and *(c)* India. [171703]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The latest available information on primary school net enrolment rates for the countries in question are as follows:

	Percentage
Bangladesh[1]	87
China	93
India	83

[1] In addition, in Bangladesh, it is estimated that approximately 8 per cent. of primary age children are catered for in NGO schools.
Source:
World Development Indicators database.

The net enrolment ratio is the ratio of the number of children of official school age (as defined by the national education system, eg in China children can enter primary education at six or seven, so the data refer to children aged 7 to 11-years-old) who are enrolled in school to the population of the corresponding official school age.

Sexual and Reproductive Health

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he is taking to increase the number of skilled birth attendants in sub-Saharan Africa. [171675]

Hilary Benn: A woman in Africa is over 100 times more likely to die in pregnancy and childbirth than is a woman in a developed country. Many millions more suffer ill health and long-term disability as a result of complications in pregnancy or childbirth. We now know that almost all deaths as a result of pregnancy and childbirth are avoidable when proven health interventions are available and women are able to use them. Improved coverage of skilled care at delivery and access to emergency obstetric care when necessary are key to reducing maternal mortality. In addition, over a third of maternal deaths could be avoided if effective family planning services and affordable, safe, legal abortion services were available and accessible. At present the health systems in most Africa countries are too weak and under-resourced to deliver these interventions.

The Department for International Development is working with partners to identify and address constraints to progress with skilled attendance, and to support work to strengthen health systems that increase coverage and utilization of health services, including addressing issues such as human resource constraints and access to medicines.

In addition, in an increasing number of countries, DFID's health assistance is provided through sector budget support or indirectly through general budget support. In these cases, DFID is increasingly explicit that sustainable child and maternal health outcomes need greater priority in many national planning and budgeting processes.

Internationally, DFID also provides substantial support for research to improve the evidence base on safe motherhood and newborn health. DFID will continue to challenge and support the international system, in particular the UN, to play an effective role in improving peoples' health in Africa and will continue to promote effective international partnerships that have a role to play, particularly the evolving partnership for Safe Motherhood and Newborn Health.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the work of the New Generation Club on sexual health in Ecuador. [171697]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID has had no contact with this organisation in Latin America.

Tanzania (Anti-drugs Programme)

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of anti-drugs programmes in Tanzania. [171694]

Hilary Benn: We are not currently funding anti-drugs programmes since these are not a priority for the Government of Tanzania. Therefore we have made no assessment of the effectiveness of anti-drugs programmes in Tanzania. The focus of our assistance to is on supporting the Government to implement their Poverty Reduction Strategy, now in its third year of operation. 75 per cent. of our development funding (£60 million in 2003) is now allocated directly to Government budgets for this purpose.

Timber

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether his Department plans to contribute financially to the establishment of the second phase of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [167614]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Timber procurement policy on timber is the responsibility of the Department of Food, Rural Affairs and the Environment. Defra has replied to the question about the funding of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber (CPET) indicating that it is in discussion with a number of Departments, including DFID. No decision has yet been taken about the funding of the second phase of CPET.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Judiciary (Ethnic Minorities)

Keith Vaz: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment he has made of the common barriers deterring applications from ethnic minority groups to the judiciary. [171309]

Mr. Leslie: The decision whether or not to seek judicial appointment is a personal one which may be influenced by a number of factors. It is possible that some applicants, irrespective of ethnicity or gender, may be deterred from seeking judicial appointment for a variety of reasons, such as:

(a) a sense that the judicial appointments process is not sufficiently open or accountable;

(b) limited access to sufficient information, at key stages in their profession, to enable them to make an informed decision about a potential career in the judiciary;

(c) concerns that certain aspects of judicial office are incompatible with other commitments, for example that working patterns may not be "family friendly".

The first issue will be addressed through the establishment of the new, independent Judicial Appointments Commission which will inspire a more diverse range of applicants through a more open, transparent and accessible system.

In relation to the provision of information, the Department has for some time run a comprehensive outreach programme of events where officials and judicial office holders explain the appointments process and answer any questions. We also provide information de-mystifying the judicial appointments process either as a booklet; video or on our website. We are, however, looking at what else is needed, and when, to assist individual lawyers in deciding whether or not to pursue a judicial career.

Finally, in terms of judicial working patterns, salaried part-time working has already been introduced for some judicial posts and we are investigating whether this can be extended to more. We are also undertaking a review of our policies to consider what more can be done to encourage a more diverse range of legal professionals to seek judicial appointment.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Television Service

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Chairman of the Information Committee if he will make Fox News available on the television annunciator service to hon. Members. [170583]

Mr. Key: Fox News cannot be made available at present as there are no spare annunciator channels. The annunciator is used by both Houses and any decision on changing the use of a channel is agreed by the Information Committees in both Houses. The Information Committee in this House has recently agreed that Channel 24 may be used for EuroNews. I understand that the Information Committee in the House of Lords will be considering the matter shortly.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Correspondence

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she will reply in full to the letter from the hon. Member for Totnes, dated 25 February 2004, concerning tax rules for the British film industry, which was acknowledged on 1 March 2004. [172042]

Estelle Morris: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State replied in full to the letter from the hon. Member for Totnes on 6 May 2004.

S4C

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she expects the review of the funding of S4C to report. [171929]

Estelle Morris: We expect to receive the final report on the review of S4C later this month.

SCOTLAND

Sea Bass

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make it his policy to source all sea bass used in catering outlets for which his Department is responsible from hand-line fishermen rather than pair trawlers. [167536]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office has no responsibility for any catering outlets.

Steel

Mr. Foulkes: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement on the supply of steel within Scotland for Scottish manufacturing industries. [167187]

Mrs. McGuire: There has been a rise in global steel prices in recent months and I am aware of the reports of difficulties in the steel supply market.

However, the industry view is that although prices have increased, all types of steel remain available and I am advised that there is no shortage of supply from UK steel producers.

Wind Farms

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what recent representations he has received on the locating of wind farms in Scotland. [169972]

Mrs. McGuire: No such representations have been received. Decisions on proposed locations for particular wind power developments in Scotland are for local authorities and Scottish Ministers.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Regional Development Agencies

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the budget of each of the regional development agencies for 2004–05 is; how much each has spent in each year since 1999; and how much of this was spent on *(a)* staffing and *(b)* administration in each case. [171509]

Jacqui Smith: For eight of the Regional Development Agencies, their first full year of operation was 1999–2000. The London Development Agency was incorporated in 2000–01. The following table illustrates the Agencies' overall expenditure, and within these totals, expenditure on staffing and general administration between the years 1999 and 2004 provided from the Agencies' annual accounts.

£ million

Regional Development Agency	1999–2000 Total	1999–2000 Admin	1999–2000 Staffing	2001–01 Total	2001–01 Admin	2001–01 Staffing	2001–02 Total	2001–02 Admin	2001–02 Staffing
Advantage West Midlands	103	5	4	113	6	6	141	6	7
East of England Development Agency	30	2	2	36	2	3	55	3	4
East Midlands Development Agency	41	3	4	67	4	4	86	4	5
London Development Agency	N/a	N/a	N/a	235	6	3	266	11	5
Northwest Development Agency	141	8	6	156	8	8	270	9	9
One NorthEast	92	10	7	98	8	8	136	9	8
South East England Development Agency	63	3	3	73	4	5	97	5	6
South West of England Regional Development Agency	43	5	6	62	5	6	85	6	7
Yorkshire Forward	121	7	5	125	9	6	207	7	8

£ million

Regional Development Agency	2002–03 Total	2002–03 Admin	2002–03 Staffing	2003–04 Forecast Outturn	2003–04 Admin	2003–04 Staffing	2004–05 Indicative Budget
Advantage West Midlands	204	7	9	247	7	11	239
East of England Development Agency	88	4	5	79	4	6	96
East Midlands Development Agency	101	5	5	122	7	6	120
London Development Agency	295	17	9	317	17	13	367
Northwest Development Agency	274	11	11	332	11	15	341
One NorthEast	193	10	9	223	9	12	235
South East England Development Agency	112	7	8	141	6	10	125
South West of England Regional Development Agency	103	8	8	99	8	10	120
Yorkshire Forward	211	7	10	248	7	12	263

Notes:

1. RDA Single Programme budgets are allocated on a full resource basis and final outturn figures are subject to external audit by the National Audit Office or, in the case of the LDA by Baker Tilly, after the end of the financial year, before annual accounts are approved. Final expenditure figures for 2003–04 are yet to be confirmed and forecasts have been provided by the Agencies. General administration and staffing costs for earlier years are derived from annual accounts.
2. Overall expenditure for 1999 to 2003 and budget allocation figures for 2004–05—yet to be confirmed—are taken from Departmental records.

Renewable Energy

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the effect of recent trends in investment in renewable energy upon residents of Bootle. [171449]

Mr. Timms: As I far as I am aware recent trends in investment have not led directly to new renewables capacity in Bootle itself. The nearest development is the wind farm at Seaforth Dock, composed of six 600 kW wind turbines, which is a little over two miles away. However, this was constructed in 1999 under the then, 'Non Fossil Fuel Obligation'.

For details of developments in the surrounding Liverpool area I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Crosby (Mrs. Curtis-Thomas) on 25 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1109W and my right hon. Friend the Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Field) on 28 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1162SW.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the effect of recent trends in investment in renewable energy upon the residents of Cambridgeshire. [170853]

Mr. Timms: As far as I am aware the following are renewable energy facilities that have been constructed within Cambridgeshire:

A 1MW Landfill gas plant at March Landfill Site, built in 2002.

A 1MW Landfill gas plant at Warboys, built in 2001.

A 37MW Biomass plant at Elean Business Park, Sutton built in 2000.

A 2.3MW Landfill gas plant at Cow Lane, Godmanchester, built in 2000

A 2MW Landfill gas plant at Huntingdon, built in 1999.

A 2MW Landfill gas plant at Dogsthorpe Landfill Site, Peterborough, which was built in 1995.

A 2.1MW Landfill gas plant at Milton, built in 1993.

A 225kW wind turbine at Kings Bush Farm, Huntingdon built in 1990.

There are currently no proposals for new developments that fall under Section 36 of the 1989 electricity act. This requires developers to notify my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State of proposals for new generating capacity of greater than 50MW. However, proposals for developments that total less than 50MW in size are the responsibility of the Local Planning Authority.

Businesses (Sittingbourne and Sheppey)

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new businesses have started up in Sittingbourne and Sheppey since 1997. [170291]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales, including 2,700 in Kent County (which contains the constituency of Sittingbourne and Sheppey), in the fourth quarter of 2003. The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and

Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before. There were 10,800 business start-ups in Kent County in 2003. Data for counties are not available for before 2003.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Swale local authority (which contains the constituency of Sittingbourne and Sheppey) are shown below for the period 1997 to 2002. Data for 2003 will be available in Autumn 2004.

VAT Registrations: 1997–2002

	Swale
1997	340
1998	315
1999	335
2000	355
2001	385
2002	330

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service, available from: www.sbs.gov.uk/statistics/vatstats.php

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Departmental Procurement

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of the *(a)* crockery, *(b)* cutlery and *(c)* glassware procured by her Department over the last five years is of British manufacture. [170811]

Ms Hewitt: All crockery is of UK manufacture. Any cutlery and glassware purchased has been through UK suppliers and manufactured outside the UK.

As a Government department we ensure that EU procurement rules are followed and these rules do not allow the specification of a particular country of origin except in very specific circumstances (such as for reasons of national security). Responsibility for procuring and maintaining stocks of crockery, cutlery and glassware for the DTI HQ restaurants and hospitality services lies with the catering contractor.

Energy Bills

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many consumers she estimates have not received an energy bill from their current *(a)* electricity and *(b)* gas supplier over the last four years; [171485]

(2) what regulations are in force to ensure that consumers receive energy bills that are *(a)* on time, *(b)* in an understandable format and *(c)* accurate; and if she will make a statement. [171486]

Mr. Timms: There is no licence condition to require suppliers to bill customers at a particular time, although suppliers are required to inform customers of energy used, on the basis of a meter reading or an estimate. However, certain standard licence conditions are relevant. Condition 17 requires that meters be read at least once every two years; condition 21 requires that customers be advised of their meter reference number at least annually, if not through a bill; condition 27 requires that they be told, at least annually, if not through a bill, about customer service codes; and condition 40 requires that they be told about Energywatch at least annually, if not through a bill. The regulation of gas and electricity supply, including the performance of suppliers against licence conditions, is the responsibility of the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM). I understand that the Chairman of OFGEM will write to the hon. Member about the matters he has raised.

Energy Supplies

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what action she is taking to promote private sector investment in renewable energy. [170281]

Mr. Timms: The importance of private investment going forward cannot be underestimated in achieving our renewables targets. The Renewables Advisory Board established the Finance and Investment Workgroup last year. I commissioned independent research into investor perspectives of renewables and concluded that investors believed that:

> The 2010–11 target, of 10.4 per cent. of electricity generated from renewables, would only be met if there is greater assurance on Government policy post 2010.
>
> Sustaining investor confidence is possible and within Government's control and principally requires promote action to firm up post-2010 targets.

In response to this I announced on 1 December 2003 an extension of the Renewables Obligation target from 10 per cent. in 2010 to 15 per cent. in 2015.

In addition, as part of the DTI's "It's Only Natural" renewables communication campaign, we held a high level seminar, on 26 April for senior representatives from banks, industry and the investment community to discuss the Government's commitment to renewables and to debate the issues facing investors. The event was well attended with over 120 delegates.

European Directives

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the European directives implemented by her Department through national regulations in each year since 1990. [169166]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 28 April 2004]:* This information could be compiled only at disproportionate cost.

Globalisation

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the impact of globalisation on UK *(a)* manufacturing and *(b)* services. [163567]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Department is drawing up a White Paper on trade and investment that will cover the causes of globalisation, its potential benefits for the UK and how best to address any adjustment challenges which may arise. This will be available in the summer.

Manufacturing Industry

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what further action she is planning to take to help small and medium UK manufacturing companies. [170285]

Nigel Griffiths: We will continue to make good progress in taking forward the Government's Manufacturing—the first such strategy for 30 years—which we developed in partnership with industry, trade unions and other stakeholders.

The Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS), a key part of the Strategy, has been a great success since it was launched in 2002, providing easily accessible and practical advice to small and medium sized manufacturers in England and Wales. MAS helped manufacturing companies to see a seven-fold increase in added value from £5 million to £39 million during 2003.

We will continue to help small and medium sized manufacturing companies utilise innovation, investment, best practice, and higher-level skills to succeed in the increasingly competitive global market through.

Mark of Marks Scheme

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how the Mark of Marks scheme will improve the quality of service in the domestic sector; [172466]

(2) what the required criteria are for the Mark of Marks trade mark; and what role trade associations play in the scheme; [172467]

(3) when the Mark of Marks scheme for the construction industry was established; what trades are involved in it; and what the level of take-up has been. [172469]

Nigel Griffiths: The Mark of Marks concept was developed under the Quality Mark umbrella in early 2003 to promote alignment of the membership requirements of the more reputable trade bodies and other organisations with Quality Mark. The scheme reflects the growing shift within the construction industry to embrace the quality ethos and promote better service to clients. The aim is to secure larger volumes of trades people by allowing members of industry bodies within Mark of Marks to be badged to consumers.

Mark of Marks envisages flexibility in how standards are delivered and consumers protected. Industry bodies have a key role to play in ensuring delivery of quality to consumers. We have been discussing this concept with industry bodies and organisations in a range of sectors have expressed interest, including the gas, heating and ventilating, plumbing, roofing, general building, damp-proofing, glazing, paving and electrical sectors.

Mayflower Buses

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what action her Department will take arising from the collapse of the bus maker Mayflower; and if she will make a statement. [171355]

Jacqui Smith: Officials are in contact with the administrators and with the Regional Development Agencies and Devolved Administrations in the parts of the country in which Mayflower businesses are based. As soon as the new owners of the businesses are known we will contact them to discuss their plans and to ensure that they are aware of the support which could be available to take the businesses forward.

The Department is aware of the widespread concern arising from the failure of Mayflower Corporation. It does have powers to investigate companies under the Companies Act and we are also consulting with other regulators.

New Businesses (Oldham, West and Royton)

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new businesses have started up in Oldham West and Royton since 1997. [170934]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales, including 400 in Oldham Local Authority (which contains the constituency of Oldham West and Royton), in the fourth quarter of 2003. The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 increase on the year before. There were 1,900 business start-ups in Oldham Local Authority in 2003. Data for local authorities are not available for before 2003.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Oldham Local Authority (which contains the constituency of Oldham West and Royton) are shown in the table for the period 1997 to 2002. Data for 2003 will be available in Autumn 2004.

VAT Registrations: 1997–2002

	Oldham
1997	480
1998	470
1999	465
2000	480
2001	440
2002	510

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service, available from: www.sbs.gov.uk/statistics/vatstats.php

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

North Sea Oil

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her latest estimate is of North Sea oil reserves; and if she will make a statement. [169794]

Mr. Timms: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 317W.

NPL, Teddington

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the original estimated *(a)* cost and *(b)* completion date for the PFI project for the National Physical Laboratory in Teddington was; and what the current estimated (i) cost and (ii) completion date is. [169815]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 30 April 2004]*: The original estimated cost for the construction of new facilities at the National Physical Laboratory, Teddington under the 1998 contract with the PFI contractor and its Design and Building Contractor was £82,012,200. The Availability Fee paid by my Department is based on this sum. We do not know the current estimated cost of construction. Since this is a PFI contract, the risk on cost overruns rests with the PFI and Design and Building contractors.

The original completion date for the PFI project was 24 September 2001, and the PFI contractor currently estimates that the final completion date will be June 2006. Fifteen of the 16 modules in the new facilities have been handed over, but additional work is still needed by the PFI Contractor to bring modules into line with the Output Specifications; and, as a result of the delay, changes are needed to some of the new facilities to enable them to meet the current needs of NPL's scientific programmes. The contractor's estimated final completion date of June 2006 provides for the demolition of existing buildings at NPL, the construction of car parking space, and landscaping.

Nuclear Materials

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to her answer of 14 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 788W, on nuclear energy, what the Department's acceptable weight limits are concerning nuclear material unaccounted for; when these limits were adopted; and when they are due to be reviewed. [172094]

Nigel Griffiths: Nuclear material unaccounted for (MUF) is a recognised feature of accounting for nuclear material and is caused primarily by the uncertainties inherent in the techniques used to measure nuclear material. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) describes standards for the measurement uncertainty expected for closing a nuclear material balance in its Safeguards Glossary, and it publishes International Target Values (ITV) for uncertainties on measurements performed on nuclear material. These are used to determine whether a facility's measurement system meets international standards and are periodically updated by international experts to reflect currently achievable measurement capabilities and to incorporate newly developed measurement techniques and instruments. The values currently used were set in 2000 and were published by the IAEA in April 2001 as a Safeguards Technical Report (STR-327). This report is available from the IAEA in hardcopy only. However, most sections of the report can also be found at www.inmm.org/topics/contents/JNMMPaperITV.pdf. The values will be reviewed when international experts conclude a change is needed.

All civil nuclear material in the UK is subject to Euratom safeguards and to the terms of the UK/Euratom/IAEA safeguards agreement. The European Commission's report on the operation of Euratom Safeguards in 2002, the most recent published, concluded that no evidence for the diversion of nuclear materials was found by the systematic evaluation of MUF reported by nuclear installations.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list nuclear materials unaccounted for at sites operated by *(a)* BNFL, *(b)* the UK Atomic Energy Authority and *(c)* URENCO since 1997; and if she will make a statement on Government oversight of private civilian nuclear facilities. [172093]

Nigel Griffiths: Material unaccounted for (MUF) figures are published annually by the nuclear industry. Copies of the figures published since 1997 were placed in the Libraries of the House on 21 January 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1233–34W in response to a written question.

All civil nuclear material in the UK, irrespective of ownership, is subject to Euratom safeguards and to the terms of the UK/Euratom/IAEA safeguards agreement. The Safeguards Office of DTI is responsible for overseeing these international obligations.

Post Office

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1)what research she has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the change in numbers of jobs, and the areas involved, which are likely to result from the proposal by Royal Mail to change its pricing structure from weight based charging to size based charging in (i) the photo finishing industry and (ii) other industries; [172516]

(2) what recent discussions she has had with *(a)* Royal Mail, *(b)* the Post Regulator, *(c)* representatives of the photo finishing industry and *(d)* other business representatives on Royal Mail's proposals to change its pricing structure from weight based charging to size based charging. [172517]

Mr. Timms: The proposal by Royal Mail to introduce size-based pricing is a matter for the postal services regulator, Postcomm. Royal Mail's proposal is currently the subject of a full public consultation which runs until 27 July 2004. The consultation can be accessed on the Postcomm website www.postcomm.gov.uk

As well as seeking views of other interested parties, a significant part of the consultation is to gather information from customers likely to be affected by size-based pricing. Following this consultation, Postcomm will produce a Regulatory Impact Assessment taking account of the comments received from customers, including the photo finishing industry.

Regional Development Agency Funding (Lancashire)

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for

Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on Regional Development Agency funding for Carnforth under the Market Towns Initiative. [170232]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* I have been advised by the Northwest Development Agency that it has issued guidance to Market Town Partnerships in the North West, including Carnforth, indicating that it is prepared to directly invest up to £1 million in each town.

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much funding the Regional Development Agency has spent or allocated to projects in Lancashire since the agency was created; and if she will list the *(a)* funding and *(b)* projects by constituency in order of amount of funding. [170233]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* I have been advised by the Northwest Development Agency that since its creation, NWDA has not collated data by sub-region or parliamentary constituency. Spend has been monitored by programme and/or activity, and many of the Agency's projects and schemes span several constituencies and local authority areas.

As of April 2004, the Agency now has a three year investment strategy which will monitor budgeted expenditure by sub region.

The NWDA has provided funding of over £500,000 to support the following projects in Lancashire:

Preston Post Office

Lancashire West Business Productivity

Lancashire Tourism Partnership (SRB Round 3)

Bacup and Stacksteads (SRB Round 6)

Blackpool Challenge Partnership (SRB Round 6)

Lancashire Small Sites Programme 2002

Michelin Site, Burnley

Pendle Economic Regeneration Programme (PERP)

Fleetwood Marsh Nature Park

Burnley Technology Centre

Pavillions, Blackburn

Cardwell Mill

Rossendale Brownfield Land Project

White Moss Business Park Phase 2

Blackpool Regeneration: Talbot Road South

Acquisition

Green Business Parks (Lancs)

Futures Park Managed Offices Bacup

White Moss Business Park Investment Centre

Skelmersdale Acquisitions

Landgate and Moss Quarries

Former Co Op Burnley

ASP—N and W Lancs Core and Lancs ASP Activities

Lancashire Rural Recovery Plan

Lancashire LSC—Festival of Skills

East Lancs Partnership (SRB Round 5)

Clitheroe Market Town Initiative

F D Sims Ltd

Blackpool: Central Gateway Phase 1

Erlson Engineering Ltd

West Lancashire Investing in Business Programme

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the current position is regarding Regional Development Agency funding for the Midland Hotel and Central Regeneration Project in Morecambe; and when she expects the project will begin. [170234]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* I have been advised by the Northwest Development Agency that the Midland Hotel re-development project has been identified in the Agency's three year investment plan for 2004–07. Discussions are about to begin with the owner and developer, Urban Splash, about Agency funding support during that period. The Agency understand that Urban Splash intend to start work in the summer of this year.

Renewable Energy (South Ribble)

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the effect of recent trends in investment in renewable energy upon residents of South Ribble. [171285]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 6 May 2004]:* As far as I am aware recent trends in investment have not led to new renewable energy developments in South Ribble.

Small Businesses

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research her Department has conducted into the effects of late payments on small businesses; and if she will make a statement. [168984]

Nigel Griffiths: Specific research into the effects of late payment has not been carried out because this government has always recognised that late payment of debts can have serious effects on the cash flow of smaller companies, which is why we had a manifesto commitment to introduce a Late Payment Act to allow small businesses to:

claim interest on late payment from other business or public sector bodies, allow creditors to claim a fixed sum of compensation to cover debt recovery costs should late payment happen. Compensation entitlements are: £40 for a debt of up to £999.99, £70 for a debt of between £1,000 and £9,999.99 and £100 for amounts over £10,000.

This package of measures has had a positive effect on payment times. The Grant Thornton European Business Survey showed that the average time taken in the UK to settle accounts in 1997 was 49 days. By 2002 this had fallen to 41 days. By comparison, the average settlement time in our European neighbours was 50 days.

A recent survey by the REL Consultancy Group looked at average days payable outstanding (DPO) and concluded that UK companies' payment performance stands at a commendable 33.6 days against 42.4 days for Europe as a whole, whilrcountries such as Italy (67.9) and France (63.4) perform considerably less well.

TRANSPORT

Airports

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he requires representatives of environmental organisations to be included on airport consultative committees. [172129]

Mr. McNulty: The Government does not specify the composition of airport consultative committees. However, an airport designated under s.35 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982 must provide adequate facilities for consultation to those in the categories there specified, which include organisations "representing the interests of persons concerned with the locality in which the aerodrome is situated".

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what guidance his Department has issued on the composition of airport consultative committees. [172130]

Mr. McNulty: The Department issued revised guidance on airport consultative committees, including matters relating to their composition, in December 2003. The guidance may be viewed on, and downloaded from, the Department's website.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which airports in England have airport consultative committees; and if he will list the members of each. [172131]

Mr. McNulty: The Department does not maintain a central register of consultative committees and the membership of each is a matter for the committee itself. 51 aerodromes are designated under s.35 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982, of which 43 are in England. I understand that all these have consultative committees, as may some aerodromes which are not so designated.

Coastguard

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether his Department has *(a)* produced and *(b)* received a list of coastguard rescue centres that may be closed. [172385]

Mr. Jamieson: There is no list of coastguard rescue centres that may be closed.

Driving Standards Agency

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much the Driving Standards Agency has spent on consultancy fees in each financial year since 1997. [171963]

Mr. Jamieson: In each financial year since 1997, the Driving Standards Agency has spent the following on consultancy fees:

	£
1997–98	586,000
1998–99	749,000
1999–2000	1,105,000
2000–01	751,000
2001–02	1,201,000
2002–03	1,128,000
2003–04	[1]1,338,000

[1] Currently subject to audit.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many staff were employed by the Driving Standards Agency to handle test booking enquiries, broken down by the number of staff dealing with *(a)* telephone inquiries and *(b)* internet inquiries in the last year. [171964]

Mr. Jamieson: The Driving Standards Agency employs 166 permanent staff in two call centres to deal with practical test bookings and telephone inquiries. Some 100 employment agency staff are also currently employed to ensure that sufficient resource is available to meet the demand. One member of staff has dealt with internet inquiries since the introduction of the practical test internet booking facility in October 2003.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much money the Driving Standards Agency received from Transport for London under its contract to test Hackney Carriage black cabs within London. [171969]

Mr. Jamieson: The Driving Standards Agency does not receive money from Transport for London under the contract for testing applicants for a hackney carriage licence. Instead, applicants pay the Agency directly for tests that they take. In 2003–04, the Agency conducted 847 tests at a cost of £55.30 a test, resulting in total revenue of £46,839.

International Security Ship Plan

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will bring forward regulations in relation to enforcement of the International Security Ship Plan. [172386]

Mr. Jamieson: Enforcement of the new ship and port facility security regime agreed by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in December 2002, including Ship Security Plans and International Ship Security Certificates, will be under the Ship and Port Facility (Security) Regulations 2004. These Regulations are currently being drafted and are expected to be laid before Parliament in early June, to come into force on 1 July at the same time as the IMO regime.

Light Rail

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many pedestrians have been involved in collisions with light rail vehicles in each year since 1997; and how many *(a)* deaths and *(b)* injuries resulted from such collisions. [171954]

Mr. Jamieson: The numbers of pedestrians killed or injured in collisions with Tram/light rail vehicles for each year since 1999, the first year for which figures are available, are shown in the following table.

	Killed	*Injured*
1999	0	14
2000	0	4
2001	0	8
2002	2	15
Total	2	41

Oldham West and Royton

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the percentage change in *(a)* deaths and *(b)* serious injuries on the roads of Oldham West and Royton has been since 1997. [170959]

Dr. Howells: The available information relates to local authority areas. In the Oldham local authority area there were 13 deaths in road accidents in 1997 and four deaths in 2002, the latest year for which information is available. The number of serious injuries fell by 33 per cent. from 85 in 1997 to 57 in 2002. Estimates on the basis of parliamentary constituencies will become available in the summer when I shall write to my right hon. Friend with figures for Oldham West and Royton and place a copy of my letter in the Libraries of the House.

Road Traffic Accidents

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people *(a)* were seriously injured and *(b)* died in road traffic accidents in the East Riding of Yorkshire in each year since 1997. [171773]

Dr. Howells: The numbers of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents in the East Riding of Yorkshire for each year since 1997, are shown in the following table.

	Killed	*Seriously injured*
1997	23	241
1998	33	270
1999	42	258
2000	21	260
2001	24	266
2002	36	286
Total	179	1,581

Shell Haven

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to report the result of the public inquiry into the Shell Haven Port inquiry. [172559]

Mr. Jamieson: The report of the public inquiry into the proposed London Gateway port at Shell Haven is under careful consideration. The report will be made public as soon as Ministers are able to announce their decision.

Shipping (Straits of Malacca)

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether ships are searched as a matter of course if they have passed through the Straits of Malacca en route to the UK. [170062]

Mr. Jamieson: The decision to invoke control measures, including ship searching is largely intelligence led.

Statutory Off-road Notifications

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what procedures are followed by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency for issuing a reminder notice in the case of Statutory off-road Notifications. [172102]

Mr. Jamieson: Statutory Off Road Notification (SORN) declarations are valid for 12 months. Approximately two weeks before expiry DVLA issues a notice to remind the motorist either to renew SORN or to tax the vehicle.

Transport Direct

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the consultants used to conduct work for the Department related to Transport Direct, broken down by *(a)* value of work and *(b)* nature of the work. [170868]

Dr. Howells: The following table provides this information.

£000

Nature of Work	*Value of Work*
Transport Direct Programme Management	210
Transport Direct Portal Project Management	342
Transport Direct Portal Technical Advice	716
Transport Direct Portal Contract Management	179
Research and Usability	196
Data Management	215
Management of Technical Standards	8
Development of an Evaluation Framework	15

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the Transport Direct information service to go online. [171945]

Dr. Howells: The Transport Direct service will become available to the public in July 2004. The service itself came online—under password protection—in December 2003, since when extensive data testing has been undertaken.

Trunk Roads

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which trunk road schemes have been placed by the Department of Transport before regional assemblies for consultation. [171991]

Mr. Jamieson: Regional Assemblies, or their predecessor organisations, have been consulted for their views on all trunk Road schemes considered as candidates for entry to the Targeted Programme of

improvements, either as part of a wider public consultation process, through direct consultation between the Highways Agency and the relevant assembly or through their involvement in the multi-modal and road based studies which were set up following the 1998 Roads Review to examine proposals for major improvements to the motorway and trunk road network.

Walking

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects his Department's partnership website on walking to go live. [172051]

Dr. Howells: A website for walking professionals, developed and run by a partnership of national walking organisations, went live on 31 March this year. It can be found at www.walk2l.com. My Department provided some financial support for the project.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Air Quality

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the air quality was in each of the last five years in towns and cities in Northern Ireland for which records are kept. [172064]

Angela Smith: The Environment and Heritage Service (EHS) of the Department of the Environment publishes an annual air quality monitoring report for Northern Ireland in partnership with the Chief Environmental Health Officers Group. The most recent report—for 2002—provides details of all air quality monitoring and results taken from district council and departmental monitoring sites. This report also draws together all the historical air quality monitoring data for Northern Ireland and includes trend analysis and discussion in relation to EU limit values and National Air Quality Objectives, where data permit.

The report can also be accessed on the EHS website. http://www.ehsni.gov.uk/environment/air/air.shtml

Copies of the report have been placed in the Library.

Body Piercing

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the regulation of body piercing and tattooing establishments in Northern Ireland. [172029]

Angela Smith: Powers for the regulation by district councils of tattooing and ear-piercing establishments in Northern Ireland are provided by Part V of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1985.

Under this legislation, district councils may resolve to control tattooing and ear-piercing practices in their districts by requiring practitioners to register themselves and their premises with the district council. They may also make bye-laws concerning the cleanliness of registered premises and practitioners, and for the cleansing and sterilisation of instruments, materials and equipment with their district council.

The Government intend to publish draft legislation for consultation later this year which would bring forward legislative proposals to extend these arrangements to body-piercing practices.

Castlereagh College

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps were taken to ensure Castlereagh College's involvement in assisting employees of TK-ECC following closure of the factory at Dundonald; and if he will make a statement. [171029]

Mr. Gardiner: Following two meetings with TK-ECC Senior Management, officials from the Department for Employment and Learning co-ordinated an inter-Departmental Outreach Service at the company's premises, from 8 to 12 March. During the meetings it was indicated to the company that Castlereagh College was keen to provide additional support to the workforce; subsequently, formal contact was established between the company and the college.

The company quickly established the Outplacement Centre, involving the Department for Employment and Learning, Invest Northern Ireland, Social Security Agency and the Inland Revenue in providing advice and guidance on their services, including referrals to jobs and training opportunities, benefit claims and entitlement, advice on business start-up and entitlement to tax credits. While it was the company's intention to engage with other interested organisations, including Castlereagh College, unfortunately, this did not transpire as the premises were vacated on 12 March, prohibiting intervention by these organisations.

The Department for Employment and Learning's District Manager for South and East Belfast met, subsequently, with the Principal and Chief Executive of Castlereagh College to clarify the situation pertaining to the closure of TK-ECC and to establish agreed practices in the event of future redundancies occurring within South and East Belfast.

Child Obesity

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the levels of obesity among children of school age; what steps he is taking to encourage exercise and healthy eating among school children; and if he will make a statement. [171985]

Angela Smith: Independent research carried out in 1996 reported that 16 per cent. of 13 and 14-year-olds were overweight. This figure included 3.5 per cent. of boys and 2 per cent. of girls, classified as obese. Additional research on levels of overweight and obesity in children in Northern Ireland is likely to become available in the near future.

A task force is being established under the auspices of the Ministerial Group on Public Health to consider and

evaluate options for tackling obesity in children and young people in Northern Ireland. The task force is expected to make recommendations on how levels of obesity in children should be assessed in future.

Some £500,000 has been made available in 2004–05 for the promotion of physical activity and a new physical activity strategy and action plan will be issued for public consultation before the summer. The Department is also encouraging a healthy diet among school children through programmes such as the pilot, Fresh Fruit in Schools initiative. In addition, the Department of Education has recently launched a 12-month pilot scheme to improve the nutritional standard of school meals.

Community Pharmacies

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the progress of the Community Pharmacy Medicines Management Initiative. [171794]

Angela Smith: Training has been provided to enable 40 per cent. of pharmacies to deliver the service and this will be progressively extended. My Department will continue to work with key stakeholders to extend and consolidate the existing scheme to build further collaboration across the primary care team and the secondary care sector. In addition, the Department is working to develop a referral scheme to formalise patient referral from care providers to the community pharmacist for medicines management advice and guidance services.

The roll-out of the service has been managed at Board level through provision of training and on-going encouragement. Linked to this, Boards are planning to put in place a number of facilitators to support practitioners to take on this new role. A regional facilitator will be appointed to establish a cohesive network with Board personnel to support further uptake of the scheme.

Emergency Admissions (Ulster Hospital)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what conclusions have been drawn from the Improving the Flow of Emergency Admissions project conducted at the Ulster Hospital; and if he will make a statement. [171755]

Angela Smith: The Eastern Health and Social Services Board initiated the Improving the Flow of Emergency Admissions project at the Ulster Hospital in January 2003. The project involves a systematic analysis of patient flows into and through the hospital, in order to identify critical bottlenecks in the system. It is a long-term project and work at the hospital is still on-going. Analysis of systems and processes has identified new ways of working and highlighted shortfalls in resources, which the Trust and the Eastern Board are working to address.

The results of this project to date, along with the outcomes of similar projects elsewhere in Northern Ireland and in Great Britain, are being considered by the Department and will be the subject of discussions to be held at a regional workshop later this month. This workshop will aim to identify key principles learned from the project at the Ulster Hospital and elsewhere that can be applied more widely. These will be incorporated into a regional initiative to improve the flow of emergency admissions.

Football

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what Government assistance has been provided for the Irish Football Association's *(a)* Give Bigotry the Red Card and *(b)* Football for All campaigns. [170243]

Angela Smith: Funding totalling £165,500 has been provided by the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council for the Football for All project which includes Give Bigotry the Red Card. This consists mainly of an award of £159,500 made under the EU Peace II Programme, which covers the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2005.

Lupus

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to assist sufferers of lupus; and if he will make a statement. [171753]

Angela Smith: Rheumatologists throughout Northern Ireland manage patients with lupus, with input from other specialists as required. The management of any individual patient with lupus depends on the type of lupus, the nature of their disease and its severity. Specific services for lupus patients include a lupus clinic run by rheumatologists in Belfast, and management in a day ward for patients who require it. Lupus is also an area where there is significant research activity and clinicians working in this area have recently received funding from the Wellcome Foundation.

Motor Cycling

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether motorcycle road racing clubs in Northern Ireland can avail themselves of the Safe Sports Grounds fund for essential work at road racing circuits. [170250]

Angela Smith: Motorcycle road racing clubs cannot avail themselves of funding from the Sports Council Safe Sports Grounds fund for essential work at road racing circuits as the Safe Sports Grounds Interim Scheme ended in March 2003. However, approximately £175,000 has been provided, via the Sports Council for Northern Ireland, over the past three years for essential safety work at road racing circuits. Moreover, motor sports clubs may be able to avail of funding for essential works from monies provided by the Sports Council to the two and four Wheel Motor Sport Steering Group Ltd., the umbrella group of motor sports governing bodies, for the development of motor sport as a whole in Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland who has *(a)* been appointed, *(b)* been dismissed, *(c)* resigned and *(d)* withdrawn from the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission since its formation; and how much remuneration has been received in each case. [168169]

Mr. Spellar: The information is as follows:

(a) Appointed (and remuneration) to April 2004

Name of commissioner	*Date appointed*	*Current remuneration per annum*	*Remuneration on starting per annum*	*Total remuneration* £
Professor Brice Dickson	1 March 1999	66,854	55,000	302,937
Professor Christine Bell	1 March 1999	[1]—	8,000	28,832
Margaret-Ann Dinsmore QC	1 March 1999	10,000	8,000	44,666
Tom Donnelly	1 March 1999	10,000	8,000	44,666
Reverend Harold Good QBE	1 March 1999	[2]—	8,000	42,999
Professor Tom Hadden	1 March 1999	10,000	8,000	44,666
Angela Hegarty	1 March 1999	[1]—	8,000	14,666
Patricia Kelly	1 March 1999	10,000	8,000	44,666
Doctor Inez McCormack	1 March 1999	[1]—	8,000	28,832
Frank McGuinness	1 March 1999	[2]—	8,000	42,999
Lady Christine Eames	1 December 2001	10,000	8,000	22,000
Doctor Christopher McGimpsey	1 December 2001	[1]—	8,000	18,666
Kevin McLaughlin	1 December 2001	10,000	8,000	22,000
Patrick Yu	1 December 2001	[1]—	8,000	15,333

[1] Resigned.
[2] Term ended 29 February 2004.

(b) Dismissed—not applicable.

(c) Resigned

Name of Commissioner	*Date resigned*
Angela Hegarty	1 December 2000
Professor Christine Bell	9 September 2002
Doctor Inez McCormack	9 September 2002
Patrick Yu	7 July 2003
Doctor Christopher McGimpsey	3 November 2003

(d) Withdrawn

Name of Commissioner	*Remuneration per annum (£)*
Paddy Kelly	10,000
Frank McGuinness	[1]—

[1] Term ended 28 April 2004.

Note:
The Commissioner's salaries were raised from £8,000 to £10,000 from 1 April 2002.

Brice Dickson's increments are as follows:

	Amount (£)
1999[1]	55,000
2000[2]	57,475
2001[2]	60,004
2002[2]	63,604
2003[2]	66,854

[1] Starting salary.
[2] From April.

Police Service

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what support his Department is providing to members of the full time police reserve of the Police Service of Northern Ireland to assist them in seeking other employment. [170563]

Mr. Pearson: Members of the full time reserve who leave the Police Service of Northern Ireland under the voluntary severance scheme have access to a range of career and outplacement services. The facilities provided by the Police Retraining and Rehabilitation Trust are also available to all full time reserve officers.

Public Health

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the cost to the health service in Northern Ireland of *(a)* tobacco smoking, *(b)* alcohol misuse and *(c)* other drug use in the last year for which figures are available. [171784]

Angela Smith: The information requested is as follows:

(a) In her 2000 Annual Report, the Chief Medical Officer estimated that the annual in-patient care costs to the HPSS of smoking related diseases were in excess of £22 million. Additional treatment costs associated with out-patient and primary care cannot readily be identified.

(b) In the Report, "Reducing Alcohol Related Harm in Northern Ireland", it was estimated that, in 1997–98, the last year for which costs are available, the social costs to the HPSS amounted to £26.8 million pounds per year. This included the costs of occupied psychiatric and acute beds, general practice costs and responses to alcohol related harm.

(c) In relation to other drug use, the information is not available in this format.

Road Accidents (Compensation)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much public money has been spent on meeting compensation claims in relation to pedestrians who have had accidents on footpaths and roads in the ownership of the Department for Regional Development in each of the last five years. [172063]

Mr. Spellar: The IT records of the Department for Regional Development do not distinguish pedestrians from other claimants e.g. car passengers. It is believed, however, that the vast majority of claimants claiming against the Department for personal injury are pedestrians and relate to accidents on footpaths or roadways. The following table sets out the total

compensation expenditure paid by the Department for Regional Development in relation to personal injury claims in each of the last five years.

	£
2003–04	4,882,718
2002–03	4,744,835
2001–02	3,069,728
2000–01	2,244,137
1999–2000	3,104,204

Small Businesses

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will take steps to assist small businesses meet insurance costs. [171714]

Mr. Gardiner: The hon. Gentleman is aware that insurance is a "reserved" matter. HM Government are conscious that many businesses have been hit hard by significant price increases in the liability insurance market. They are committed to playing their part in helping business in this area.

The Government's agenda for action at national and local levels is being directed towards improving the functioning of the insurance market, including promoting better risk management and health and safety practices in order to reduce premium costs.

The Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment is working closely with the Federation of Small Businesses and the Insurance sector on the production of guidance for local businesses.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will take steps to reduce regulation on small businesses in Northern Ireland. [171715]

Mr. Gardiner: Government are aware of the potential problems faced by small businesses in complying with regulations.

In December 2001, the Northern Ireland Executive approved the introduction of the Northern Ireland Better Regulation Strategy which actively seeks to reduce the regulatory burden on businesses, including revised arrangements for Regulatory Impact Assessments and the introduction of a Micro Business Test to assess the impact of any proposed legislation on businesses with less than five employees. It also requires Northern Ireland Departments to give businesses at least 12 weeks advance notice of any legislation and to provide appropriate guidance on implementation.

I acknowledge fully the vital role of small businesses in the local economy and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment is striving to ensure that they benefit from the application of the Better Regulation Strategy.

Toxic Materials (Illegal Dumping)

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what action he intends to take in relation to the illegal dumping of toxic material at the green area, Annadale Embankment, Belfast. [171236]

Angela Smith: Powers to deal with illegal dumping are enforced by a number of regulatory bodies including district councils, roads service and the Environment and Heritage Service (EHS) of the Department of the Environment. The owners of land where waste has been unlawfully deposited also have responsibilities in the matter. I understand that quantities of waste material have been deposited at Annadale Embankment for the purposes of the 11 July bonfire celebration. Statutory bodies have encountered particular difficulties when endeavouring to deal with waste deposited for bonfire events. To address this, an Interagency Working Group on Bonfires was established by EHS in November 2003. The Report of the Working Group, with guidelines for communities in preparing and organising bonfire events, will be published and sent to all elected representatives in Northern Ireland, and to regulatory bodies involved in the control of bonfires, in the week commencing 17 May 2004.

Legal action will continue to be taken by EHS, when evidence is available, relating to the disposal of commercial waste to bonfire sites by either waste producers or transporters.

Translink

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the status of Translink is; and what the membership is. [171719]

Mr. Spellar: Translink is a brand name, introduced in 1996, of the integrated services of Citybus, Ulsterbus and Northern Ireland Railways. It is a subsidiary of the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company, which is a public corporation established under the Transport Act (NI) 1967 to oversee the provision of public transport in Northern Ireland.

Transport Review Team

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland who the members of the Transport Review Team are; and when its report is due to be published. [171720]

Mr. Spellar: I assume that the hon. Gentleman is referring to the Railway Review Group which was set up to gather information on the future needs and requirements of railways in Northern Ireland and is comprised of Officials from the Department for Regional Development, the Department of Finance and Personnel and Senior Translink Officials. The group has reported preliminary findings to me and it is my intention to issue a consultation document relating to the future investment needs in the coming weeks in order to inform the forthcoming spending review process.

Victim Support

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much funding has been allocated to victim support groups in Northern Ireland since 2001–02; which groups are involved; how much each group received; on what basis the funding was given; and how funding is monitored. [159693]

Angela Smith: I have placed a table in the Library which lists the funding allocated and paid up to 31 March 2004 to groups and organisations involved in providing support for victims of the Northern Ireland

conflict. The table lists the groups and organisations that benefited, the amounts allocated and paid, the basis on which the funding was given and indicates how the funding is monitored.

TREASURY

European Union

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the reasons why the European Union accounts for 2002 have not been signed or approved by the Court of Auditors; and if he will make a statement. [172486]

Ruth Kelly: The Paymaster General made a full statement on these issues on 23 February 2004 during the debate in European Standing Committee B on the European Court of Auditors' annual report.

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the reasons for the increase in the number of recorded fraud cases within the EU in 2002; and how much money was lost in fraud within the EU in 2002. [172487]

Ruth Kelly: Member states are required to report irregularities detected in their own resources, agriculture and structural funds budget sectors to the European Commission and to the European Anti-Fraud Office. These figures are reported every year in the Commission's annual "Fight against Fraud" report. Reported irregularities may include suspected fraud cases, but the Commission does not publish an estimate of fraud. Irregularities rose during 2002 mainly because the heavy audit activity required at the closure of the 1994–1999 Structural Funds programming period led to the detection of a higher number of errors than is usually the case. Any money found to have been paid in error is normally recovered by the paying agency concerned.

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the scope for reducing levels of fraud connected with the European Union budget. [172489]

Ruth Kelly: The Government strongly supports measures to reduce fraud against the Community budget. The European Anti-Fraud Office, which was an initiative of the Chancellor, is now up to complement and is doing a good job in tackling fraud, especially in cross-border cases which require investigations in several member states. The Government played an active part in negotiating the new Financial Regulation, a major reform which introduced new levels of accountability. Better financial control regulations in the Structural Funds, and simplification of agricultural payments will also reduce the opportunities for fraud.

Income Distribution

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will set out the distribution of original income, by quintile, in each of the past 10 years. [171582]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. David Willetts, dated 11 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking for the distribution of original income, by quintile, in each of the past ten years. (171582)

Estimates in the following table are produced from the Office for National Statistics' analysis "The effects of taxes and benefits on household income" published on the National Statistics website on 6 May 2004 at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/taxesbenefits.

The analysis includes measures of income inequality for the United Kingdom as a whole based on data from the Expenditure and Food Survey. There have been some changes in the underlying surveys and improvements in the methodology so caution is required when making direct comparisons between years.

The table shows, for the UK, for 1993 to 2002/03, average original income received by all households and for each income quintile group where households are ranked by equivalised disposable income. For example, the 1st quintile boundary is the income level below which one fifth of households are estimated to lie. Equivalisation is a standard methodology that takes into account the size and composition of households and adjusts their incomes to recognise differing demands on resources.

Original income is defined as income before government intervention i.e. from sources such as earnings, occupational pensions and investments. It does not include cash benefits such as the State Retirement Pension, Incapacity benefit, Working Families Tax Credit, child benefit or housing benefit.

Distribution of Original Income, by quintile, 1993[1] to 2002–03—United Kingdom

£ per year

	1993		*1994–95*		*1995–96*	
Quintile	*Income boundary[2]*	*Original Income*	*Income boundary[2]*	*Original Income*	*Income boundary[2]*	*Original Income*
Bottom		1,920		2,040		2,430
	6,880		7,407		7,786	
2nd		5,020		5,600		6,080
	9,541		10,136		10,635	
3rd		12,850		13,390		13,790
	13,351		14,042		14,505	
4th		20,850		22,240		22,450
	19,095		19,879		20,393	
Top		39,370		40,330		41,250
Average for all households		16,000		16,720		17,200

Quintile	1996–97 Income boundary2	1996–97 Original Income	1997–98 Income boundary2	1997–98 Original Income
Bottom		2,310		2,520
	8,032		8,507	
2nd		6,450		6,760
	11,344		11,922	
3rd		14,710		15,530
	15,521		16,342	
4th		24,220		25,980
	21,972		23,457	
Top		44,780		47,610
Average for all households		18,490		19,680

Quintile	1998–99 Income boundary2	1998–99 Original Income	1999–2000 Income boundary2	1999–2000 Original Income	2000–01 Income boundary2	2000–01 Original Income
Bottom		2,940		2,840		3,090
	8,785		9,171		9,790	
2nd		7,260		7,680		8,820
	12,504		13,173		13,808	
3rd		16,570		17,170		18,570
	17,193		18,212		19,029	
4th		26,700		27,920		29,950
	24,259		26,118		27,109	
Top		51,220		54,400		55,740
Average for all households		20,940		22,000		23,230

Quintile	2001–02 Income boundary2	2001–02 Original Income	2002–03 Income boundary	2002–03 Original Income
Bottom		3,410		4,030
	10,356		11,196	
2nd		9,140		9,610
	14,670		15,516	
3rd		19,330		19,320
	19,910		20,860	
4th		32,000		33,080
	28,469		29,575	
Top		62,080		60,310
Average for all households		25,180		25,270

[1] 1993 calendar year, 1994–95 to 2002–03 are financial years.
[2] Boundary point between equivalised disposable income quintiles.
Source:
Office for National Statistics, based on the analysis 'The effects of taxes and benefits on household income', published on the ONS website and in *Economic Trends*.

Aviation Tax

Mr. Best: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the impact on demand forecasts for air travel of *(a)* taxing aviation fuel at the same level as motor fuel, *(b)* the aviation industry paying the social and environmental costs of air travel and *(c)* applying VAT to airfares. [168721]

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what estimate he has made of the additional revenue that would be raised, assuming no change in demand, if aviation fuel were taxed at the same rate as will apply to ordinary unleaded petrol for motor vehicles as from 1 September; [171362]

(2) what estimate he has made of the additional revenue that would be raised, assuming no change in demand, if VAT at 17.5 per cent. or a sales tax at 17.5 per cent. were imposed on all domestic and international airline tickets for flights departing from UK airports. [171363]

John Healey: A discussion paper published jointly by HM Treasury and the Department for Transport in March 2003, entitled "Aviation and the Environment: using economic instruments", considered the role of economic instruments and the environmental costs of road transport. This was also considered in Air Transport White Paper, "The Future of Air Transport", published on 16 December 2003 and in chapter 5 of "Aviation and Global Warming", published by the Department for Transport on 10 February 2004.

The Air Transport White Paper set out the conclusions of the Government's analysis, including our view that aviation should be brought within the EU Emissions Trading Scheme by 2008, as the most effective way of tackling the climate change impact. Along with other measures to tackle local environmental impacts, this will help to ensure that the air transport sector meets its environmental costs.

The Government have not undertaken an analysis of the demand impacts of specific measures which are not legally possible, such as tax on fuel for international flights or VAT on air transport, but we are continuing to explore options for using economic instruments.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the forecast revenue from air passenger duty is for 2004–05. [171365]

John Healey: Projected receipts from all taxes and duties are published in table C8 of the Financial Statement and Budget Report (HC 301). The forecast for Air Passenger Duty in 2004–05 is £0.9 billion.

Child Tax Credit

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many parents have *(a)* been eligible for and *(b)* received the higher child tax credit in respect of a child under one in each year since it was introduced. [171600]

Dawn Primarolo: The child tax credit, which includes a baby addition to the family element, and a disregard for families receiving income support or income-based jobseeker's allowance and who have a child aged under one, have been available from April 2003.

Estimates of the numbers benefiting appear in Table 3.2 of "Child and Working Tax Credits. Quarterly Statistics. April 2004", and the footnote to that table. This document is available on the Inland Revenue website at: www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/menu.htm No estimate of the number of families eligible for such help will be available until the Family Resources Survey for 2003–04 has been analysed.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in South Ribble have received child tax credits. [171996]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to my answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Burton (Mrs. Dean) on 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 98W.

Demography

Mr. David Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many mothers in each cohort since 1945 have had three or more children. [171601]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. David Willetts, dated 11 May 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking for the number of mothers in each cohort since 1945 who have had three or more children. (171601)

Statistics on women by the number of children they have given birth to are not readily available. However, estimates can be produced using information from birth registrations and the General Household Survey, together with estimates of the population by age and sex. This exercise is only carried out for England and Wales.

Summaries of these estimates are regularly published in the annual reference volume "Birth statistics (FM1)", but are normally presented in terms of proportions of women rather than numbers of women. However, I have supplied both the estimated numbers and proportions in the attached table.

Cohorts of women born from 1958 onwards have yet to complete their childbearing. As each more recent annual cohort of women have successively more of their childbearing life remaining there are, therefore, successively fewer women who have had three or more children.

Estimated number and percentage of women by year of birth who have had three or more children, based on births to 2002, England and Wales

Thousand, per cent.

Women born in year shown *Year*[1,2,4]	*Number with three or more children*[2,4]	*Percentage with three or more children*[3,5]
Women who have completed their fertility		
1945	107	33
1946	107	33
1947	126	30
1948	118	31
1949	108	30
1950	104	30
1951	99	30
1952	98	30
1953	100	30
1954	100	30
1955	100	30
1956	102	30
1957	107	30
Women who have not yet completed their fertility		
1958	109	30
1959	109	30
1960	112	30
1961	114	29
1962	114	28
1963	112	27
1964	109	26
1965	104	25
1966	99	23
1967	92	22
1968	83	20
1969	74	18
1970	63	16
1971	56	14
1972	46	12
1973	37	10
1974	29	8
1975	22	7
1976	16	5
1977	11	4
1978	8	3
1979	6	2
1980	3	1
1981	2	1
1982	1	0
1983	0	0
1984	0	0
1985	0	0
1986	0	0
1987	0	0
1988	0	0

[1] The years of birth shown are by necessity approximate, since births pre 1963 are available only by calendar year of occurrence and age of mother at childbirth. For instance, women aged 32 giving birth to children in 2002 could have been born in either 1969 or 1970; for convenience, however, such women are here regarded as belonging to the 1970 cohort.

[2] Women who have completed their fertility to age 45, population shown at age 45.

[3] Percentage of women of all parities in given cohort at age 45.

[4] Women who have not yet completed their fertility (have not reached age 45) The populations shown are at age they have completed by 2002, for example the 1970 cohort is at age 32.

[5] percentage of women of all parities in given cohort at age reached in 2002.

Source:

Office for National Statistics

Economic Indicators

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his estimates are for gross domestic product growth rates for fiscal years 2004–05 and 2005–06 in *(a)* France, *(b)* Germany, *(c)* Japan and *(d)* the United States. [171357]

Ruth Kelly: HM Treasury does not publish GDP growth forecasts for individual countries other than for the UK. Forecasts for GDP growth in the G7 and Euro area can be found in table B1 of the 2004 Financial Statement and Budget Report.

A number of international agencies, banks and market analysts publish country-specific forecasts. For example, forecasts of GDP growth for France, Germany, Japan and the US can be found in the OECD's Economic Outlook No.74, December 2003, table 1 of the statistical annex.

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what he expects the size in percentage terms will be of budget deficits in fiscal years *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06 in (i) France, (ii) Germany, (iii) Japan and (iv) the United States. [171358]

Ruth Kelly: HM Treasury does not publish projections of budget deficits for individual countries other than the UK. Projections on a calendar year basis, to 2005, for France, Germany, Japan and the US are available from a number of sources. The latest OECD figures are published in its "Economic Outlook" No. 74, December 2003, table 28 of the statistical annex.

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the percentage of the workforce employed in the public sector over the last 20 years in *(a)* France, *(b)* Germany, *(c)* Japan and *(d)* the United States. [171359]

Ruth Kelly: Definitions of public sector employment vary between countries, but Government employment as a percentage of total employment is a comparable and publicly available indicator. The OECD releases data on Government employment as a percentage of total employment through its Economic Outlook database. Data from 1980 for France, Germany, Japan and the US are presented in the following table.

Government employment, percentage of total employed

	France	Germany	Japan	Percentage US
1980	19.6	14.4	8.8	16.4
1981	20.1	14.6	8.8	16.0
1982	20.5	14.8	8.7	15.9
1983	20.8	15.0	8.6	15.7
1984	21.7	15.0	8.7	15.3
1985	22.0	15.0	8.7	15.3
1986	22.4	14.9	8.5	15.2
1987	22.7	14.9	8.5	15.1
1988	22.5	14.7	8.3	15.1
1989	22.5	14.6	8.1	15.2
1990	22.5	14.2	8.1	15.5
1991	22.8	13.4	8.1	15.8
1992	23.3	13.5	8.1	15.9
1993	24.0	13.4	8.2	15.8
1994	24.1	13.2	8.4	15.7
1995	24.1	12.8	8.3	15.6
1996	24.3	12.7	8.2	15.4
1997	24.1	12.4	8.3	15.2
1998	23.7	12.1	8.3	15.1
1999	23.4	11.7	8.3	15.2
2000	23.0	11.4	8.5	15.2
2001	22.7	11.1	8.4	15.4
2002	22.8	11.1	8.6	15.7
2003	22.9	11.1	8.6	15.6

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how income tax receipts as a percentage of the total tax take have varied over the last 20 years in *(a)* France, *(b)* Germany, *(c)* Japan and *(d)* the United States. [171360]

Ruth Kelly: The OECD publishes figures for "Taxes on personal income as a percentage of total taxation" for each of its member countries, in its annual Revenue Statistics publication (OECD Revenue Statistics 1965–2002, October 2003 edition, p.78, Table 11). A copy of this publication is available in the Library of the House.

Employment

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the *(a)* change and *(b)* percentage change was in the number of full-time permanent jobs in South Ribble from 1997 to 31 December 2003; [172151]

(2) how many new jobs have been created in South Ribble since 1997. [172152]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Borrow, dated 11 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about full-time jobs and jobs created in South Ribble. (172151,172152)

While statistics of jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes in numbers of jobs from year to year.

The attached table shows the information requested, relating to all jobs and full-time jobs in South Ribble Parliamentary Constituency for 1997 and 2002, the latest year for which information is available.

Information is not available about whether the jobs were permanent.

Number of full-time employees and total number of employees[1] in South Ribble parliamentary constituency, 1997 and 2002

	Full-time	Total
Number of employees		
1997	19,700	26,600
2002	22,100	30,800
Change from 1997 to 2002		
Absolute	2,400	4,200
Percentage	12.5	15.9

[1] Employee jobs only, not self-employed jobs.

Source:

1997; Annual Employment Survey, rescaled 2002; Annual Business Inquiry (ABI).

EU Insurance Mediation Directive

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the timetable is for the introduction of the EU Insurance Mediation Directive; and what consultation he has had with the insurance industry on its potential impact; [171417]

(2) what the definition is of the term insurance business as used on page five of the Financial Services Authority booklet entitled High street firms: application pack for mortgage and general insurance businesses, with regard to the introduction of the EU Insurance Mediation Directive; [171418]

(3) what measures he is putting in place to protect *(a)* smaller companies and *(b)* individual brokers in the lead up to the introduction of the EU Insurance Mediation Directive, with specific reference to costs; [171428]

(4) what the rationale is for the introduction of the EU Insurance Mediation Directive; and how consumer choice will be guaranteed under its provisions; [171429]

(5) what alternatives for a suitable regulatory body for the monitoring of the EU Insurance Mediation Directive were considered before the Financial Services Authority was appointed to this role. [171430]

Ruth Kelly: The IMD is being implemented across the EU and will come into force in the UK on 14 January 2005. The Government has consulted widely on the regulatory regime, publishing a public consultation document including draft regulations and a draft regulatory impact assessment in October 2002. Officials attended a wide range of meetings, working groups and conferences to consult on implementation. The FSA has carried out extensive public consultation on its rules.

In implementing the Directive the Government and the FSA have worked closely with the industry to design a regulatory regime that takes account of market practice, and does not load the industry and ultimately the consumer with unnecessary costs. Both the Government and the FSA have been concerned to minimise the impact on smaller firms and sole traders. The Government also largely implemented the exclusions permitted in the Directive for travel insurance sold as part of a package, and for extended warranties.

Application fees have been set by the FSA according to the volume of business that a firm undertakes, so are cheapest for the smaller firms. The FSA have developed an approach to authorisation that is as streamlined and straightforward as possible. In terms of the wider costs to firms, the FSA have published detailed cost benefit analyses, based on surveys of firms' costs and asked for comment. Where these have revealed that the costs are thought to be disproportionate and/or under-estimated, the FSA have responded in their final decisions. The UK has the largest insurance industry in Europe. Implementing the IMD is a key step in completing the single market in financial services, and will enhance consumer protection in an important sector of financial business. The UK market for selling insurance is competitive with many players giving customers wide choice, and this will continue in the new regime. Already thousands of firms have applied to the FSA for authorisation for the new regime.

The Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 set up the FSA as the single regulatory body for a range of financial services, including the regulation of insurance. The Government therefore decided the FSA, as the single financial services regulator, was the most appropriate body to regulate insurance mediation. For many firms this will simplify and streamline regulation compared to the alternative of a separate regulator for insurance mediation. Intermediaries selling a range of other financial services products, such as pensions, mortgages, or investments, as well as general insurance, will come under the FSA as a single regulator, minimising compliance costs.

The Directive requires the regulation of a range of insurance mediation activities. The activities to be regulated are introducing, proposing or carrying out other work preparatory to the conclusion of contracts of insurance; concluding contracts of insurance; and assisting in both the administration and performance of such contracts, in particular in the event of a claim. The Directive applies to such activities in relation to contracts of insurance. The FSA application pack notes that shortened terms have been used in the pack in four instances. One of them is "insurance business" and refers to "insurance mediation activity in respect of non-investment insurance contracts." Further details of the FSA's regulatory regime can be found on their website at www.fsa.gov.uk

Euro Preparations

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on which dates the *(a)* Standing Committee on Euro Preparations, *(b)* Scottish Euro Preparations Committee, *(c)* Wales Euro Preparations Committee and *(d)* Northern Ireland Euro Preparations Committee met; if he will publish the minutes of the meetings; and what the cost to public funds has been of euro preparations. [171578]

Ruth Kelly: The Chancellor's Standing Committee on Euro Preparations last met on 23 October 2003. Minutes of all Standing Committee meetings are available on the Treasury's euro website, www.euro.gov.uk. An update on the work of the Scottish, Wales and Northern Ireland Euro Preparations Committees, including the timing of recent and forthcoming meetings, was published in Chapters of the spring report on euro preparations, on 29 April 2004. Minutes of the meetings are available at www.dfpni.gov.uk (Northern Ireland), www.wales.gov.uk (Wales) and www.scottishsecretary.gov.uk (Scotland). Details of expenditure on changeover planning were included in the third outline National Changeover Plan, published on 9 June 2003. Copies of the document are in the Library of the House.

Gender Pay Gap

Mr. Denham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the pay gap between men and women employed by his Department and its agencies in *(a)* Southampton, *(b)* Eastleigh, *(c)* Winchester and *(d)* Romsey. [171631]

Ruth Kelly: HM Treasury and its agencies do not have any staff employed in the locations mentioned.

Mr. Denham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the average earnings of *(a)* men and *(b)* women in Hampshire. [171634]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. John Denham, dated 11 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what assessment has been made of the average earnings of *(a)* men and *(b)* women in Hampshire. (171634)

Average earnings are estimated from the 2003 New Earnings Survey (NES) and are provided for full-time employees on adult rates of pay whose pay was unaffected by absence during the pay period, by their place of work. This is the standard definition used for NES tables. The NES does not collect data on the self employed and people who do unpaid work.

The 2003 NES estimates that the total average weekly earnings of full-time adult employees in Hampshire were £549.10 for males and £399.50 for females. Please note that these estimates relate to the administrative county of Hampshire, which excludes the unitary authorities of Portsmouth and Southampton.

More detailed information on earnings in each of these areas is available in the published tables from the 2003 NES. The relevant estimates can be found in table A22.5 for males and A23.4 for females, and are available on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_labour/NES2003_Analyses_By_Region/NES2003_Analyses_By_Region.pdf

The NES, carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in Great Britain. It is a 1 per cent. sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes, but because of its sampling frame, it has difficulty capturing data on people with very low pay. It is therefore likely to under-represent relatively low paid staff earning below the tax threshold.

The New Earnings Survey publication criteria ensures that all estimates are undisclosive and of reliable quality. A number of estimates have been removed from the published tables for these reasons.

Income Tax

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many senior citizens in South Ribble have qualified for the 10 pence rate of income tax in each year since its introduction. [171997]

Dawn Primarolo: All income taxpayers benefit from the 10 pence starting rate. The Survey of Personal Incomes estimates there are about 8,000 and 6,000 state retirement pension age taxpayers in the South Ribble constituency in 2000–01 and 2001–02 respectively. However, year on year comparisons should be treated with caution because of sampling variation. Figures for 1999–2000 are currently not available.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many senior citizens in Bootle qualified for the 10 pence of income tax in each year since its introduction. [172340]

Dawn Primarolo: All income taxpayers benefit from the 10 pence starting rate. The Survey of Personal Incomes estimates that there are about 4,000 state retirement pension age taxpayers in the Bootle constituency in 2000–01 and 2001–02. Estimates should be treated with caution because of sampling variation. Figures for 1999–2000 are currently not available.

Insurance Policies

John Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps his Department is taking to prevent banks and insurance companies from selling unsuitable insurance policies to pensioners; and what redress can be offered to customers in such circumstances. [171772]

Ruth Kelly: The selling of qualifying contracts of long-term insurance (broadly speaking long-term insurance policies that are not pure protection products) is already regulated by the Financial Services Authority (FSA). Any firm which makes a recommendation to a customer must ensure that the contract is suitable to the customer's demands and needs, and this applies to pensioners as to other consumers.

The FSA will regulate the selling of general insurance contracts from 14 January 2005. This regime will also introduce suitability standards such that any firm which makes a recommendation to a customer must ensure that the contract is suitable to the customer's demands and needs. This also applies to pensioners as to other consumers.

International Accounting Standards Board

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the effect of the proposed changes by the International Accounting Standards Board to IAS39 on dormant accounts held by retail banks. [171995]

Ruth Kelly: When new International Accounting Standards come into force for listed groups in the EU at 1 January 2005, retail banks will need to ensure that they comply with those standards rather than existing UK accounting standards across all aspects of their business.

Pensioner Taxation

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how tax income from pensioners has changed over the last 20 years. [171311]

Dawn Primarolo: It is not possible to separate out income tax from capital gains tax.

Stamp Duty

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has *(a)* to raise the level for which stamp duty is not payable on domestic property transactions in deprived wards and *(b)* increase the number of wards which can have stamp duty exemption under his scheme; and if he will make a statement. [171446]

John Healey: There are currently no plans to raise the threshold. The Government keeps all aspects of the tax system under regular review, including the rates and thresholds of Stamp Duty Land Tax.

There are currently no plans to revise the qualifying wards.

Statistics

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the amount of

(a) aspartame, *(b)* monosodium glutamate and *(c)* saccharine imported into the UK in processed foods in each year since 1989. [172348]

John Healey: HM Customs and Excise are responsible for the collection of data on imports. It is not possible to identify the amount of these products imported into the UK in processed foods from the data held.

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many job vacancies there were in Stockton South in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [171464]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Ms Dari Taylor, dated 11 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about job vacancies in Stockton South. (171464)

According to Jobcentre Plus administrative records, the number of unfilled vacancies in the Middlesbrough and Stockton travel-to-work area was 1,830 on average during 1997. This represents only a proportion of all the vacancies available, as not all vacancies are notified to Jobcentres.

Figures are not available for Stockton South alone because the vacancies are allocated to local Jobcentres, not according to constituency boundaries, and because of the practice of notifying some vacancies centrally with one Jobcentre taking vacancies for others in the same district.

Jobcentre vacancy statistics were withdrawn from National Statistics in September 2001 as a result of distortions to the data, which occurred following the introduction of new administrative procedures by Jobcentre Plus. Comparable figures for vacancies in 2003 are therefore unavailable.

Results from the ONS Vacancy Survey were released as National Statistics from July 2003, but are not available for local areas.

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the level of unemployment was in Stockton South in each year since 1997. [171468]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from John Pullinger to Ms Dari Taylor, dated 11 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about unemployment. I am replying in his absence. (171468)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give a reliable picture of changes over time of unemployment in the Stockton South Constituency.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (ISA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

The table as follows gives the annual average number of JSA claimants for the Stockton South constituency for each year since 1997.

Annual average number of JSA claimants

Stockton South constituency, 1997—2003

	Number of claimants
1997	3,201
1998	2,756
1999	2,780
2000	2,575
2001	2,183
2002	2,032
2003	1,884

Statistics (West Lancashire)

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many job vacancies there were in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003 in West Lancashire. [171493]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Colin Pickthall, dated 11 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about job vacancies in West Lancashire. (171493)

According to Jobcentre Plus administrative records the number of unfilled vacancies notified to Jobcentres in Lancashire West Jobcentre Plus District was 4,730 on average during 1997. This represents only a proportion of all the vacancies available, as not all vacancies are notified to Jobcentres.

Figures are not available for West Lancashire alone because the vacancies are allocated to local Jobcentres, not according to constituency boundaries, and because of the practice of notifying some vacancies centrally with one Jobcentre taking vacancies for others in the same district.

Jobcentre vacancy statistics were withdrawn from National Statistics in September 2001 as a result of distortions to the data, which occurred following the introduction of new administrative procedures by Jobcentre Plus. Comparable figures for vacancies in 2003 are therefore unavailable.

Results from the ONS Vacancy Survey were released as National Statistics from July 2003, but are not available for local areas.

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many new jobs have been created in West Lancashire since 1997. [171495]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Colin Pickthall, dated 11 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about jobs created in West Lancashire. (171495)

While statistics of new jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes in numbers of jobs from year to year.

The most recent year for which data are available is 2002. There were 35,900 employees in the West Lancashire constituency in 2002 compared to 33,800 in 1997, a net increase of 2,200 jobs during this period. All figures are rounded to the nearest 100, which can introduce rounding error.

The figures provided relate to employee jobs only, with self-employed jobs excluded, and are taken from the rescaled Annual Employment Survey (1997) and the Annual Business Inquiry (2002)

Tax Coding

Mr. Flook: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many notices of coding sent out in January to March for the 2004–05 tax year included car and fuel benefits attributable to the company car scheme which ceased in 2002–03. [167587]

Dawn Primarolo: The rules of the company car scheme changed in 2002–03. All the notices of coding issued between January and March for the 2004–05 tax year that included car and fuel benefits correctly included them under the new scheme. However, around 468,000 of the coding notices containing car and fuel benefits were incorrect because the rates for 2003–04 were mistakenly used instead of those for 2004–05. Amended notices of coding with revised figures to correct the error were issued in February before the 2004–05 codes were brought into operation.

Tax Repayments

Mr. Caton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the reasons were for the decision to limit the option of receiving Inland Revenue tax repayments by cheque to people without bank accounts. [172128]

Dawn Primarolo: The principal reasons for restricting the options for the method of repayment were to improve the level of service given to customers, to improve efficiency around the repayment process, and to improve the security of the payment.

By making a repayment electronically direct to a bank or building society account, the customer is able to have earlier use of the money than if a cheque had been sent through the post. An electronic repayment also has lower processing cost both for the Inland Revenue and the banking sector; and reduces the risk of the payment being intercepted.

But if the customer is unable to accept the repayment electronically, a cheque can be issued.

Timber

Ms Walley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his Department plans to contribute financially to the establishment of the second phase of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [167620]

John Healey: I refer my hon. Friend to an answer provided by my hon. Friend the Minister for Environment and Agri-Environment yesterday, *Official Report*, column 31W.

Unemployment

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the level of unemployment was in South Ribble in each year since 1997. [172011]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from John Pullinger to Mr. Borrow, dated 11 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about unemployment. I am replying in his absence. (172011)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment in the South Ribble Constituency.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

The table gives the annual average number of JSA claimants for the South Ribble constituency for each year since 1997.

Annual average number of JSA claimants, South Ribble constituency, 1997–2003

	Number
1997	1,281
1998	1,038
1999	1,034
2000	921
2001	763
2002	759
2003	740

Working Tax Credit

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has received on the stoppage or reduction of payment of the child care element of the working tax credit in response to earlier overpayments of child tax credit. [171646]

Dawn Primarolo: None. In a case where both working and child tax credit have been awarded and the child care element is payable, the family would be entitled to the maximum amount of child tax credit so we would not expect the situation to arise.

Tax credit awards are adjusted during the year so as to pay out the right amount for the year and prevent overpayments arising. The Inland Revenue's approach to dealing with tax credit overpayments is set out in a Code of Practice, "What happens if we have paid you too much tax credit?", available on the Inland Revenue's website or as a leaflet.

WORK AND PENSIONS

British Sign Language Interpreters

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he is taking to increase the number of qualified British Sign Language/English interpreters. [171012]

Maria Eagle: The lack of tutors at the higher levels is recognised as being a significant blockage in the system to recruit and train BSL/English interpreters. On 4 May, I announced we were putting in place a programme of work to support the Government's position statement on British Sign Language (BSL) and had raised the original funding allocation by a further half million to £1.5 million. One of the two priorities this work will address is helping establish a framework to support BSL tutors, for example by providing on-line training material and developing tutor support packs. These measures will, over time, assist an increase in interpreting provision.

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he intends to reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 5 April with regard to Mrs. Robina Abaid. [172265]

Mr. Andrew Smith: The letter has been transferred to my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I am sorry that due to an oversight it was not transferred earlier.

Pension Credits (Devon and Cornwall)

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many eligible pensioners he estimates are not claiming *(a)* pension credits and *(b)* council tax credit in Devon and Cornwall, broken down by constituency. [171579]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available in the form requested. Estimates of numbers of people eligible are not available at any level lower than that of Government office region. However, the information in the tables gives the numbers of pension credit and council tax benefit recipients aged 60 and over in Devon and Cornwall for the latest dates for which figures are available. As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State announced on 21 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 21–22, we have published the latest monthly pension credit progress report with information up to the end of March. The report, which is available in the Library, is accompanied by tables showing the number of pension credit households and corresponding individuals in each constituency in Great Britain.

Table 1: Pension credit recipients in Devon and Cornwall, 31 March 2004

County	*Pension credit recipients (households)*
Devon	30,615
Cornwall	26,090

Note:
Figures are rounded to the nearest five.

Table 2: Council tax benefit recipients aged 60 and over in Devon and Cornwall, 31 August 2003

County	*Thousand Council tax benefit recipients (households)*
Devon	26.1
Cornwall	22.0

Notes:
1. The figures refer to benefit units, which may be a single person or a couple.
2. The figures have been rounded to the nearest hundred and expressed in thousands.
3. Figures for any non-responding authorities have been estimated.
4. Council tax benefit totals exclude any second adult rebate cases.
5. "Aged 60 and over" refers to cases where the claimant and/or partner are aged 60 or over.

Pensions

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer of 23 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 709W, on pension forecasts, which *(a)* employers and *(b)* pension providers delivered combined pension forecasts in each year since their introduction. [171101]

Malcolm Wicks: The names of the employers and pension providers providing combined pension forecasts in each year since their introduction are set out in the table.

Pilot years
AXA (Provider)
DWP PCSPS
EMAP
J Sainsbury plc
Merseyside Pension Fund
NPI
Prudential (Provider)
2002–03
Bacon and Woodrow
Durham County Council
EMAP
J Sainsbury plc
Misys
Moore Stephens
Nationwide Pension Fund
2003–04
Aberdeen City Council
Adidas
Aircraft Research Association Limited
Albany International Limited
Alusuisse Holdings
Amcor Flexibles UK Limited
Aspen plc
Automated Packaging
Babcock Engineering Services
BAe Royal Ordnance
Barnet CC
Black Mountain International Limited
BOC Group
Brachers
Cable & Wireless
Capita Hartshead
Caterpillar UK Limited
Countrywide ASSD Caspil (Provider)
Countrywide ASSD Vax (Provider)
DS Smith Group Pension Scheme
Durham County Council
DWP Cheshire
DWP PCSPS
EMAP
Field Group plc
FMC Chemicals Pen/Plan
FMC Corp (UK) Pen/Plan
Gallaher Limited
Goldsmith Group plc
IBM Pensions Systems
Imeche
Imerys
J Sainsbury plc
Liverpool Victoria Friendly Society
London—Scottish Fund
London Borough of Haringey
London Borough of Wandsworth
Menzies Distribution Limited
Meridan
Ministers Pension + Insurance Fund

Misys
Molins
Moore Stephens
Nationwide Pension Fund
NEC Staff Pension Scheme
Nortel Networks UKPEN Trust Limited
Northern Lighthouse Board
Oxford Instruments
Peacock Group 1988 Pen S
Prudential (Provider)
Reliance Mutual
Rexam plc
RMC
Royal Society of Medicine
Sabmiller plc
Scottish and Newcastle plc
Serco plc
Shilling Communications
South Yorkshire Pens Auth
Steel Plate and Sections Limited
Stock Exchange Centralised P/F
Terrapin International Limited
Thames Water
Vencel Resil Limited
Woodgate Fulfilment Limited
WS Atkins Plc

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer of 23 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 709W, on pension forecasts, how many individuals have received a combined pension forecast; and how many of that number have received a forecast on *(a)* one, *(b)* two, *(c)* three and *(d)* more than three occasions. [171102]

Malcolm Wicks: The information requested is not available in the format requested. Such information as is available is as follows.

DWP has supplied 1,120,048 state pension forecasts to employers or pension providers for inclusion in combined pension forecasts. However the number of individuals who have received combined forecasts will be less than the total number of forecasts issued. This is because:

all of the employers and providers currently delivering combined pension forecasts issue them annually to their scheme members and therefore some individuals will have received more than one forecast over the period since the service has been available;

some individuals may receive a combined forecast from more than one pension provider.

Retirement Pensions

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the cost of abolishing the requirement on recipients of retirement pensions to have made national insurance contributions for at least 25 per cent. of their working life. [172432]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available in the format requested.

However, we estimate that it would cost around £95 million in 2004–05 if recipients of graduated retirement pension and/or additional pension were to be paid basic state pension where they have less than 25 per cent. of the required qualifying years.

Notes:

1. The estimated cost has been provided by the Government Actuary's Department.

2. As data are not available on the individual contribution records of those people who have contributed for less than 25 per cent. of their working life, the estimate is based on the assumption that nine years national insurance contributions have been paid, or credited, thus the estimate is the maximum potential cost.

3. The figures are for Great Britain and overseas.

Sure Start

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many mothers in Heywood and Middleton have taken up the Sure Start maternity grant. [168543]

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many mothers in Oldham, West and Royton have taken up the Sure Start maternity grant. [170952]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested, the available information is in the table.

	Applications	*Awards*
Sure Start maternity grants for West Pennine social fund district		
2000–01	1,807	1,591
2001–02	2,363	1,794
2002 to December	2,213	1,689
Sure Start maternity grants for the area covered by Oldham and Rochdale Jobcentre Plus district		
2003 January	Not available	325
2003 February and March	682	435
2003–04	4,251	3,059

Notes:

1. Heywood and Middleton parliamentary constituency and, Oldham, West and Royton parliamentary constituency used to be part of West Pennine social fund district and are now part of Oldham and Rochdale Jobcentre Plus district. The latter was formed in January 2003 from part of Oldham social fund district and part of West Pennine social fund district. The two areas for which data is given above are thus different, and the data is not comparable.

2. Sure Start maternity grants were introduced on 27 March 2000. The very small number of cases for 1999–2000 have been excluded for data protection reasons.

3. Data is given for all applications and awards, irrespective of whether the application was made by the mother or her partner.

Source:

DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Quality Protects

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much has been spent on the Quality Protects programme in each of the last three years, broken down by region; and if he will make a statement. [170179]

Margaret Hodge: Allocations to support Quality Protects were made to Local Authorities via the Children's Services Grant. Children's Services Grant allocations are set out by region in a table which has been placed in the Library.

Quality Protects was a five year programme launched in 1998 with the aim of improving the management of delivery of children's social services. It focused on working with some of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable children in society; children in need, children looked after by local authorities, young people leaving care, children in the child protection system and disabled children. From April 2004, the funding for quality protects was incorporated into local authorities' funding for children's social services.

Bootle Schools

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of pupils in Bootle reached the *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English standard in each of the last seven years. [172023]

Mr. Miliband: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I have given to the hon. Member for Westmorland and Lonsdale (Mr. Collins) on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 34W.

Capital Modernisation Fund (South Ribble)

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money has been allocated to South Ribble from the Capital Modernisation Fund. [171999]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Department for Education and Skills does not hold this information centrally. Capital Modernisation Fund has been allocated by project and not by area.

Child Care

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many *(a)* Sure Start centres and *(b)* early excellence centres have been created in Manchester, Gorton; [167451]

(2) how many new nurseries have been established in Manchester, Gorton since 1997. [167452]

Margaret Hodge: Sure Start Hyde Road Local Programme covers the majority of the Gorton constituency and is currently under development. It was approved by the Sure Start Unit with indicative capital funding of £1,250,000 in May 2003 and the programme is expected to submit their capital plan for this money in the summer. No Early Excellence Centres have been created in Gorton since 1997.

Manchester City Council is responsible for determining local need for nursery provision in Gorton and holding information on current provision. Under the Neighbourhood Nurseries scheme 534 new nursery places have been opened in Manchester, although none of these fall within Gorton constituency.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps his Department is taking to improve the provision of childcare for *(a)* children from minority ethnic groups, *(b)* children with special needs and *(c)* children with disabilities. [171366]

Margaret Hodge: The Government are committed to inclusive practice and this principle underpins our strategic guidance to local authorities. Local authorities are required to have policies for equality in developing Early Years and childcare services.

My Department funded four pilot programmes in local authorities during 2003–04 to develop practical ways of ensuring equal access to Early Years and childcare settings for ethnic minority families and recently held a conference to disseminate the findings.

All settings in receipt of nursery education funding are required to appoint one of their staff as a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and local authorities have received specific funding for this purpose over 2004–05 and 2005–06. Every authority is expected to appoint a network of Area Special Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) with a ratio of one Area SENCO to every 20 non-maintained settings delivering funded early education. These coordinators are responsible for training and supporting setting-based SENCOs and other childcare staff to meet the needs of disabled children.

Removing Barriers to Achievement, the Government's strategy for SEN, outlines further actions that Government and our partners will take to improve childcare provision for children with special needs or disabilities. We are taking a range of actions on improving information for the parents of disabled children, improving the co-ordination and responsiveness of childcare services and training the childcare workforce so that children's needs are met.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the funding streams and grants which are available to providers of childcare in respect of children over eight years; and for each one, what the expenditure was in each year for which the scheme has been in existence. [171602]

Margaret Hodge: There is no grant funding available or statistics collated exclusively for providers of childcare in respect of children over eight years. What providers can access is resources available to provide childcare for children from three to 14, and up to 16 for children with special needs. The key funder of out of school childcare has been the Lottery through the New Opportunities Fund (NOF) Out of School Programme since its inception in 1999.

While figures cannot be broken down year on year, from April 1999 to March 2003, NOF grant awards totalled over £270,857,247 million in England. This is because the process of NOF grant funding was based on a rolling allocation of set periods of time rather than an annual award.

From August 2003, local authorities bid direct to the Department as part of the new Sure Start Out of School Programme launched in 2003. In 2003/04, grants allocated from Sure Start provided £19 million for out of school care. For 2004/06, £1.2 billion has been

allocated to local authorities to support the growth of childcare and Early Years services. This includes funding to create 250,000 new childcare places, some of which will be out of school places.

In 2003/04, £2.73 million has been made available to support the childcare element of the main extended schools programme. For 2004/05, this figure has grown to £7.6 million.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many child care places have been created in Bootle since 1997. [171298]

Margaret Hodge: The Department is unable to provide details of child care places for Bootle. However, from April 1999 to March 2004 Sefton Local Authority created 3,590 new child care places helping some 6,440 children. This shows an increase in the stock of child care places, taking into account turnover, of 2,009 helping some 3,700 children.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the number of children in South Ribble who have gained from the National Childcare Strategy. [171666]

Margaret Hodge: The Department is unable to provide details of childcare places for South Ribble. However, from April 1999 to March 2004, Lancashire local authority created 22,581 new childcare places helping some 39,808 children. This shows an increase in the stock of childcare places, taking into account turnover, of 9,826, helping some 17,631 children.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many new nurseries have been established in South Ribble since 1997. [171667]

Margaret Hodge: Lancashire county council is responsible for determining local need for nursery places in South Ribble and hold information on current provision. Under the Neighbourhood Nurseries scheme, 799 new nursery places have been created in 22 nurseries in Lancashire, and a further two nurseries providing 106 places are planned. None of these nurseries are within South Ribble constituency.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the effectiveness of ChildcareLink. [171306]

Margaret Hodge: The ChildcareLink programme consists of two separate parts—The ChildcareLink Phoneline and the ChildcareLink website:

ChildcareLink Telephone Help Line

Set up in 1999, the ChildcareLink phoneline provides a signposting service for callers looking for information on child care and early years. The majority of callers are directed to their local Children's Information Service (CIS).

The phoneline covers England and Scotland and is available from 8 am—8 pm Monday to Friday and from 9 am—12 pm on Saturday. These hours offer a service that is accessible to people who do not have the time to look for child care in the 9 am—5 pm working day. Being national, the service also provides a useful service for those looking for child care outside their local area.

The phoneline has a high level of usage and received approx 33,170 calls in 2003.

ChildcareLink website

Set up in 1999, the ChildcareLink website provides details of registered childcare provision across England and Scotland. The service enables users to look for details of registered child care in their local area as well as giving them access to supporting information that would assist them in their search, such as advice on how to pay for child care, and a description of the different types of child care on offer.

The website is available 24 hours a day and, being national, the user is not limited to look only for child care in their local area but can search across the whole of England and Scotland.

The website has a high level of usage and received approx 1.1 million visits during 2003 encompassing over 70 million hits.

Education Funding

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many *(a)* Sure Start centres and *(b)* early excellence centres have been created in Oldham, West and Royton; [170913]

(2) how many new nurseries have been established in Oldham, West and Royton since 1997. [170914]

Margaret Hodge: There are five Sure Start local programmes in Oldham: Sure Start Hollinwood; Sure Start Westwood; Sure Start Werneth; Sure Start Coldhurst and Sure Start Glodwick, St. Mary's and Higginshaw. Of these five programmes, three are based within Oldham, West and Royton: Sure Start Westwood, approved in January 2002; Sure Start Coldhurst approved in December 2002 and Sure Start Werneth which was approved by the Sure Start Unit in March 2003. No Early Excellence Centres have been created in Oldham since 1997.

Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council has responsibility for determining local need for nursery places in Oldham and holding information on current provision. Under the neighbourhood nurseries scheme 477 new nursery places have been created in Oldham, with 216 of these places being based within Oldham, West and Royton.

Oldham MBC is currently developing plans to implement children's centres in the 20 per cent. most disadvantaged wards; Oldham will be included in these plans.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* free nursery and *(b)* pre-school places were available for (i) three and (ii) four year olds in the Huntingdon constituency in each of the last seven years. [170846]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the form requested.

Figures on the number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four-year-olds in Cambridgeshire local education authority area are shown in the table.

The latest figures on provision for 3 and 4-year-olds in England were published in a Statistical Bulletin 'Provision for children under five years of age in England—January 2003' which is available on the Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

From April 2004, six months ahead of our original target, all three-year-olds in England whose parents want one, are eligible for a free, part-time early education place.

Children's Fund

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many *(a)* Sure Start centres and *(b)* Early Excellence centres have been created in Stockton, South; [171452]

(2) how many new nurseries have been established in Stockton, South since 1997. [171454]

Margaret Hodge: There are five Sure Start local programmes in Stockton-on-Tees: Sure Start Hardwick, Mile House and Roseworth; Sure Start Newtown, Portrack and Tilery; Sure Start Parkfield and Victoria; Sure Start Mandale Village and Stainsby and Sure Start Billingham. Of these five programmes, two are based within the Stockton, South constituency: Sure Start Mandate Village and Stainsby and Sure Start Parkfield and Victoria, both approved by the Sure Start Unit in December 2002. There are no Early Excellence Centres in Stockton-on-Tees.

Stockton-on-Tees borough council has responsibility for determining local need for nursery provision in Stockton and holding information on current provision. Under the neighbourhood nurseries scheme, 340 new nursery places have been created in Stockton, with 100 of these places being based within Stockton, South.

Stockton-on-Tees borough council is currently developing plans to implement children's centres in the 20 per cent. most disadvantaged wards; Stockton, South will be included in these plans.

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* free nursery and *(b)* pre-school places were available for (i) 3 and (ii) 4-year-olds in Stockton, South in each of the last seven years. [171453]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the form requested.

Figures on the number of free nursery education places taken up by 3 and 4-year-olds in Stockton-on-Tees local education authority area are shown in the table.

The latest figures on provision for 3 and 4-year-olds in England were published in a Statistical Bulletin Provision for children under five years of age in England—January 2003' which is available on the Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsaateway/.

From April 2004, six months ahead of our original target, all 3-year-olds in England whose parents want one, are eligible for a free, part-time early education place.

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many childcare places have been created in Stockton, South since 1997; [171455]

(2) how many children in Stockton, South have gained from the National Childcare Strategy. [171477]

Margaret Hodge: The Department is unable to provide details of childcare places for Stockton, South. However, from April 1999 to March 2004, Stockton-on-Tees local authority created 3,401 new childcare places helping some 5,838 children. This shows an increase in the stock of childcare places, taking into account turnover, of 1,776, helping some 3,081 children.

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the arrangements are for allocating money from the Children's Fund in Newcastle-upon-Tyne; what criteria are applied; and what the audit arrangements are. [166537]

Margaret Hodge: Children's Fund resource is allocated according to a formula that takes into account the number of children and young people in an area, and also the levels of deprivation in that area.

Children's Fund partnerships in 2003–04 had an over-allocation built in to their budgets. This was to ensure that underspends built up in the programme overall would be used up. However, this has now resulted in a projected overspend in the programme. To keep the programme overall within its financial limits this year the Department for Education and Skills held a mid year review of expenditure. This identified underspends in the programme and as a result revised budgets were agreed to some partnerships for the remainder of 2003–04. Decisions at the mid year review were revisited where they compromised partnerships' ability to meet contractual obligations, or were likely to cause unplanned staff redundancy or premature closure of services.

My Department has identified new resources from outside the Children's Fund which means that the total budget for partnerships this year will be £160 million. This is only slightly below the originally notified total allocation of £164.6 million. As such, the allocation for the Newcastle-upon-Tyne partnership has been reduced from £1.25 million to £1.215 million. I have also agreed that they can carry forward any underspend from previous years, where this can be shown to maintain services that continue to deliver value for money and bring benefit to local communities.

All partnerships must have an accountable body, which is ultimately responsible for the spending of the Children's Fund grant. The accountable body must undertake audit requirements as set out in the terms and conditions of grant, with which all of the Children's Fund partnerships must comply.

Children's Information Services

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the effectiveness of children's information services. [171304]

Margaret Hodge: Figures provided by CISs for 2003 showed that they are dealing with almost 24,000 inquiries per week—over a million per year.

Although parents' surveys have suggested low usage, it appears that many parents may not necessarily be aware that they are being helped by CISs, which are often seen as being part of the host organisation e.g. the local authority or voluntary organisation involved.

CISs services are aimed at anyone seeking childcare or other Sure Start services, but there is a strong emphasis on reaching people without existing networks of contacts through outreach work with groups who find it hard to access childcare services.

The CIS Strategy, published in November 2003, sets out clear delivery standards and requires CISs to work toward achieving "model CIS" status by 2006. All CISs have been set targets for further improving numbers of weekly inquiries by 2006.

Computer Learning Centres

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many Capital Modernisation Fund computer-learning centres have been established in Oldham, West and Royton. [170926]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Four Capital Modernisation Funded UK online centres have been established in Oldham, West and Royton.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* teachers and *(b)* families in Bootle have benefited from the Computers in Reach programme. [171127]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Computers Within Reach (CWR) scheme closed on 31 October 2001 having delivered over 24,000 recycled computers to people in 22 pilot areas, at a cost of £7.1 million over two years. Those eligible were in receipt of certain working age benefits or a State Pension with minimum income guarantee.

At the same time as funding was made available for the Computers within Reach scheme, funding was also provided for the Computers for Teachers programme. For teachers who met certain criteria, this programme subsidised the cost of a computer. It was subsequently replaced by the current Laptops for Teachers scheme which dispensed with subsidies, and through which sufficient funding will be provided to enable two thirds of teachers to receive a laptop by March 2006.

Of the 24,000 computers delivered through the Computers within Reach scheme, approximately 3,000 were for people in the Liverpool area, including those in and around Bootle.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many families in South Ribble have benefited from the Computers Within Reach scheme; and how many teachers have benefited from the Computers for Teachers programme. [171978]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Computers Within Reach (CWR) scheme closed on 31 October 2001, having delivered over 24,000 recycled computers to people in 22 pilot areas, at a cost of £7.1 million over two years. Those eligible were in receipt of certain working age benefits or a state pension with minimum income guarantee.

At the same time as funding was made available for the Computers Within Reach scheme, funding was also provided for the Computers for Teachers programme. For teachers who met certain criteria, this programme subsidised the cost of a computer. It was subsequently replaced by the current Laptops for Teachers scheme, which dispensed with subsidies, and through which sufficient funding will be provided to enable two-thirds of teachers to receive a laptop by March 2006.

South Ribble was not one of the pilot areas for the CWR scheme.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many Capital Modernisation Fund computer learning centres have been established in South Ribble. [171979]

Mr. Charles Clarke: 15 Capital Modernisation Fund UK online centres have been established in South Ribble.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on computers for schools in South Ribble in each of the last seven years. [171980]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department does not collect information on school spend on computers at constituency level. However, South Ribble is in Lancashire LEA and in the last seven years schools in Lancashire have benefited from the following funding through the Standards Fund grant for ICT (including match funding from the LEA):

	Allocation to Lancashire LEA (£)
1998–99	2,500,000
1999–2000	1,627,867
2000–01	5,576,036
2001–02	6,483,142
2002–03	8,983,493
2003–04	9,169,124
2004–05	11,892,478

Computers (Bootle)

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people in Bootle have received a computer to assist in seeking employment or retraining. [171305]

Mr. Charles Clarke: At present no centrally funded schemes exist which provide people with a free or low cost computer to assist in seeking employment or retraining.

Computers within Reach

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* teachers and *(b)* families in Oldham, West and Royton have benefited from the Computers within Reach programme. [170927]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Computers within Reach (CWR) scheme closed on 31 October 2001 having delivered over 24,000 recycled computers to people in 22 pilot areas, at a cost of £7.1 million over two years. Those eligible were in receipt of certain working age benefits or a state pension with minimum income guarantee.

At the same time as funding was made available for the Computers within Reach scheme, funding was also provided for the Computers for Teachers programme. For teachers who met certain criteria, this programme

subsidised the cost of a computer. It was subsequently replaced by the current Laptops for Teachers scheme which dispensed with subsidies, and through which sufficient funding will be provided to enable two thirds of teachers to receive a laptop by March 2006.

Oldham, West and Royton was not one of the pilot areas for the CWR scheme.

Early Years Education

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what Government expenditure on early years education was in each year since 1997, broken down by main budget heading. [171302]

Margaret Hodge: From April 2003, all funding to support the delivery of early years education was consolidated within the under-fives sub-block of each LA's Education Formula Spending Share (EFSS)—the main source of education funding. Prior to that time, provision in the private, voluntary and independent sectors together with new places in the maintained sector was funded through separate ring-fenced grant and existing places in the maintained sector were funded through the Standard Spending Assessments (SSAs). Expenditure on early education and funding for the under-fives block was as follows:

£

	Early education (expenditure)	*Under-fives block (funding)*
1997–98	637	562
1998–99	134	1,170
1999–2000	150	1,280
2000–01	247	1,340
2001–02	224	1,490
2002–03	326	1,620
2003–04[1]	42	2,600

[1] Provisional.

Notes:

1. Outturn figures for early education in 2003–04 are provisional. Final figures will be available later in 2004.
2. Funding for the under-fives block in 2003–04 includes an apportionment of the pensions transfer into EFSS.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many nursery managers are qualified to NVQ level 3 or above. [171368]

Margaret Hodge: According to the 2001 Childcare Workforce Survey, 78 per cent. of nursery managers were qualified to NVQ level 3 or above. Results from the 2003 survey are due to be published shortly.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on recruitment and retention of staff in the nursery and childcare sectors. [171371]

Margaret Hodge: The Government are committed to increasing both Early Years provision and the quality of that provision. We have already created new childcare places for 1.6 million children and are now committed to creating at least 250,000 new places for 450,000 children by 2006. Recruiting and retaining sufficient numbers of good quality staff to support this expansion is essential and we are helping early years' employers to do so.

Over the next two years, we are providing local authorities with £129.9 million for workforce development, including £14 million to support recruitment in their local areas. Our childcare recruitment campaign has been running since 2000 and has been successful in raising the profile of job opportunities in the sector. To date, we have received over 200,000 responses to the campaign.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many childminder inspections were carried out by Ofsted's Early Years Directorate in each year since 2000. [171372]

Margaret Hodge: The number of childminder inspections carried out by Ofsted is a matter for the Office of Standards in Education (Ofsted) and the HM Chief Inspector for Schools, David Bell will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of his letter in the Library.

Education (Heywood and Middleton)

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many new nurseries have been established in Heywood and Middleton since 1997. [168495]

Margaret Hodge: Rochdale City Council is responsible for determining the local need for nursery places in Heywood and Middleton and currently holds this information. 235 new nursery places have been opened in Rochdale under the Neighbourhood Nurseries scheme, of which 25 places are in Heywood and Middleton.

Educational Attainment

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of 11-year-old pupils in Manchester, Gorton reached level four in *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English in each of the last seven years. [167438]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is as follows:

	Mathematics			*English*		
	Manchester, Gorton		*England*	*Manchester, Gorton*		*England*
	Number of pupils achieving Level 4 +	*Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 +*	*Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 +*	*Number of pupils achieving Level 4 +*	*Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 +*	*Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 +*
2003	659	61	73	690	64	75
2002	711	64	73	688	62	75
2001	628	61	71	638	62	75
2000	612	60	72	621	61	75
1999	584	55	69	593	56	71
1998	456	43	59	548	52	65
1997	526	49	62	568	53	63

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of pupils in England have achieved five GCSEs A*-C including *(a)* mathematics, *(b)* English and *(c)* mathematics and English in each year since 1997, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [167567]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested has been placed in the Libraries.

Free Nursery Places (Croydon)

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether Croydon council is in breach of its obligations in the provision of free nursery places for three-year-olds. [171448]

Margaret Hodge: Section 118 of the School Standards Framework Act 1998 places a duty on all LEAs to ensure sufficient nursery education for children of the prescribed age. They must also have regard to a Code of Practice which makes clear that, with effect from 1 April 2004, and six months ahead of target, all three-year-olds are entitled to receive a free part-time place for at least six terms prior to compulsory school age. Croydon council has yet to confirm that all three-year-olds will receive that entitlement in full. I have asked my officials to investigate the matter and to work closely with the local authority officials to ensure that parents and children in Croydon are able to benefit fully from the free entitlement.

Information Technology Training

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many women in Oldham, West and Royton have visited an information and communications technology training centre in order to learn skills to return to work. [170929]

Mr. Charles Clarke: In the period October 2003[1]—March 2004, 1,717 people visited a UK online centre in Oldham, West and Royston, 962 (56 per cent.) of these people were women. Since learndirect was launched in 1999, 2,931 people from Oldham, West and Royton have enrolled on a learndirect course. 1,634 (56 per cent.) of these people were women. Of the total number of women who enrolled on a course 8 per cent. did so in order to learn skills to return to work.

[1] Please note the complete statistics are not available for UK online prior to September 2003 as the DfES did not collect this data on a centre-by-centre basis.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people in Oldham West and Royton have received a computer to assist in seeking employment or retraining. [170930]

Mr. Charles Clarke: At present no centrally funded schemes exist which provide people with a free or low cost computer to assist in seeking employment or retraining.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many women in Bootle have visited an information and communications technology training centre in order to learn skills to return to work. [171124]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Seven Capital Modernisation Funded UK online centres have been established in Bootle.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many Capital Modernisation Fund computer-learning centres have been established in Bootle. [171125]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Seven Capital Modernisation Funded UK online centres have been established in Bootle.

Learning Disabilities

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children with learning disabilities are educated in mainstream schools; and if he will make a statement. [170608]

Margaret Hodge: The provisional figures from the pupil level annual schools census for January 2004, published on 29 April, show that 148,200 pupils with statements of Special Educational Needs are being educated in maintained mainstream nurseries, primary schools or secondary schools.

The provisional figures also show that 1,137,600 pupils with SEN but without statements are being educated in maintained mainstream nurseries, primary schools and secondary schools.

Section 312 of the Education Act 1996 states that children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Local Authority Care (Children)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* boys and *(b)* girls are looked after by local authorities (i) in total, (ii) in foster care and (iii) in children's homes. [169040]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is provided in the table as follows.

Number of children looked after in total, in foster placements and in children's homes at 31 March 2003, by gender

Number of Children Looked After at 31 March 2003[1]	*Boys*	*Girls*	*Total*
England	33,600	27,200	60,800
Foster Placements	22,000	19,100	41,100
Children's Homes[2]	4,300	2,400	6,600
Other Placements[3]	7,300	5,800	13,100

[1] Figures exclude children looked after under an agreed series of short term placements

[2] Children's homes include secure units, homes and hostels but excludes residential schools.

[3] Includes children who are placed for adoption, with parents and in residential schools. Also includes those living independently or in residential employment and other accommodation.

Source:
Children Looked After by Local Authorities, Year Ending 31 March 2003

Medical Students

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students who are aged under 21 years and have less than the equivalent of three grade Cs at A level he expects to be recruited for courses leading to registration with the General Medical Council and subsequent practice as a doctor in *(a)* the academic year 2004–05 and *(b)* subsequent years. [168186]

Alan Johnson: The information is not held centrally. Admission of students to medical, and other, courses is a matter for individual institutions. However, latest figures from the Higher Education Statistics Agency show that, of those students aged under 21 with A levels entering undergraduate courses in Pre-clinical medicine in 2002/03, only 95 (or 3 per cent.) had A level tariff scores equivalent to less than 3 grade Cs.

National Childcare Strategy

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many childcare staff have been employed through the National Childcare Strategy to support disabled children; and if he will make a statement. [170609]

Margaret Hodge: We do not collect information in the form requested. All childcare settings in receipt of funding for nursery education are required to appoint a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) whose role is to support children with disabilities or special needs and to advise other staff in the setting.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when he will reply to the questions tabled by the hon. Member for Hertsmere *(a)* on 20 April, references (i) 168185, (ii) 168186, (iii) 168202, (iv) 168203 and (v) 168204 and *(b)* on 23 April, reference 168913. [172362]

Alan Johnson: I have issued a response to the hon. Member's question 168186 today. Responses were provided to 168185 on 6 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1767w and 168202,168203 and 168204 on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 37–38w.

Pupils (Continence Problems)

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what psychological support is available in schools to help children with continence conditions. [171135]

Margaret Hodge: The joint DfES/Department of Health guidance, "Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs: A Good Practice Guide", is designed to help schools draw up policies on managing medication in schools and to put effective systems in place to support individual pupils with medical needs.

Individual schools are best placed to decide on arrangements to meet the needs of their pupils and may decide that a counselling service, for example, would best serve the interests of a child experiencing anxiety or depression as a result of continence difficulties. Children may also receive help from specialist mental health professionals, many of whom will be located within the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.

Reading

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action his Department is taking to promote reading in schools; and if he will make a statement. [169930]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Government is committed to raising standards of reading in our schools and to promoting an enjoyment of reading among young people.

The National Literacy Strategy has transformed standards of reading in our primary schools. This was confirmed by the publication last year of the 'Progress in International Reading Literacy Study', which reported that England's 10 year olds achieved the third highest standards of reading in the world. It also reported that the literacy strategy had introduced primary school pupils to a wider range of reading texts and that pupils in England had the highest use of real books and reading schemes in the classroom.

Building on this improvement is a key aim of our strategies for primary and secondary schools and we are also working closely with the National Literacy Trust on a range of activities to encourage children to read for pleasure.

School Computers

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the computer to pupil ratio is in *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools in the East Riding of Yorkshire. [171785]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information requested is not available centrally. Figures for England, which were derived from a sample of schools, are shown in the table. Average number of pupils[1] per computer (used solely or mainly for teaching and learning purposes) by type of school in England (year ending March 2003).

Maintained schools

	Primary	*Secondary*
2003	7.9	5.4

[1] Full-time equivalent numbers of pupils

The latest information on ICT in schools was published in Statistical Bulletin 'Survey of Information and Communications Technology in Schools 2003', which is available on my Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

School Standards

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many and what percentage of pupils in Oldham West and Royton reached the *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English standard in each of the last seven years; [170921]

(2) how many and what percentage of 11 year old pupils in Oldham West and Royton reached level four in *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English in each of the last seven years. [170922]

Mr. Miliband: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I have given to the hon. Member for Westmorland and Lonsdale (Mr. Collins) on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 34W.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many and what percentage of pupils in Wigan have reached the *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English standard in each of the last seven years; [169285]

(2) how many and what percentage of eleven year olds in Wigan reached level four in *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English in each of the last seven years. [169286]

Mr. Miliband: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I have given to the hon. Member for Westmorland and Lonsdale (Mr. Collins)on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 34W.

School Transport (London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children have used home to school transport in Greater London, in each of the last five years, broken down by local education authority. [170500]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information requested is not collected by my Department. However, a joint survey conducted in 2003 by the Confederation of Education Service Managers (ConfEd) and DfES into the number of pupils receiving free home to school transport in 2001/02 is reported in the following table:

LEA number	*LEA name*	*Pupils[1] receiving free home-school transport (2001/02)*
201	City of London	38
202	Camden	680
203	Greenwich[2]	0
204	Hackney[2]	0
205	Hammersmith and Fulham	253
206	Islington	111
207	Kensington and Chelsea	610
208	Lambeth	1,585
209	Lewisham	1,636
210	Southwark[2]	0
211	Tower Hamlets	688
212	Wandsworth	440
213	Westminster[2]	0
301	Barking and Dagenham[2]	0
302	Barnet	1,741
303	Bexley	1,005
304	Brent	697
305	Bromley[2]	0
306	Croydon[2]	0
307	Ealing	2,151
308	Enfield	1,758
309	Haringey[2]	0
310	Harrow[2]	0
311	Havering	1,250
312	Hillingdon	2,342
313	Hounslow	480
314	Kingston upon Thames	843
315	Merton[2]	0
316	Newham	446
317	Redbridge	2,916
318	Richmond upon Thames	644
319	Sutton	1,459
320	Waltham Forest	476
Total		24,249

[1] Primary, secondary, special school and other pupils.

[2] Did not respond.

Solvent Abuse

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which projects dealing with solvent abuse among children have been awarded funding from the Children's Fund; and how much was awarded to each. [169060]

Margaret Hodge: The Department does not directly monitor the number of projects in receipt of Children's Fund which deal with solvent abuse. Of the 4,665 projects in receipt of Children's Fund in the period July to September 2003 (the most recent period for which complete data is available) 398 were for services that worked in areas involving substance misuse. Other projects will work to educate and support children, young people and their families about the misuse of a range of substances, which in many cases will include solvents.

With regard to the funding that each of these projects receives, this information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost and so is not included in this reply.

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money has been allocated to schools in Stockton South for information and communication technologies since 2001. [171457]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My department does not hold information on school level allocations for information and communication technologies. However, Stockton South is in Stockton-on-Tees and since 2001 schools in Stockton-on-Tees have benefited from the following funding through the Standards Fund grant for ICT (including match funding from the LEA):

	Allocation to Stockton-on-Tees LEA (£)
2001–02	921,142
2002–03	1,308,008
2003–04	1,333,573
2004–05	1,745,924

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many women in Stockton South have visited an information and communications technology training centre in order to learn skills to return to work. [171458]

Mr. Charles Clarke: In the period October 2003[1]—March 2004, 4,848 people visited a UK online centre in the Stockton South constituency. 2,714 (56 per cent.) of these people were women.

Since learndirect was launched in 1999, 3,819 people from the Stockton, South constituency have enrolled on a learndirect course. 1,441 (38 per cent.) of these people were women. Of the total number of women who enrolled on a course, 8 per cent. did so in order to learn skills to return to work.

[1] Please note the complete statistics are not available for UK online prior to September 2003 as the DfES did not collect this data on a centre-by-centre basis.

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many Capital Modernisation Fund computer-learning centres have been established in Stockton, South. [171459]

Mr. Charles Clarke: 12 Capital Modernisation Funded UK online centres have been established in Stockton South.

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of 11 year old pupils in Stockton South reached level four in *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English in each of the last seven years. [171472]

Mr. Miliband: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I have given to the hon. Member for Westmorland and Lonsdale (Mr. Collins) on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 34W.

Sure Start

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has further to develop Sure Start programmes in the Workington constituency, with particular reference to rural areas. [171618]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* Local authorities are currently developing children's centres as the next phase in the Government's strategy to deliver better outcomes for children and families. Funding has been allocated to Cumbria county council to develop children's centres in their 20 per cent. most disadvantaged wards by March 2006, building on existing Sure Start local programmes and other provision. The local authority has determined the location of its children's centres. In the Workington constituency, one major new children's centre will be established in Workington. Children's centres are also being developed from the existing Sure Start West Allerdale rural local programme based around Maryport town and from the existing North Allerdale mini rural Sure Start covering Aspatria and Silloth. Both of these children's centres will continue to serve rural areas within the Workington constituency.

Child Care (West Lancashire)

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many childcare places have been created in West Lancashire since 1997. [171491]

Margaret Hodge: The Department is unable to provide details of childcare places for West Lancashire. However, from April 1999 to March 2004, Lancashire local authority created 22,581 new childcare places helping some 39,808 children. This shows an increase in the stock of childcare places, taking into account turnover, of 9,826, helping some 17,631 children.

HEALTH

Drug Treatment

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in Wigan are receiving drug treatment. [169339]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In 2000–01, there were 882 people receiving drug treatment in Wigan. This is the latest data available. Data broken down by drug action team for 2001–02 and 2002–03 has not yet been published.

Abortions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent on medical instruments which are used in abortions in each year since 1994; and if he will make a statement. [169935]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not held centrally.

Anaesthetists

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many anaesthetists have been employed in the NHS in each of the last five years. [170429]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the table.

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS): Staff with a specialty in Anaesthetics

numbers (headcount)

	1998	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*December 2003* [1]
All Staff	6,731	6,939	7,178	7,517	8,056	8,511	n/a
of which: Consultants	2,955	3,136	3,293	3,549	3,822	4,053	4,127

[1] All data as at 30 September each year, except for 2003 December where data is at 31 December.
n/a—not applicable.
Source:
Department of Health medical and dental workforce census.

The number of consultant anaesthetists increased by 1,172, or 40 per cent, between September 1998 and December 2003.

Barnet and Chase Farm NHS Trust

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the financial position of Barnet and Chase Farm NHS Trust. [169782]

Mr. Hutton: Unaudited information on in-year financial forecasts is subject to exemption two of the code of practice on access to Government information. The audited information in respect of the 2003–04 financial position of all national health service trusts will be published in their individual annual accounts and will be available centrally in autumn 2004.

Cancer

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when his Department plans to repeat the NHS cancer patients survey; and if he will make a statement. [169716]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The responsibility for carrying out future patient surveys now rests with the Commission for Healthcare Audit and Inspection. The

Commission is looking at a number of factors before deciding when the next cancer patient survey will take place.

The recently published secondary analysis of the cancer patient survey to identify variations within and between trusts on various cancer types will be used to inform plans for any future surveys. Copies of the report are available in the Library, and on the Department's website.

In addition to this work, the National Audit Office (NAO) will be publishing a report later in 2004 on improving the patient experience of cancer services in England. As part of this study the NAO have carried out a cancer patient survey. This report forms part of a suite of three NAO studies on the delivery of cancer services. The first of these studies 'Tackling Cancer in England—Saving More Lives' was published on 19 March 2004.

Cancer Services

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to resolve the patient pathway delays for cancer patients identified by the National Audit Office in its recent report on cancer services. [163987]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the response I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Norwich, North (Dr. Gibson), today.

Cancer Treatment

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what measures he is taking to encourage patients to seek medical attention when they have suspicious symptoms which may be cancer; and if he will make a statement; [164232]

(2) what plans he has to extend the national cancer clinical audits to all major cancers; [164238]

(3) what plans he has to ensure that each general practitioner receives a copy of the updated referral guidelines for patients with suspected cancer when they are published; [164233]

(4) what plans he has to ensure that waiting times for radiotherapy are monitored at the local level using standardised national measures; [164234]

(5) what plans he has to develop a mechanism to audit the time taken for assessment and treatment of patients who are referred routinely by general practitioners and subsequently diagnosed with cancer; [164236]

(6) if the Department of Health will issue guidance to primary care trusts on the provision and role of administrative support for multi-disciplinary teams providing cancer services; [164237]

(7) if extra resources will be made available to hospitals providing radiotherapy and radiology services in order to assess local need for extra staff and facilities. [164240]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The primary purpose of the national health service cancer plan is to save more lives. Reducing waiting times is key to achieving this. The ultimate goal in the NHS Cancer Plan is to offer patients a maximum one-month wait from an urgent referral for suspected cancer to the beginning of treatment. Where patients wait longer, this should be because of the needs of the diagnostic process or their personal choice, not because of in-built delays in the system of care. We hope to achieve this goal by 2008. There is a series of milestones towards this goal: By 2005, there will be a maximum one-month wait from diagnosis to treatment for all cancers. By 2005, there will be a maximum two-month wait from urgent general practitioner referral to treatment for all cancers.

Progress towards these targets is being achieved through increased investment, additional staff working in new ways, installing new radiotherapy and diagnostic facilities and streamlining of cancer care pathways for all cancer patients through the cancer services collaborative 'Improvement Partnership'.

The Department will take the National Audit Office report's recommendations into account as we further develop and improve cancer services. The report will be discussed in detail at a Committee of Public Accounts hearing scheduled for 16 June 2004. Sir Nigel Crisp, chief executive of the NHS and Professor Mike Richards, national cancer director, have been called to give evidence at the hearing. The government will respond to the Committee's subsequent report in the form of a Treasury Minute.

Chest Pain Clinics

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many rapid access chest pain clinics there are in Bootle. [170074]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There is no rapid access chest pain clinic in Bootle. There is a rapid access chest pain clinic located at Aintree Hospitals National Health Service Trust.

Children (Chronic Illness)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children developed type II diabetes in each year since 1998. [169476]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not collected centrally.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health in what ways the National Service Framework for chronic conditions will specifically address children with chronic illness. [169480]

Dr. Ladyman: The national service framework (NSF) for long term conditions will aim to improve the standard of services for people with neurological conditions and also address some of the common issues that can promote independence for people living with a disability or long term condition. The NSF will focus on people of working age but will also look at ensuring people can move smoothly between different services regardless of their age or if they move to another geographical area.

The NSF for children, young people and maternity services will address the needs of all children, young people, pregnant women and families. It will set standards covering a broad range of services, including the management of chronic conditions.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of children are needle phobic; and what estimate he has made of the percentage of children who would take-up a needle-free insulin delivery system. [169484]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The research suggests that in children and young people with diabetes the prevalence of self-reported needle phobia is around 10 per cent.. The take up of needle-free insulin delivery systems would depend on their suitability for use by the individual involved.

Chronic Dehydration (Children)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the prevalence of chronic dehydration amongst children; and if he will make a statement. [169705]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the prevalence of this condition is not collected centrally. The importance of children having access to a wholesome supply of drinking water is recognised in guidance relating to schools, and within advice issued by the Department on nutrition and maintaining a healthy life style.

Conference Attendance

Mr. Burnett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* days and *(b)* half-days were spent by NHS staff attending conferences in each year since 1996–97, broken down by (i) clinicians and (ii) non-clinicians. [169459]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 29 April 2004]:* The Department does not hold this information centrally.

Continuing Care Eligibility Criteria

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 19April, *Official Report*, column 180W, on eligibility criteria, how many individual cases were granted recompense. [169721]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department expects to make information on the number of cases granted recompense available in due course.

Coronary Angioplasty

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost of a coronary angioplasty was in each NHS hospital trust in England in the latest period for which figures are available. [168595]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Demographics

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of the likely impact on health services in Hendon *(a)* generally and *(b)* with reference to Edgware hospital of the expected population growth in (i) Barnet, (ii) Harrow and (iii) Brent; and if he will make a statement; [169783]

(2) what changes he expects in the number of patients requiring health services in Hendon over the next 10 years; and if he will make a statement. [169798]

Mr. Hutton: The responsibility for determining local need for health services in Hendon lies with Barnet Primary Care Trust (PCT).

Barnet PCT is carrying out a health impact assessment on the projected increases in population, which will inform decisions about local services including those provided at Edgware hospital.

Dentistry

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children under the age of 18 were given mercury fillings in England *(a)* in 2004 up to the latest date for which figures are available and *(b)* in each of the last five years. [169589]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table shows the number of children under the age of 18 who were given mercury fillings in the general dental service (GDS) in England.

Number of individual children given mercury fillings in the GDS

Year ending March	*Number of individual children treated*
2000	528,193
2001	520,845
2002	510,202
2003	503,129
2004	494,257

Source:
Dental Practice Board

The figures do not includes mercury fillings given in other dental services such as the personal dental service, community dental services and hospital dental services.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children aged under 18 years had the removal of wisdom teeth funded by the NHS in 2003–04. [169637]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The most recent information on the number of children aged under 18 years who had the removal of wisdom teeth funded by the national health service in 2003–04 in England and Wales is shown in the table. The figures cover patients treated in the general dental service, personal dental service and hospital dental service.

Number of patients aged under 18 who had a wisdom tooth extracted during the year ending March 2004

	Number of patients
General dental service or personal dental service patients	[1]2,047
Hospital dental service patients	[2]724

[1] In England and Wales 2003–04.
[2] In England 2002–03.
Source:
Dental Practice Board and Hospital Episode Statistics.

The figures do not cover those patients treated in the community dental service.

Elective Admissions

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the levels of elective admissions to the NHS in Heywood and Middleton in the past five years. [168493]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information on the numbers of elective admissions to the relevant national health service trust is shown in the table.

Count of in-year elective admissions, 1998–99 to 2002–03 (admission method = 11,12,13) by provider North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust, Oldham NHS Trust and Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust

Provider	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	21,450	24,409	24,519	24,782	—
Oldham NHS Trust	30,093	31,393	30,369	27,237	—
Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	83,193
Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	19,082	18,977	20,373	17,439	—
Bury Health Care NHS Trust	19,003	19,577	18,831	13,274	—

Note:
1. An in-year admission is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider, excluding admissions beginning before 1 April at the start of the datayear. Periods of care on-going at the end of the datayear (unfinished admission episodes) are included. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
2. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the levels of elective admissions to the NHS in Bootle in the past five years. [170075]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected on a constituency basis but at national health service trust level. The information is shown in the table.

In year elective admission episodes 1998–99 to 2002–03

	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust
1998–99	30,363
1999–00	31,063
2000–01	32,959
2001–02	32,437
2002–03	33,401

Notes:
Ungrossed Data:
Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).
In-year admissions:
An in-year admission is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider, excluding admissions beginning before 1 April at the start of the datayear. Periods of care ongoing at the end of the datayear (unfinished admission episodes) are included. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in- patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Health Services

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on NHS waiting times for heart surgery in Bootle. [169262]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In March 1997, there were 138 people waiting nine months, and 40 people waiting over 12 months, for heart surgery at the cardiothoracic centre—Liverpool National Health Service Trust. The latest available figures show that, in February 2004, there were no people waiting nine months and over for surgery.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether there is a diagnostic and treatment centre located in Bootle. [169266]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There is no treatment centre in Bootle. A treatment centre is located at the Aintree Hospital National Health Service Trust.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* therapists and *(b)* scientists were located in Bootle in each of the last seven years. [170538]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff in each specified organisation as at 30 September each specified year

	South Sefton PCT	*Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust*	*Headcount Total*
1997	n/a	393	393
1998	n/a	415	415
1999	n/a	470	470
2000	n/a	500	500
2001	n/a	507	507
2002	19	482	501
2003	19	555	574

n/a = Not applicable.

Source:
Department of Health Non Medical Workforce Census.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many senior citizens in Bootle aged over 60 years have benefited from the abolition of charges for eye tests; [170539]

(2) how many senior citizens in Bootle have access to free eye tests. [170540]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data for the number of sight tests by constituency or by the number of senior citizens is not collected centrally.

The total number of sight tests paid for by Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority in the year 2002–03 for the aged 60 and over category was 201,180. The total number eligible for a free sight test for those aged 60 and over was 507,080. Sight tests cannot be equated to the number of patients.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses there were in the Huntington constituency in each of the last seven years; and if he will make a statement. [170852]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the number of doctors and nurses in the Huntington constituency in each of the last seven years has been placed in the Library.

Nationally, more staff are returning to the NHS:

With over 3,000 nurses and midwives in training since 1999.

With over 15,800 former nurses, midwives and health visitors returned since 1999.

With over 3,600 expressions of interest in the flexible careers scheme.

Golden hello scheme—3,500 beneficiaries since April 2001.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average general practitioner list size was in Greater London, broken down by national health service trust, in each of the last 10 years. [170506]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the average list sizes in London has been placed in the Library. Information by primary care trust is only available from 2001.

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the level of funding for sexual health services in North Tyneside was in each year since 1997. [170422]

Miss Melanie Johnson: This information is not collected centrally.

Funding is allocated to primary care trusts on the basis of the relative needs of their populations. It is for primary care trusts in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders to determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health in equalities and modernising services.

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* private dentists and *(b)* NHS dentists there are in North Tyneside; and if he will make a statement. [170423]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information on the number of dentists in North Tyneside who are working wholly privately is not available.

The table shows the number of primary care national health service dentists in North Tyneside.

National health service: Number of dentists in North Tyneside as at 30 September 2003

Primary Care Trust	Number of Dentists: General Dental Service	Personal Dental Service	Community Dental Service
North Tyneside PCT	62	5	2

Notes:

1. GDS dentists are dentists whose main work is in North Tyneside. PDS dentists exclude dentists already counted as GDS dentists.
2. Dentists in the General Dental Service include Principals, Assistants and Vocational Dental Practitioners. These figures are on a headcount basis rather than whole time equivalent (wte) basis and therefore take no account of part-time working.
3. These figures exclude 127 dentists working in the Hospital Dental Service in Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals Trust, which covers a wider area than North Tyneside.

Source:

Dental Practice Board and Department of Health medical and dental workforce census.

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many pensioners living within the North Tyneside Primary Care Trust area benefited from free eye tests in *(a)* 2002 and *(b)* 2003. [170424]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data for the number of sight tests by constituency or by the number of senior citizens is not collected centrally.

The total number of sight tests paid for by Northumberland, Tyne and Wear strategic health authority in the year 2002–03 for those aged 60 and over was 50,860. *Source:*

Department of Health Statistics.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on health in Wigan in each of the last seven years. [169353]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested. Expenditure per weighted head in the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area, which includes the constituency of Wigan, has increased from £582.33 in 1997–98 to £992.61 in 2002- 03, the latest year available. This does not represent the total expenditure per head as an element of health expenditure cannot be identified by SHA area.

Healthy Living Centres

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many healthy living centres *(a)* have been built, *(b)* are being built and *(c)* are planned. [170416]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Healthy living centres (HLCs) all vary in the approaches that they use and the settings in which they work. In some cases, the HLC will be a building, but in others it will be a network with a range of projects taking place in a number of different locations within a neighbourhood.

Of the 257 HLCs in England, 54 schemes have received capital grants for building. Of these, 26 have been built, 17 are in the process of being built and 11 are planned.

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what has been the total cost to date of healthy living centres. [170418]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In total, £300 million was made available by the New Opportunities Fund for healthy living centres across the United Kingdom, of which £233 million was for England.

To date, 257 awards, worth £204 million, have been made in England.

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many healthy living centres are run directly by local authorities. [170419]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Healthy living centres have been established as a partnership between a range of different organisations.

Sixty six healthy living centres in England are led by local authorities (LAs). LAs are listed as partner organisations in 210 of the 257 healthy living centres in England.

Hospital Land Sales

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his policy is toward land sales of sites at *(a)* Edgware hospital and *(b)* Colindale hospital; and what assessment he has made of the implications for such sales of (i) anticipated population growth, (ii) changes in demand for car parking at Edgware hospital and (iii) the availability of affordable housing in the area (A) generally and (B) for key workers. [169764]

Mr. Hutton: The responsibility for disposal of land at Edgware hospital and Colindale hospital lies with Barnet Primary Care Trust (PCT), and with Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Services National Health Service Trust respectively. In accordance with long-term local plans the PCT and the Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Services NHS Trust are disposing of surplus land at Colindale and Edgware hospitals. The land sales are being managed locally to ensure the need of the local NHS are met. The PCT and the Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Services NHS Trust will take into account the identified factors in disposing of land and any requirements of the local authority in terms of affordable housing.

Human Embryos

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether an application for a licence to create human embryos by cell nuclear replacement has been submitted to the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority. [169473]

Miss Melanie Johnson: From 7 May 2004, the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) will publish the titles and lay summaries of research licence applications on its website.

The HFEA has received one application for a licence to create human embryos by cell nuclear replacement. The title and lay summary are as follows:

Title—Derivation of human embryonic stem cell lines using nuclear transfer and parthenogenically activated oocytes.

Centre—Newcastle Fertility Centre at Life.

Lay summary—It is recognised that human embryonic stem cells offer a great potential for therapies for many diseases such as diabetes. These stem cells are derived from embryos which are created for in-vitro fertilisation treatment, but which are not suitable for treatment. If stem cell treatments are to reach their full potential we need to derive stem cell lines which are genetically similar to the recipient so they will not be rejected. This may require the application of techniques such as nuclear transfer and parthenogenic activation. Nuclear transfer involves the transfer of genetic material from adult skin cells to eggs which have had the cell's nucleus removed. Parthenogenic activation involves an egg being artificially stimulated by chemical or electronic means in order to make the egg start embryo development. The present application is to undertake some of the initial studies that are needed to understand methods that will develop this technology.

Mental Health Provision

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* consultant psychiatrists, *(b)* mental health nurses and *(c)* primary care mental health workers are employed in each Greater London NHS trust; and how many of these work (i) part time and (ii) full time. [168939]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Mobile Phones

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his Answer of 21 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 646W, on mobile phones, if he will evaluate the research on the dielectric property of cells by Bo Sernelius of Linkoping University, Sweden. [170176]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The paper by Bo Sernelius is a recent contribution to the scientific literature and is a theoretical study. It is one of many papers appearing in scientific journals that may have relevance either directly, or as in this case indirectly, to understanding the interaction of radiofrequency electromagnetic fields with people.

The author of the paper considers the findings indicate the need for further work on the measurement of dielectric properties of materials and specifically cautions against interpreting the findings of the study as evidence that mobile phones are harmful.

The publication of work such as this emphasises the need for continuing research and evaluation into the possible health effects of mobile phone technology. This paper and others will continue to be considered by expert review groups such as the National Radiological Protection Board's independent advisory group on non-ionising radiation, which authored the most recent review of the subject in January 2004.

National Service Frameworks

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on progress towards the National Service Framework milestone for strategic and operational plans to include the development of an integrated falls service. [170628]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer the hon. Member to the response I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Forest of Dean (Diana Organ) today.

Neonatal Intensive Care

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many intensive care beds for newborn babies are operational in each hospital trust in England. [169054]

Dr. Ladyman: This information requested has been placed in the Library.

NHS Staff (Assaults)

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS trusts have *(a)* met the targets for reducing assaults on staff, *(b)* failed to meet those targets and *(c)* reported an increase in such assaults in the latest period for which figures are available. [169462]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* A Health Circular issued in 1999, entitled Working Together, required health bodies to have systems in place to record incidents of violence and aggression against national health service staff and set targets for reducing violence and aggression by 20 per cent. by 2001 and by 30 per cent. by 2002. These targets were incorporated in the Improving Working Lives standard in October 2000.

As part of the Working Together initiative, the Department undertook a national survey to identify the reported incidents of violence and aggression. The first survey, conducted in 2000–01, identified 84,214 incidents. The following survey, conducted in 2001–02, showed an increase on the previous year to 112,000 incidents.

Figures from the Department for 2002–03 show a three per cent. increase in reported incidents to 116,000 on the previous year.

The National Health Service Security Management Service (SMS) assumed policy and operational responsibility for the management of security in the NHS in April 2003. This remit includes work previously carried out under the NHS Zero Tolerance campaign. In November 2003, the SMS introduced a new framework for tackling violence against NHS staff, including consistent definitions of physical and non-physical assault and a national reporting system for physical assaults. The SMS is currently developing robust methodologies to identify the true nature and scale of the problem of violence—to measure both the perception as well as the reality.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to reduce the number of assaults on NHS staff who work in clients' homes; and if he will make a statement. [169463]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* The national health service Security Management Service (SMS) assumed policy and operational responsibility for the management of security in the NHS in April 2003. This remit includes work previously carried out under the NHS "Zero Tolerance" campaign.

In November 2003, the SMS introduced a new framework for tackling violence against NHS staff. A number of key practical reactive and proactive measures were introduced, among which was the development and implementation of a national syllabus for conflict resolution training to be delivered to all NHS frontline staff, with the aim of giving them the necessary skills and expertise to defuse aggressive situations before they become violent incidents.

The new national reporting system for physical assaults will allow hard accurate information about the nature of the problem to be gathered and analysed for the first time so that further practical solutions can be developed and implemented.

The SMS is exploring how best technology and other interventions can be used to better protect staff, particularly those who work alone in the community. A device based on mobile phone technology is being trialled that is designed to allow the member of staff to covertly summons assistance when faced with a threatening situation and automatically transmit their location so that appropriate help can be given.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of assaults on NHS staff which take place *(a)* in clients' homes, *(b)* in isolated units and *(c)* at night. [169464]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* Statistics on the number of assaults on national health service staff taking place in clients' homes, isolated units and at night have not been collated centrally.

The NHS Security Management Service (SMS) assumed policy and operational responsibility for the management of security in the NHS in April 2003. This remit includes work previously carried out under the NHS "Zero Tolerance" campaign.

In November 2003, the SMS launched a new national system for the reporting and recording of physical assaults. Part of its purpose is to gather hard accurate information about the nature of assaults on NHS staff so that appropriate solutions can be developed to minimise the risk of them reoccurring.

NHS Staff (Manchester)

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses there were in Manchester, Gorton in each of the last seven years. [167383]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Northumbria NHS Trust

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps have been taken to improve accident and emergency services at hospitals within the Northumbria NHS Trust since 1997. [170420]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The following steps have been taken to improve accident and emergency services at Northumbria Healthcare:

Opening a rapid assessment and treatment unit.

Expansion of the A&E consultant team to 10 consultants at the North Tyneside General Hospital and Wansbeck General Hospital.

A major refurbishment and extension of the two A&E departments.

Opening of a dedicated minor injuries area.

Development of a dedicated emergency nurse practitioner services at both hospital sites.

Development of an emergency nurse practitioner services in community hospitals.

Introduction of care facilitators across the trust to reduce delays during hospital care and to help co-ordinate the patient's journey.

The emergency services collaborative has also helped to redesign systems and unnecessary steps out of the patient pathway. This is being continued under the Improving Partnership in Hospitals programme.

Osteoporosis

Diana Organ: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he expects the first National Service Framework osteoporosis milestone to be achieved by April. [169872]

Dr. Ladyman: The national service framework for older people requires integrated falls services to be in place locally by April 2005. This should include appropriate links to osteoporosis. The Department will be monitoring formally the 2005 milestone at strategic health authority (SHA) level as this is included as one of the key targets in Improvement, Expansion and Reform, the priorities and planning framework for 2003–06. All SHAs except one currently report that the April 2005 target will be achieved in their area. The Department has offered support to this SHA.

Pharmacy Services

John Cryer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will place in the Library copies of responses to the consultation on proposals to reform and modernise the NHS (Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 1992 in relation to the proposed exemption of large shopping developments from the control of entry requirements for retail pharmacy services. [157513]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[pursuant to her answer, 8 March 2004, Official Report, c. 1334W]:* I regret my previous response was incorrect. The number of responses to the Department's consultation on proposals to reform and modernise the NHS (Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 1993 should have been 267.

Radiographers

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many radiographers have been employed in the NHS in each of the last five years. [170430]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the table.

NHS hospital and community health services: qualified radiographers in England as at 30 September each specified year

	Total qualified radiography staff	Diagnostic radiography[1]	Headcount Therapeutic radiography
1999	12,330	10,839	1,491
2000	12,489	11,036	1,453
2001	12,706	11,163	1,543
2002	13,031	11,489	1,542
2003	13,344	11,687	1,657

[1] New occupation codes for healthcare scientists were introduced in 2003. As a result, a small number of staff previously included under diagnostic radiography are now classified within medical physics.

Source:

Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.

Serotonin

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many prescriptions have been issued for selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors for *(a)* children and *(b)* adults in each of the last 10 years. [169897]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the total number of prescription items of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) dispensed in the community in England and the estimated number of prescription items of SSRIs dispensed in the community in England to children and adults are shown in the table. Figures for the total number of SSRI items are provided for the last 10 years (1994 to 2003). However, the Department does not have information on the estimated numbers of prescription items dispensed to children or adults available before 1999.

Total number of prescription items of SSRIs, and estimated number of prescription items of SSRIs dispensed to children and adults which were dispensed in the community in England, 1994 to 2003

Total number of prescription items of SSRIs and estimated number of prescription items of SSRIs dispensed to children and adults which were dispensed in the community in England, 1994 to 2003

Thousand

	Total number of prescription items	Estimated number of prescription items dispensed to: Children	Adults
1994	2,681.2	[1]—	[1]—
1995	3,807.8	[1]—	[1]—
1996	5,136.0	[1]—	[1]—
1997	6,555.8	[1]—	[1]—
1998	7,581.6	[1]—	[1]—
1999	8,929.4	100	8,800
2000	10,442.5	110	10,000
2001	12,085.1	150	12,000
2002	13,304.0	170	13,000
2003	13,816.9	110	14,000

[1] Information for groups of patients not required to pay a charge (e.g. children) prior to 1999 is not available.

Notes:

1. PCA data covers all prescription items that were dispensed in the community in England. It does not include items dispensed in hospitals or private prescriptions.
2. Information for groups of patients not required to pay a charge (e.g. children) is based on a 1 in 20 sample of all exempt prescriptions dispensed in the community. The information for children and hence adults is therefore an estimate and subject to sampling errors. To reflect this the figures have been rounded appropriately. (Figures over 100,000 are rounded to the nearest 10,000. Figures over a million are rounded to the nearest 100,000, and figures over 10 million are rounded to the nearest million.) Rounding applies to exemption data only. The total number of SSRI prescriptions is an actual figure (not an estimate) and has not been rounded. The number of items dispensed to adults was estimated by subtracting the estimates for children from the total SSRI items. Hence, rounding also applies to the adults.
3. Due to rounding, the sum of the components may not equal the total items.
4. Data on exemption categories for SSRIs is only available from 1999. The exemption data for children and adults for 1999 and 2000 is not strictly comparable with data for 2001 onwards. Exemption data for children and adults from 2001 is based on a 1 in 20 sample of all exempt prescriptions dispensed by community pharmacists, appliance contractors and dispensing doctors. Exemption data for 1999 and 2000 is based on those dispensed by chemists and appliance contractors only and excludes those dispensed by dispensing doctors. No exemption figures for dispensing doctor for 1999 and 2000 are available but the figures presented are the best estimates of the total figure for children and adult prescriptions. This does not apply to the total number of SSRI prescription items—data for all years includes all items dispensed in the community (including dispensing doctors).
5. Children are defined here as children aged under 16 and young people in full-time education aged 16,17 or 18.

6. The exemption data is identified from the box ticked on the back of the prescription form and relies on the form being completed correctly which may not always be the case.
7. SSRIs are defined in the British National Formulary (BNF) paragraph 4.3.3.
8. Data in the table is in thousands.
9. Definition of prescription item: Doctors write prescriptions on a prescription form. Each single item written on the form is counted as a prescription item.

Source:
Prescription Cost Analysis (PCA) data from the Prescription Pricing Authority (PPA).

Waiting Lists

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes there have been to NHS waiting list times in the last seven years for the residents of Bootle. [170080]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information most closely associated with place of residency is not collected on a constituency level, but at a health services commissioner level. The data in the tables is given for Sefton health authority for the period 1997–2002, and for South Sefton Primary Care Trust for 2003.

In-patient waiting lists by Commissioner for Bottle residents

								Waiting list in months	
	Quarter	Name	TWL	0–2[1]	3–5[1]	6–4[1]	9–11[1]	12–14[1]	15–17[1]
1996–07	4	Sefton HA	9,239	4,046	2,247	1,531	1,166	246	3
1997–08	4	Sefton HA	8,975	4,204	1,952	1,328	984	367	80
1998–09	4	Sefton HA	7,967	4,031	1,634	1,142	745	325	90
1999–2000	4	Sefton HA	7531	3,603	1,773	1,158	644	237	116
2000–01	4	Sefton HA	7,436	3,987	1,638	971	455	278	107
2001–02	4	Sefton HA	7,155	3,837	1753	1,002	464	99	0

	Month	Name	TWL	0–2[1]	3–5[1]	6–4[1]	9–11[1]	12–14[1]	15–17[1]
2002–03	March 2003	South Sefton PCT	3,917	2,581	841	369	726	0	0
2003–04	December 2003	South Sefton PCT	3,689	2,744	689	230	26	0	0

[1] Not seen
Source:
Department of Health QF01

Out-patient Commissrioner waiting list data

	GP referral to Consultant waiting list in weeks		
	Name	13 to 25[1]	26 +[1]
1997–08	Sefton HA	1,936	243
1998–09	Sefton HA	2,153	911
1999–2000	Sefton HA	2,241	883
2000–01	Sefton HA	1,358	779
2001–02	Sefton HA	1,141	0

	Name	13–17[1]	17–21[1]	21–26[1]	26+
March 2003	South Sefton PCT	218	85	0	0
September 2003	South Sefton PCT	441	102	0	0

[1] Not seen
Source:
Department of Health QM08R

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 12 May 2004

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Advisers/Consultants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much her Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies spent on external consultants and advisors in each of the last three years. [171876]

Mr. Caborn: The use of external consultants and advisers over the period 2000 to 2003, the last full years of accounting, were as follows:

	£
2000–01	358,000
2001–02	693,000
2002–03	323,820

These figures include the Royal Parks Agency. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has over 66 sponsored bodies and compiling the figures for them could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Archaeological Sites

Mr. Allan: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the impact of the decision by the Crown Prosecution Service not to proceed with the case against Mr. Robert Duqueria for the alleged removal of objects from the scheduled site of Cunetio, Wiltshire on her strategy to protect archaeological sites in England; and if she will make a statement. [172212]

Estelle Morris: It is for the Crown Prosecution Service to determine whether any prosecutions are in the public interest and it judges each case on its individual merit. Through the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and the Treasure Act 1996, there is a framework of legislation in place to protect important heritage sites. I would expect those who operate in this area would do so in accordance with the law.

In addition, the recently expanded Portable Antiquities Scheme, through its network of Finds Liaison Officers, is designed to encourage closer working relations between archaeologists and metal detector users.

Bingo Hall Conversions

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate she has made of the number of bingo halls which occupy more than 10,000 sq ft and would be eligible to convert to a casino under the terms of the draft Gambling Bill. [172046]

Mr. Caborn: There is no central record of the total area which each licensed bingo club covers; but we have seen estimates that over half of the current total of about 700 clubs have a total area in excess of 10,000 sq ft. We indicated last August that, under the proposed Gambling Bill, the minimum size of the area set aside for table games in a new casino should be 5,000 sq ft. We are now looking again at that requirement in the light of the views of the Joint Scrutiny Committee on the Bill and the points made by interested bodies and individuals in commenting on the Bill proposals. It is, however, relevant to note that a 5,000 sq ft minimum table gaming area would entail a total casino size considerably in excess of that, particularly if the casino also wanted to provide bingo for its customers.

Early Retirement

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many employees in her Department took early retirement, and at what total cost, in the last financial year. [172185]

Mr. Caborn: In DCMS one employee was granted approved early retirement terms in the financial year 2003–04 at a cost of £9,361. In addition, two employees were awarded compensation payments at a cost of £61,887.

Ice Hockey UK

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assistance is provided by her Department to Ice Hockey UK. [172077]

Mr. Caborn: Ice Hockey is classified as an Olympic sport and as such funding decisions are a matter for UK Sport.

The top priority for UK Sport is the provision of support for those senior athletes/teams operating at a UK/GB level who have realistic chances of winning medals at the highest level (Olympic Games/World Championships within the current Olympic cycle).

UK Sport have informed us that in recent years, GB Ice Hockey has been unable to provide evidence that it can meet this criteria and has not, therefore, received support from UK Sport.

There is scope for developing talent via the home country Sports Councils but sports would be assessed against a number of criteria. Ice Hockey has not been deemed a priority at present by Sport England.

However, UK Sport does acknowledge that if GB athletes are to win medals in the Winter Olympics, in the longer term, some form of support needs to be provided. In recognition of this, UK Sport is in discussion with a number of partners, including an Olympic Winter Sports Group. Ice Hockey UK is represented on the Winter Olympic Sports Group.

Productivity

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what her policy is for *(a)* increasing the productivity and *(b)* cutting the costs of (i) her Department and (ii) its agencies and non-departmental public bodies. [172190]

Mr. Caborn: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 148–49W.

Regional Tourism

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money has been spent on the digitisation of content in libraries in South Ribble since 1997. [172143]

Estelle Morris: This information is not held centrally.

The New Opportunities Fund £50 million Digitisation of Learning Materials Programme has delivered 150 projects across the UK to enable resources which support learning of all kinds held in libraries as well as museums, archives and other public-sector institutions, to be made available online through the People's Network and the National Grid for Learning. This initiative has created a body of material containing over 2 million images, tens of thousands of sound and video clips and documents and over 1,000 learning packages. All projects can be accessed via the EnrichUK portal at http://www.enrichuk.net.

Information on grants awarded to individual local authorities and their expenditure can be obtained from the relevant authority.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the work of regional development agencies in developing tourism in South Ribble. [172144]

Mr. Caborn: The North West Development Agency (NWDA) is working closely with the Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board, the nominated Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for Lancashire. The new DMOs are, in effect, smaller versions of tourist boards. They aim to ensure a strong visitor and market focus to all that is done within the region and strengthen the connection between businesses and other organisations in the tourism sector.

During 2003–04, the Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board received £275,000 from the agency's tourism budget for a variety of tourism marketing and development projects. South Ribble has also benefited from the agency's contribution of £60,000 during 2003–04 towards the construction of a visitor centre in Cuerden Valley Park.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money from the New Opportunities Fund was allocated to South Ribble in each year since 1997. [172153]

Estelle Morris: The New Opportunities Fund began making grants in 1999. The awards to South Ribble are shown in the table.

Financial year	*Amount (£)*
1999–2000	482,994
2000–01	273,735
2001–02	0
2002–03	0
2003–04	31,296

The information is freely available from the Department's searchable Lottery award database at www.lottery.culture.gsi.gov.uk, which uses information supplied by the Lottery distributors.

Sports Funding (Chorley)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what grants are available to build *(a)* a running track and *(b)* rugby football and other sports stadia in Chorley; and what other assistance her Department can give to such projects in Chorley. [172332]

Mr. Caborn: Grants for the provision of sports facilities, including running tracks and sports stadia, are available through the following programmes: Community Club Development Programme and Active England, administered by Sport England; and the New Opportunities Fund for PE and Sport, administered by the New Opportunities Fund. In addition, grants are available to support football facilities through the Football Foundation.

Chorley Cricket Club has benefited from a Community Club Development Fund grant of £53,000 to provide cricket practice areas and nets.

Terrestrial Television (Wales)

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many households in Wales she estimates cannot receive a terrestrial television signal from the public service broadcasters. [172440]

Estelle Morris: The spectrum planners working for the Government's Digital Action Plan have been working to improve the accuracy of the planning tools used to derive both analogue and digital coverage. Until this work is compieted, OFCOM estimates that approximately 3 per cent. of households in Wales are unable to receive PSB services (excluding Five) via terrestrial means (analogue or digital).

Analogue coverage for Five is not available on a per country basis. According to figures given by Ofcom, 20 per cent. of UK households do not currently have access to Five in analogue form, although some of these will be able to receive it by digital terrestrial TV.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the Government's response is to the recent request of the transitional Government in Afghanistan for extra military forces from NATO to ensure security; and if he will make a statement. [172050]

Mr. Ingram: The Afghan Transitional Authority holds ultimate responsibility for the security of the Afghan national elections due in September 2004. NATO's planned expansion of the International Security Assistance Force will, however, contribute to creating the security conditions within which free and fair elections may take place. As I explained to the

House on 31 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 96WS, we have offered to play a leading role in this expansion in Northern Afghanistan.

Army Air Corps (Medical Care)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what specialised diagnosis services are available to personnel based at *(a)* AAC Aldergrove, *(b)* AAC Hereford, *(c)* AAC Wattisham, *(d)* AAC Middle Wallop, *(e)* AAC Netheravon and *(f)* AAC Dishforth; [169988]

(2) what the average waiting time is for specialised diagnosis services available to personnel based at *(a)* AAC Aldergrove, *(b)* AAC Hereford, *(c)* AAC Wattisham, *(d)* AAC Middle Wallop, *(e)* AAC Netheravon and *(f)* AAC Dishforth. [169989]

Mr. Caplin: Specialised diagnosis services would require secondary care opinion that would normally be provided within the NHS, including those NHS Trusts which host Ministry of Defence Hospital Units. Waiting times would be based on clinical need and would vary depending on the type of specialised diagnosis required.

Cluster Bombs

Mr. Sarwar: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place a moratorium on the *(a)* use, *(b)* manufacture, *(c)* sale and *(d)* export of cluster bombs until new international law on the use and clearance of these weapons is introduced. [172024]

Mr. Ingram: No. Cluster bombs are legal weapons that are not indiscriminate. They provide a unique capability for use against wide area or dispersed targets. Were we not to use them, it would be necessary to use a large number of either unitary bombs or artillery shells to cover an equivalent area, involving a greater tonnage of explosive. Increasing the number of munitions launched also increases the risk that one or more launches may go astray. In many instances, using munitions other than cluster bombs may pose a far greater risk to civilians at the time of attack. Any applications for the export of cluster bombs would be considered on a case by case basis against criteria announced by the Foreign Secretary on 28 July 1997 and the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Sales.

Defence Medal Offices

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence to whom the legal title of the land occupied by the Droitwich Spa Army Medal Office belongs; and who would receive the proceeds of any sale of the site. [172034]

Mr. Caplin: The land was acquired on 30 March 1940 by 'The Commissioners of His Majesty's Works and Public Buildings'. Subsequent Government inter-departmental transfers culminated in the disaggregation of the Common User Estate by the Government's Property Holdings Unit in April 1996. This resulted in the land transferring (again on an inter-department basis) to the Ministry of Defence although technically the legal title remains with the successor to 'The Commissioners of His Majesty's Works and Public Buildings'. The proceeds of the disposal would fall to the MOD.

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will place in the Library a copy of the investment appraisal for the proposed closure of the Droitwich Spa Army Medal Office and the relocation of its services to RAF Innsworth; [172036]

(2) what the costs of upkeep and maintenance of the Army Medal Office, Droitwich Spa, were in the most recent year for which figures are available. [172037]

Mr. Caplin: A copy of the Investment Appraisal will be placed in the Library. It considered the options for co-location of all functions that will come into the Joint Personnel Administration Centre, but did not deal exclusively with the issue of the Army Medal Office. I have also placed in the Library a letter dated 18 March 2004 to the Trade Unions, in which more details were provided on the specific business and financial justification for the closure of Droitwich and the creation of the Joint Medal Office at RAP Innsworth.

For financial year 2003–04, the property management costs for the upkeep and maintenance of the Army Medal Office were some £110,000. This figure excludes staff and medal bullion/production costs. Utility costs for the same period were some £22,600.

HMS Trafalgar

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the safety of HMS Trafalgar following its repairs. [170663]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave on 6 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1713W, to my hon. Friend the Member for Leyton and Wanstead (Harry Cohen).

Infantry Anti-structure Weapon System

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his policy is on the procurement of an infantry anti-structure weapon system; and if he will make a statement. [167231]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to my Written Ministerial Statement of 6 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 86WS.

Iraq

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what laws apply to the activities of private contractors operating in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* UK controlled areas; and which courts have jurisdiction. [171441]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* average and *(b)* maximum tour lengths of troops deployed to Iraq since 1st May 2003 were for (i) territorial army and (ii) regular personnel; and if he will make a statement. [171442]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* The average tour length for troops deployed to Iraq, for both Territorial Army and Regular Army personnel, since 1 May 2003, is approximately five to seven months, while the maximum tour length is six months.

A small number of TA personnel have extended their period of mobilisation, and will have undertaken successive tours over the period, which in total will amount to over six months. Where this has occurred, it has been at the individual's own request.

Operation Telic

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when payments for expenses incurred in financial year 2003–04 relating to Operation Telic will be made to his Department. [172125]

Mr. Ingram: The net additional costs of Operation Telic are met from the Reserve in the year in which they fall. Funds to cover these costs are voted by Parliament under Request for Resources 2 in Main and Supplementary Estimates. Final expenditure will be reported in the notes to the Ministry of Defence's Annual Report and Accounts to be published in September.

Suez Medal

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how long it has taken, on average, to process each application for the General Service Medal, Suez Canal Zone, 1951–54. [172367]

Mr. Caplin: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 22 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 663W, to my hon. Friend the Member for The Wrekin (Peter Bradley).

The updated situation since then is:

Service Medal Office	*Applications received*
Royal Navy	5 November 2003
Royal Marines	As they arrive
Army	5 September 2003
RAF	11 November 2003

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many outstanding claims there are for the General Service Medal for serving in the Suez Canal Zone between 1951 and 1954. [172368]

Mr. Caplin: As at 7 May there were 29,153 applications requiring assessment. It is not possible to estimate the total number of claim applications that will be received.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many General Service Medals have been issued for service in the Suez Canal Zone between 1951 and 1954. [172369]

Mr. Caplin: As at 7 May 7,696 medals and/or clasps had been dispatched to veterans or their families.

Support Vehicle Contract

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will hold discussions with Leyland Trucks on the contract for the supply of the Support Vehicle. [172073]

Mr. Ingram: Leyland Trucks withdrew from the competition for the supply of the Support Vehicle in June 2002. This competition is now at an advanced stage and it would be inappropriate to invite their further interest. We are confident that the existing competition, involving four bidders, will deliver an operationally effective, value for money solution.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Council Housing (Stockton, South)

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of how the change in the level of council funding for housing has affected the residents of Stockton South since 1997. [171469]

Keith Hill: Since 1997 allocations of capital funding to local authorities for housing purposes have risen consistently by an average of 15 per cent. per annum. This includes the Major Repairs Allowance we introduced in 2001–02 specifically for the improvement of local authority housing stock alongside the Decent Homes Standard that set minimum standards to be met by 2010. Stockton's allocations in the period 1997 to 2003–04 have risen by some 320 per cent. In addition, Arms Length Management Organisation initial resources of £44.5 million are available with a further £8 million to follow to facilitate Decent Homes improvements over the whole of the Stockton borough.

Increased resources have also been generated through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and Single Housing Investment Partnerships (SHIP) to target non-decent and non-sustainable housing stock. In the last three years alone £12.7 million has been invested in the local authority housing stock with future investment up to 2010 expected to be £11.45 million.

In the private sector and as a result of successful SHIP/English Partnerships bids £6.9 million has been secured in addition to £532,000 for renovation grants, home repair assistance, empty homes and damp proofing.

Coverage Care

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 29 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1227W, on Coverage Care, when he expects the matter to be resolved. [172095]

Yvette Cooper: I understand that on 28 April 2004 all parties to Gloucestershire county council met in private session to discuss options for the long term continuation of care provision to the county. The council hope that this matter can be resolved by the end of the year.

Departmental Budget

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much he expects to spend in this financial year; how much was spent last year; how much is budgeted next year for writing off outstanding debt of local authorities that transfer housing stock; and from which budget this sum is allocated. [172276]

Keith Hill: Payments to meet local authorities' overhanging debt are made where the value of the housing stock transferring is less than a local authority's associated housing debt. £90.9 million was paid in 2003–04. The budget is £616 million for both 2004–05 and 2005–06. The payment reflects the liability the

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister would otherwise have to pay continuing subsidy on a local authority's housing attributable debt. It is not possible to use this resource for capital purposes.

Housing (Chorley)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his policy is on the percentage of housing land to be made available for *(a)* low cost housing and *(b)* part-rent-part-buy schemes in the Chorley constituency; and what advice he gives to local authorities on the matter. [172334]

Keith Hill: This is a matter for local assessment. National planning advice in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 "Housing" (PPG3) and Circular 6/98, 'Planning for Affordable Housing' makes it clear that each local authority should assess the local need for affordable housing within its area. Policy UR9 of Regional Planning Guidance for the North West gives further advice on the need for affordable housing.

PPG3 advises that where there is a demonstrable lack of such housing, local planning authorities should include a policy in their development plan seeking affordable housing in suitable housing developments. It advises them to identify sites on which affordable housing will be expected and to indicate the amount of such housing to be sought as a proportion of the overall dwelling provision on a site. Decisions about the amount and types of affordable housing to be provided in individual proposals should reflect local housing need and be a matter for agreement between the local authority and the developer.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has published for consultation proposed changes to the current policies for affordable housing set out in PPG3 and Circular 6/98. The proposed changes re-emphasise the above policy, but also include allowing local authorities to seek affordable housing on smaller sites where this is justified. The changes are designed to help deliver more affordable housing where it is needed, and deliver a better match between a community's housing needs and supply.

Housing Stock Transfer

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library the research evidence showing how housing stock transfer better meets the interests of tenants. [172274]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's housing research report entitled Views on the Large Scale Voluntary Transfer Process—May 2000, examines the degree to which tenants who have transferred from a local authority to a new landlord under a Large Scale Voluntary Transfer scheme are satisfied with their new landlord.

A copy of the report is available in the Library of the House.

Parliamentary Questions

John Thurso: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many *(a)* Ordinary Written and *(b)* Named Day Questions his Department received in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary session, broken down by month; [171187]

(2) what proportion of Ordinary Written Questions to his Department were answered within five sitting days of tabling, and what proportion of Questions for a Written Answer on a named day received a substantive answer on that day, in *(a)* the 2002–03 parliamentary session and *(b)* this parliamentary session, broken down by month. [171188]

Yvette Cooper: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House on 3 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 907W. The effective handling of parliamentary questions is an issue to which my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister and ministerial colleagues attach great importance, endeavouring to reply to all Parliamentary Questions within Parliamentary deadlines wherever possible.

The information requested is tabled as follows:

	Number of named day PQs tabled to ODPM	*Number of named day PQs answered on time (percentage)*	*Number of ordinary written PQs tabled to ODPM*	*Number of ordinary written PQs answered within five working days (percentage)*
Parliamentary Session 2002–03				
November 2002[1]	85	84.7	245	88.2
December 2002	60	91.7	155	87.1
January 2003	71	90.1	237	65
February 2003	27	85.2	253	63.2
March 2003	53	84.9	258	63.2
April 2003	21	95.2	176	61.4
May 2003	34	88.2	234	56.4
June 2003	27	74.1	253	73.1
July 2003	32	84.4	201	82.6
September 2003	16	31.3	115	58.3
October 2003	34	88.2	170	88.2
November 2003[2]	25	96	135	68.9
Parliamentary Session 2003–04				
November 2003[3]	11	100	38	86.8
December 2003	32	90.6	232	72.4
January 2004	105	73.3	393	85.5
February 2004	51	96.1	267	67
March 2004	75	90.7	320	72.5
April 2004	28	92.9	178	86.5

[1] 13 November to 30 November 2002.
[2] 1 November to 12 November 2003.
[3] 26 November to 30 November 2003.

Planning Inspectorate

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how the planning inspectorate has ensured that value for money was achieved when employing external consultants; and who was responsible for making such value for money assessments. [170045]

Keith Hill: The Planning Inspectorate follows standard Government purchasing procedures including best practice guidance issued by the Office of

Government Commerce from time to time. Particular care is taken to achieve value for money in the procurement of external consultancy which is always handled by the Agency's specialist procurement unit.

Public Bodies

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the staff numbers were for 2003 of the *(a)* Standards Board for England, *(b)* Advisory Panel on Beacon Councils and *(c)* Review of the Needs Indices used in the allocation of housing capital resources to local authorities and registered social landlords. [172471]

Keith Hill: The information requested is as follows.

(a) The number of staff in post at the Standards Board for England on 31 March 2003 was 105,

(b) the Advisory Panel on Beacon Councils, an advisory Non-Departmental Public Body, has no staff. Its board of 10 core members and 10 specialist advisors is supported by officials in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, and

(c) I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 29 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1257W.

Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects the planned re-valuation of the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre to be *(a)* finished and *(b)* published; and if he will make a statement. [169116]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects the revaluation to be completed later in 2004. The valuation report will not be published, but the valuation amount will be included in the Office for the Deputy Prime Minister's Resource Accounts for 2004–05.

Regional Assemblies

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1649W, on regional assemblies, what proportion of the set-up costs of elected regional assemblies he estimates will be *(a)* premises, *(b)* wages and salaries, *(c)* equipment and stationery and *(d)* other costs for (i) the North East, (ii) the North West and (iii) Yorkshire and the Humber. [169441]

Mr. Raynsford: Available estimates, rounded to the nearest 5 per cent. are:

Percentage

	North East	*North West*	*Yorkshire and the Humber*
Premises	10	5	5
Staff and supplies	35	20	25
Other	55	75	70

Tourism

Mr. Moss: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much was spent by local authorities in promoting tourism in each of the last 10 years to *(a)* domestic markets and *(b)* overseas markets. [172393]

Mr. Caborn: I have been asked to reply.

The only information available, for English local authority net expenditure on tourism, is as follows:

	Amount (£ million)
1998–99	75
1999–2000	92
2000–01	99
2001–02	106
2002–03	109
2003–04	102

Sources:
Revenue (Outturn) Forms 1998–99 to 2002–03, and Revenue Account (budget) form 2003–04.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Combined Heat and Power

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the development of combined heat and power in the UK in the last three years. [171031]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* In 2000 we announced a target of achieving at least 10,000 megawatts of Good Quality CHP capacity by 2010 and to developing a Strategy to achieve it. We consulted on a draft Strategy in 2002, reaffirmed our commitment to the target in the February 2003 Energy White Paper and published "The Government's Strategy for Combined Heat and Power to 2010" on 26 April of this year.

Development of CHP in terms of installed capacity for each of the last three years for which we have figures is: 4,730MWe in 2000, 4,753MWe in 2001 and 4,742MWe in 2002. A figure for 2003 will become available when the annual Digest of UK Energy Statistics (DUKES) is published in the summer by DTI.

Environmental Support

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on progress being made on the introduction of new entry level schemes for environmental support. [168792]

Mr. Morley: Entry Level Stewardship (ELS) has been developed in response to recommendations made by the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food. The ELS is intended to tackle countrywide environmental problems such as diffuse pollution, loss of biodiversity and landscape character and damage to the historic environment. A pilot scheme has been running in four areas of England since February 2003, and an evaluation of these pilots has confirmed that the scheme is popular with farmers and has the capacity to deliver widespread environmental benefits.

Following the success of the pilot, Defra intend to launch Entry Level Stewardship (ELS) as part of a new agri-environment scheme called Environmental Stewardship in early 2005. Proposals for the new scheme have recently been submitted to the European Commission for approval. It is proposed that the ELS should be open to all farmers in England and that they

will be paid at a flat rate of 30 per ha in return for carrying out a certain amount of environmental management options across their whole farm.

A parallel Organic Entry Level Stewardship (OELS) is proposed, which will have the same design as the standard Entry Level Scheme but would be tailored towards organic farming systems. It is proposed that organic farmers will receive a higher payment rate of 60 per ha, in recognition of the contribution that organic farming systems make towards increases in soil health and fertility, benefits for biodiversity and wider landscape benefits.

Entry Level Stewardship and its Organic equivalent will be complemented by Higher Level Stewardship, which is designed to build on the basic Entry Level in order to deliver significant environmental benefits in targeted high priority situations and areas. Further information on Environmental Stewardship will be available once Commission approval has been received. Final details of the new Scheme will be made available immediately prior to the launch in 2005. Application packs will not be available until the launch of the Scheme.

Flooding

Mr. Michael Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what assessment she has made of the impact of flash flooding in *(a)* Worcester, *(b)* Worcestershire and *(c)* England and Wales; and if she will make a statement; [170130]

(2) what advice she has received on the future incidence of flash flooding. [170131]

Mr. Morley: I understand the recent flash floods in Worcester resulting from exceptionally intense rainfall equivalent to around a month's rain in just a few hours. This caused extensive highway flooding and some local property flooding. This flooding was from surface runoff and storm sewer/highway drain overflow and not from the main river system.

Although the Environment Agency (EA) issued a Floodwatch and were operating a local storm balancing system on the Barbourne Brook in Worcester, the wider emergency response to the flash flooding fell for the most part to Severn Trent water and the local highway authority who are primarily responsible for responding to such incidents, the EA will be assisting its partners in the follow up investigation and the review of the storm event.

The Government recognise the need for Integrated Drainage Plans for urban areas prone to such flooding, and this will be considered as part of Defra's new strategy on flood and coastal erosion risk management. However any assessment on flash flooding would need to take into account detailed knowledge of the drainage systems in the area, the local topography, together with modelling of the effects of different types of event. This information is not generally available and carries a high degree of uncertainty. The EA are in the meantime working with Research Councils and the Flood Risk Management Research Consortium to develop improved modelling and prediction of flooding in urban areas.

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) if she will estimate how many properties in Cheltenham will be affected by flooding in a once in 100-year event if no bund is constructed at Cox's Meadow; [168387]

(2) if she will estimate how many properties will be affected by flooding in a once in 100-year event if *(a)* the Cheltenham Flood Alleviation Project including the bund at Cox's Meadow and *(b)* the Cheltenham Flood Alleviation Project approved in 1998 is constructed; [168388]

(3) if she will publish the results of modelling used to assess the impact of flooding in Cheltenham of a once in 100-year event; [168389]

(4) if she will make a statement of the expected impact on Cheltenham caused by a once in 100-year flooding event. [168390]

Mr. Morley: The final stage of the Cheltenham Flood Alleviation Scheme is currently being considered by Defra for formal approval.

The Project, including the bund at Cox's Meadow and the Project approved in 1998, was designed to protect over 600 properties from flooding up to, and including, a one in 100 year flood. I understand from the Environment Agency (EA) that with no bund constructed at Cox's Meadow, the majority of the 600 properties identified at risk before the project began would remain vulnerable.

The extent and impact of the 100 year modelled floods were published in the EA's Environmental Report for the Combined Works Contract dated October 2003. This report is available from Cheltenham Library or the local EA office at Tewkesbury. A summary of the modelling that has been prepared for the EA by their consultant's specifically for the benefit of interested parties and members of the public is also available from the local EA office.

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assistance her Department has provided to alleviate the risk of flooding in the London borough of Redbridge since 2000. [164878]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency has powers to undertake works to manage flood risk on designated "main rivers" while Redbridge borough council has similar powers for "ordinary watercourses" in their area.

The Agency is undertaking a study into flood risk from the River Roding which is due to report in December 2004. Working with Thames Water (which has responsibility for the drainage system) and the council, the Environment Agency aims to agree a strategy to reduce flood risk in the area. Funding of the Environment Agency's Flood defence function will almost entirely be funded by Defra from 1 April 2004.

Defra has also grant-aided the council for two studies—the Seven Kings Water Hydraulic Study and the Cran Brook Hydraulic Study, both carried out in 2001–02. Our grant amounted to £9,225.00 and £7,425.00 respectively for these two studies. I understand the council plans to apply for grant aid for

a further study in 2004–05 into flood risk adjacent to the River Roding in the Chigwell Road and Roding Lane South areas.

In addition the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister supports the borough's own flood defence expenditure through the local government funding system.

Flood Defence

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the written statement of 20 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 7–8WS, on the flood defence finding review, what other substantial reforms to improve accountability and effectiveness will be introduced in the next 12 to 24 months as part of the Government's development of a long-term strategy on flood defence. [171516]

Mr. Morley: The Government intend to consult on the proposed content of a new strategy for flood and coastal erosion risk management in England during summer 2004. The final strategy will have a long-term delivery plan from 2005 onwards.

Background information on the scope of the strategy and updates on progress are available via http://www.defra.gov.uk/environ/fcd/policy/strategy.htm

Government Funding (Animals)

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what Government funding was allocated to zoos in 2003–04. [169947]

Mr. Morley: The Department's spending on issues connected with zoos in 2003–04 totalled £36,708.76. This covered funding of the Zoos Forum (the Government's advisory body on zoos issues); publicity material relating to zoo policy (including a Defra Circular on the Zoo Licensing Act 1981 following amendments to that Act) and a research study on the operation of the Zoo Inspectorate.

In addition the Department donated £50,000 to 21st Century Tiger (a partnership between London Zoo and a non-governmental organisation called Global Tiger Patrol) to undertake tiger conservation projects in the wild.

These figures do not include the Department's staff costs for officials working on issues relating to zoos or spending by local authorities in respect of their statutory role under the Zoo Licensing Act 1981.

Household Waste

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will broaden the duty of care provisions under section 34 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to encompass prosecution for dumping of household waste. [169983]

Mr. Morley: A review of section 34 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, which sets out the framework for the current duty of care regime, began in March this year. The terms of reference for this review are currently being finalised, though it is expected that the review will consider the issue of householders and household waste.

It is currently a criminal offence under section 33 of the 1990 Act for a householder to dispose of household waste outside the curtilage of his or her property other than in accordance with a waste management licence.

Illegal Imports (Animals/Endangered Species)

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action her Department is taking to stop the illegal import of *(a)* animals and *(b)* endangered species into the United Kingdom. [169855]

Mr. Morley: Most commercial consignments of live animals must be imported into the UK via a Border Inspection Post (BIP) where import checks are carried out by a veterinarian. The only BIPS approved to check live animals in the United Kingdom are at Gatwick, Glasgow, Heathrow, Luton, Manchester, Prestwick and Stansted airports. There are no live animal BIPS at UK seaports.

Rabies susceptible mammals, including some commercial consignments, may be imported into specified ports and must be pre-licensed and moved directly from the port of entry to an approved quarantine establishment by an authorised carrying agent. The carrying agent submits a report to Defra to state that the animal has been delivered to the quarantine premises.

As an exemption to quarantine, cats and dogs may also enter under the Pet Travel Scheme. The animal must enter using an approved transporter on an approved route where the transport company is responsible for checks on the animals documents for compliance with the rules of the Scheme. If an animal is entering on an unapproved route then they are licensed into quarantine.

It is illegal to import rabies susceptible mammals into the UK without a licence issued by the Government. The penalties for not complying are detention of the animal in quarantine at the owners' expense, re-export or destruction. The person responsible is also liable to prosecution and/or imprisonment.

Accompanied pet birds have to be pre-licensed and under go quarantine under the supervision of a veterinarian at the place of destination.

Outside border inspection posts enforcement responsibility for ensuring that animals are not introduced illegally rests with the local authority. The State Veterinary Service (SVS) also take action when they receive information that animals have been illegally imported.

HM Customs and Excise have a presence at all points of entry and if they find live animals they detain or seize (as appropriate) and inform the local Divisional Veterinary Manager of the SVS.

The "Washington" Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, more commonly known as CITES, aims to protect certain plants and animals by regulating and monitoring

their international trade to prevent it reaching unsustainable levels. My Department acts within the UK as the UK CITES Management Authority.

As part of our efforts to stop the illegal import of endangered species a dedicated team of Customs officers is located at Heathrow airport and they are recognised worldwide as a "centre of excellence".

Furthermore, we are continuing to contribute to the National Wildlife Crime Intelligence Unit, to help counter serious national and international wildlife crime, including the import of endangered species.

Landfill Directive

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to her answer of 10 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1534W, on meetings with the Deputy Prime Minister on compliance with the Landfill Directive, on what dates meetings were held; and what was discussed on each occasion. [168371]

Mr. Morley: As stated in the answer of 10 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1534W, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has many meetings with the Deputy Prime Minister to discuss all manner of topics. However, while there have been exchanges of correspondence between my right hon. Friend and the Deputy Prime Minister on Landfill Directive compliance issues, there has not been a formal meeting to discuss this matter specifically.

Pharmaceutical Crops

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the use of pharmaceutical crops. [167830]

Mr. Morley: 'Pharmaceutical crops' is a term used for plants that have been genetically modified so that they contain proteins or other chemicals that may be used for the treatment of disease in humans or animals. Such plants are regulated as all other GMOs, and must be kept under contained conditions as required by the legislation on the contained use of GMOs. Release of such crops into the environment requires consent under the deliberate release legislation.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research into bio-pharmaceutical crops she has commissioned in the last five years; whether this research was carried out outdoors; and what plans her Department has to commission further research. [167831]

Mr. Morley: The Department has not commissioned any specific research in this area.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received from companies proposing to plant genetically modified food crops for commercial scale drug production. [167833]

Mr. Morley: We have not yet received any representations from companies proposing to plant genetically modified food crops for commercial scale drug production.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the Government's policy on pharmaceutical crops differs from its policy on other genetically modified crops. [167835]

Mr. Morley: The Government's policy on genetically modified organisms applies to any GM crop whether intended for pharmaceutical use or other purposes.

Recycling

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the tonnage of household recycling was in 2002–03 of the 10 local authorities in England that achieved the *(a)* highest and *(b)* lowest rates for household recycling in 2002–03. [169772]

Mr. Morley: Provisional results from Defra's 2002–03 Municipal Waste Management Survey indicate that the tonnage of household waste recycled and composted by the local authorities in England that achieved the 10 highest and lowest rates for household recycling and composting in 2002–03 (as measured by the Best Value Performance Indicator dataset for 2002–03), is as presented in the following table:

Local authority	*Type of local authority*[1]	*Tonnage of household waste recycled and composted in 2002–03*[2]
Daventry District Council	WCA	16,132
Lichfield District Council	WCA	17,428
Wyre District Council	WCA	11,312
Melton District Council	WCA	6,001
Isle of Wight District Council	UA	18,823
St. Edmundsbury District Council	WCA	14,258
Windsor and Maidenhead Borough Council	UA	19,009
Forest Heath District Council	WCA	7,444
Eastleigh	WCA	10,759
Chiltern District Council[3]	WCA	7,870
Dorset County Council[3]	WDA	55,658
Kettering District Council	WCA	1,412
North Tyneside Council	UA	3,735
Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council	WCA	2,778
Corby District Council	WCA	928
Tower Hamlets London Borough	UA	2,684
Bolsover District Council	WCA	1,030
Hackney London Borough	WCA	2,426
Sunderland City Council	UA	2,718
Barking and Dagenham London Borough	WCA	2,090
Liverpool Metropolitan Borough Council	WCA	3,320

[1] The Waste Disposal Authority (WDA) and Unitary Authority (UA) recycling rate includes all recycling in the area, i.e. the amount recycled by the authority through its own civic amenity sites plus the amount recycled by its constituent collection authorities through bring or kerbside collection schemes. Waste Collection Authorities' (WCA) rates do not take account of waste deposited at civic amenity sites for recycling or disposal.

[2] The tonnage of household waste sent for recycling and composting by each local authority is not collected with the Best Value Performance Indicator dataset. The tonnages given are collected through the Municipal Waste Management Survey 2002–03.

[3] Joint tenth place.

Sewers

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of the population in their domestic premises in Greater London has access to *(a)* mains sewerage systems, *(b)* unadopted sewers, *(c)* sewers connected to a private treatment facility and *(d)* septic tanks. [168943]

Mr. Morley: Detailed information on the number of properties served by various types of sewerage system is not available. However, estimates do exist.

(a) I have been informed by Thames Water that the vast majority of properties in the Metropolitan London area are connected to the foul water sewerage system. I understand that virtually every property has the opportunity to connect to the public sewerage system under Section 106 of the Water Industry Act 1991.

(b) Nationally around 40 per cent. of properties connect to public sewers via unadopted sewers. (This is assuming 'unadopted sewers' mean all private sewers i.e. they are not adopted by the relevant sewerage undertaker). Separate data for Greater London are not available.

(c) Nationally around 10 per cent. of properties are estimated to be connected to completely private systems. This includes those connected to private treatment facilities, septic tanks and cesspools. Separate data for Greater London are not available.

(d) No data are available on the number of properties with a septic tank, as distinct from other forms of private sewage treatment, either nationally or for Greater London.

Ship Dismantling (Teesside)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will place in the Library a copy of the environmental assessment underlying the decision that dismantling of the US ghost ships on Teesside is now the preferred environmental option; what views have recently been expressed on the matter by the Environment Agency; on what date her view was reached; and if she will make a statement. [169857]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 30 April 2004]:* The Government position remains as stated to the House on 22 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 435. Four US ships are currently docked in Graythorp dock near Hartlepool. Applications are due to be submitted for the necessary permissions for dismantling to take place at this location, and an associated Environmental Impact Assessment is being prepared. The applications will need to be considered by the relevant authorities. In the meantime, dismantling work is prevented, and the ships are subject to regular inspection by the Environment Agency.

Substitute Fuels Protocol

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures have been taken to consult the public over proposed amendments to the Environment Agency's Substitute Fuels Protocol. [169924]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency is undertaking a 12 week consultation on its proposals to revise the Substitute Fuels Protocol for use on cement and lime kilns, in accordance with Cabinet Office Code of Practice on Written Consultations. Responses are invited by 18 June 2004. The consultation document has been sent to a variety of stakeholders and published on the Environment Agency's website. The Agency has engaged with the environmental trade press to encourage coverage of the consultation in relevant magazines and journals.

In preparing the list of consultees for direct mailing, the Agency has included national organisations such as trade associations, Government agencies, local organisations and members of the public with an interest in this subject.

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received to extend the consultation period for amendments to the Environment Agency's Substitute Fuels Protocol. [169925]

Mr. Morley: The Department has not received any representations to extend the consultation period.

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will extend the consultation period for amendments to the Environment Agency's Substitute Fuels Protocol. [169926]

Mr. Morley: The consultation period, of 12 weeks, has been set in accordance with the Cabinet Office Code of Practice on Written Consultations. The Environment Agency considers that the 12-week period is appropriate in this case. The Agency has consulted on amendments to the Substitute Fuels Protocol on several consultations in the past.

Sustainable Development

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on *(a)* the positions taken by her delegation at the 12 Commission on Sustainable Development in New York and *(b)* the outcome of that meeting. [172020]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* The Twelfth UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD 12) met in New York from 19 to 30 April to review progress towards implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) commitments on water, sanitation and human settlements. Over 100 Ministers attended the ministerial segment (28 to 30 April) including my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and myself, along with senior representatives of the major UN and other international institutions. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan addressed the opening session.

The UK delegation, led by the Secretary of State, played a leading role at CSD 12, in concert with EU partners, in identifying obstacles to progress and examples of best practice. Amongst the priorities we identified were: incorporation of water, sanitation and

human settlements issues in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and national Sustainable development strategies; integrated water resource management plans to be in place by 2005; innovative financial mechanisms, such as the UK's proposed International Finance Facility; promotion of small-scale local initiatives and partnerships; and improved coordination between UN agencies and with international financial institutions.

CSD 12 raised the profile of these issues and stimulated inclusive and interactive debate by all parties. The Chairman's Summary of the ministerial segment recognises that we are not yet on track to meet the targets, identifies the main obstacles faced and picks up on most of the UK's priorities. It also sets out a number of challenges to be addressed in the second year of the cycle on water, sanitation and human settlements, culminating at CSD 13 in May 2005, which has the task of agreeing the policy responses needed to get back on track with these international targets.

Two Tree Island

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) which councils and bodies are responsible for monitoring pollution on Two Tree Island in the constituencies of Castle Point and Southend West; [170825]

(2) what assessment she has made of the risk to children on Two Tree Island of the accidental ingestion of dust or soil; [171527]

(3) what the cost was of the Halcrow Report into Two Tree Island; and what steps have been taken to publicise the report's conclusions; [171528]

(4) whether it is safe for the public to consume *(a)* vegetables and *(b)* fruit grown on Two Tree Island; [171529]

(5) what estimate she has made of the cost of stopping the old Two Tree Island waste dump polluting the environment; [170829]

(6) what assessment she has made of the potential and actual impact on *(a)* bird life, *(b)* marine life and *(c)* mammals of the pollutants within and seeping from the old Two Tree Island waste dump; [170830]

(7) which areas of land on Two Tree Island may be subject to contamination from leakage from *(a)* old landfill and *(b)* old sewage works; [171530]

(8) when repair work to Two Tree Island's sea wall was first identified as necessary; and when that work will commence; [171531]

(9) if she will give advice to *(a)* walkers and *(b)* bathers regarding the pollutants in and seeping from the old Two Tree Island waste dump; [170831]

(10) if she will list the health hazards to *(a)* walkers and *(b)* bathers around and on Canvey Island and Two Tree Island resulting from pollutants from the old Two Tree Island waste dump; [170832]

(11) if she will list the toxic substances *(a)* within and *(b)* seeping into the Thames and surrounding areas from the old Two Tree Island waste dump; and if she will make a statement; [170833]

(12) what assessment she has made of the extent of leakage of pollutants from the old Two Tree Island waste dump; [170834]

(13) if she will make a statement on the Halcrow Report into environmental problems associated with Two Tree Island in the Castle Point constituency; [170835]

(14) what investigations have been undertaken by the Environment Agency into leachate seeping into the Thames from Two Tree Island. [171532]

Mr. Morley: The local authorities, that is Southend borough council and Castle Point borough council, are responsible for preventing pollution from this landfill site as it was closed before 1990. In this case, the local authority is also the landowner and is responsible for the sea defences.

I understand that Southend borough council commissioned a consultant, Halcrow, in 2001 to assess the risks associated with the sea defence failure at Two Tree Island and to prepare a management strategy. Following wide consultation with relevant bodies, including the Environment Agency, a report was produced that considered the options. The local authorities involved are considering action in light of the recommendations made in the report.

Questions about the pollution risks and the assessment of any health impacts associated with this landfill site are a matter for the local authorities.

Warm Front

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in South Ribble have benefited from the Warm Front and Home Energy Efficiency Schemes. [171278]

Mr. Morley: The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme is now marketed as Warm Front. Between the launch of the scheme in June 2000 and the end of March 2004, approximately 1,800 households in South Ribble received assistance from the Scheme.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in Oldham, West and Royton have benefited from the Warm Front and Home Energy Efficiency Schemes. [170881]

Mr. Morley: The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme is now marketed as Warm Front. Between the launch of the scheme in June 2000 and the end of March 2004, approximately 3,600 households in Oldham West and Royton received assistance from the Scheme.

Water Report

Joyce Quin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department intends to hold a public consultation on the recommendations of the Report commissioned by her Department from PricewaterhouseCoopers on the future structure of the Consumer Council on Water and the future of WaterVoice organisations. [169478]

Mr. Morley: A wide range of groups were consulted by PricewaterhouseCoopers during their study of the organisational and regional structure of the Consumer Council for Water, including water industry representatives, consumer organisations, and WaterVoice members and staff.

The Government do not intend to carry out a further consultation. The priority now is to work towards a successful establishment of the Consumer Council for Water in October 2005 based on the consultants' report and to seek to minimise the uncertainties for WaterVoice and its staff.

Joyce Quin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost to her Department has been of commissioning the PricewaterhouseCoopers report on the structure of the Consumer Council on Water and the future of WaterVoice organisations. [169479]

Mr. Morley: The PricewaterhouseCoopers study of the organisational and regional structure of the Consumer Council for Water cost £93,261.41.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Asylum Processing

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what targets are in place for the length of time taken to process asylum claims; when these targets were introduced; and which Minister in his Department approved the setting of these targets. [166557]

Mr. Browne: The principal target for processing asylum claims made in 2003–04 is to decide and serve 75 per cent. within two months. This was an element of target 7 of the Home Office Public Service Agreement (PSA) covering the period 2003–04 to 2005–06. The PSA targets were agreed between my right hon. Friends the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer and formed the basis for the Home Office's funding settlement for SR2002.

The technical notes were published on 25 March 2003, and this was announced by Written Ministerial Statement on 25 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 55WS, by the Minister for the Environment and Agri-environment, my hon. Friend the Member for Scunthorpe (Elliot Morley). The notes are held on the Home Office website and can be accessed at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/inside/aims/index.html. The relevant section is on p20. Latest published performance figures against this target indicate that 80 per cent. of applications, received between April and September 2003, were decided and served within two months.

Body Armour

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the level of ballistic protection provided by *(a)* HG1 and *(b)* HG1A body armour. [172356]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* HG1 and HG1A are body armour protection levels defined in a Home Office body armour standard. Both HG1 and HG1A afford the same ballistic protection. They both provide protection against standard ammunition fired from short-barrelled handguns. In the case of HG1A a back face deformation of the armour to a maximum depth of 44mm is allowed and in the case of HG1 this maximum deformation is reduced to 25mm. The back face deformation is a measure of the trauma that would be inflicted.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he was informed *(a)* that Highmark Manufacturing Co Ltd. had changed the specification of its KCW223 model of body armour and *(b)* that the body armour used by some police forces did not meet the protective HG1/KR2 classification of the original tender. [172357]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* Highmark did not change the specification of the armour. In mid 2001 it incorporated a material that had been cured in a different way. They did not inform the Home Office of this change. It has now been established that the fully cured material affords a lower ballistic trauma protection level than the partially cured material. The Home Office was informed of the problem in February 2004 and established its extent in March 2004. All affected forces have been told what action they should take, and the manufacturers are providing upgrade packs to return the armour to the specified protection level.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department *(a)* which police forces and *(b)* how many police officers are using body armour supplied by Highmark Manufacturing Co Ltd. that does not meet the protective HG1/KR2 specification of the original tender. [172358]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* The police forces in England and Wales using KCW223 model of body armour supplied by Highmark Manufacturing Co Ltd. are Avon and Somerset constabulary, Cheshire constabulary, Cumbria constabulary, Devon and Cornwall constabulary, Dorset police, Durham constabulary, Greater Manchester police, Hampshire Constabulary, Lancashire constabulary, Leicestershire constabulary, North Wales police, South Wales police, West Midlands police and West Yorkshire police. 30,000 models of this armour have been supplied and the manufacturers are supplying upgrade packs to return the armour to its original HG1/KR2 level (where required).

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how long police forces have been using body armour supplied by Highmark Manufacturing Co Ltd. that does not meet the protective HG1/KR2 specification of the original tender. [172359]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* In mid 2001, Highmark Manufacturing Co Ltd. started using a material that makes up part of the construction of the armour model KCW223 which was supplied to police forces. This material had been cured in a different way to material previously used. This resulted in the armour in having a reduced ballistic (trauma) protection level in

terms of the HG1/A specification and a slightly reduced stab protection level that placed it just below the KR2 level in some carriers and just above KR2 in others.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how long police forces were using HG1A body armour before it was approved by his Department; and what action his Department is taking to ensure that police forces are issued with the certification of body armour they specify at tender. [172360]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* The Police Scientific Development Branch (PSDB) of the Home Office produces a body armour standard. HG1A is a body armour protection level, which was introduced in early 2002. PSDB approved test houses test body armour to the current PSDB standards and the results are published in the Manual of Ballistic and Stab Resistant Body Armour maintained by PSDB. When body armour is tested at a PSDB test house the manufacturer is asked to provide a Declaration of Construction that details the material used in the manufacture of the armour along with a detailed description of the construction of the armour. Any model of armour tested is assigned an identification number that uniquely identifies it and the test sample is retained by PSDB. This procedure is designed to ensure that all armour bearing a particular model number that has met a PSDB defined protection level, which is subsequently supplied by the manufacturer, is of the same construction as the original test armour.

Care Custody System

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects the Care Custody computer system to be fully operational throughout England and Wales. [170722]

Caroline Flint: The current plan proposes that the Custody and Case Preparation software applications will be installed and ready for service in all 43 Police Forces by October 2005 and that Forces will have the systems in full operational use by March 2006.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether *(a)* the Care Custody computer system will contain all data held in England and Wales regarding an individual and *(b)* the information will be limited to locally-held data. [170723]

Caroline Flint: As currently designed the bulk of the Custody and Case Preparation information will be held locally within the force area and only core data and that information required to be recorded on the PNC will be available nationally.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what timescale targets he intends to set for the input of data into the Care Custody system regarding custody decisions, bail and court decisions. [170724]

Caroline Flint: The current requirement established by the Association of Chief Police Officers and monitored by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, (HMIC), stipulates that the following timeliness performance indicators are required to be met by the Police for entry onto the Police National Computer:

Arrest and Charge

1. Initial key details of arrestee and charge—90 per cent. within 24 hours of arrest.

2. Full entry—90 per cent. within five days

3. Once compliance with 1 and 2 is obtained then a staged improvement to 90 per cent. within 24 hours for full entry.

Bail

1. Police bail 100 per cent. within 24 hours

Court Case Results—Police Entered.

2. 100 per cent. entered within 72 hours of the result from the court coming into Police possession.

Court Case Results—Court Entered 1.

100 per cent. within 24 hours.

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department *(1)* when he intends to reply to the letter to him from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, dated 19 February, with regard to Wajid Shamsul Hasan; [167260]

(2) when he intends to reply to the letter to him from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 25 March with regard to Mr. Amanah Ullah. [172254]

(3) when he intends to reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 30 March with regard to Ms S.A. Ntonga. [172255]

(4) when he intends to reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 30 March with regard to Mr. Cristian Cornel Peres. [172256]

Mr. Blunkett: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 11 May 2004.

Drugs

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what meetings Ministers have had with their counterparts from *(a)* Sweden, *(b)* Greece, *(c)* Belgium, *(d)* Denmark, *(e)* Finland, *(f)* Spain, *(g)* the USA, *(h)* Portugal, *(i)* Italy, *(j)* New Zealand, *(k)* Ireland, *(l)* Canada, *(m)* Jamaica, *(n)* the Netherlands, *(o)* Switzerland, *(p)* France and *(q)* Germany on drug abuse in the past two years. [171622]

Caroline Flint: Over the past two years, in addition to the regular contacts we have with European colleagues in the Council of Ministers and with other counterparts at other international meetings, my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary has met counterparts from Greece, Belgium, Denmark, the United States, Italy, Ireland, Canada, the Netherlands, Germany and France; my predecessor as Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Home Office with responsibility for drugs issues, my hon. Friend the Member for Coventry, North-East (Mr. Ainsworth), met his counterparts from Ireland, Jamaica and France; I have met my counterparts from Jamaica and the Netherlands. As a matter of major concern to Home Affairs and Justice Ministers across the world, drugs will have featured in most of these discussions. Home Office Ministers also have ready

access to drug policies and practice in those countries through published reports from and about them and through advice from officials and others who keep in close touch with developments.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what public funds were spent on tackling drugs misuse in Oldham, West and Royton in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* 2003–04. [170957]

Caroline Flint: Breakdown of financial allocation to local constituencies is not available to the Home Office. Funding is allocated to Drug Action Team (DAT) areas, in this case Oldham Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT).

The period 1997–98 pre dates the Government's current National Drug Strategy. Expenditure across all appropriate agencies in the area at this time is estimated to have been £977,350. This figure is based on locally held information for the period 1998–99 and has been supplied by Oldham DAAT.

In 2003–04 the total drugs allocation for Oldham was £1,697,123. In order to ensure consistency figures supplied are based on funding streams associated with the National Drug Strategy and are readily verifiable. These funding streams are specifically targeted at tackling the harm caused to individuals, families and communities by the misuse of drugs. Other mainstream funding is made available at a local level, this varies and both in amount and origin as a result it is not possible to provide robust financial information.

2003–04

	£
Partnership Capacity	69,259
Treatment Pooled Budget	1,016,000
Through Care After Care Pump Priming	35,000
Building Safer Communities[1]	386,069
Young people	190,795
Total	1,697,123

[1] Contains non-drug elements.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what public funds were spent on tackling drugs misuse in South Ribble in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* 2003–04. [171656]

Caroline Flint: Breakdown of financial allocation to local constituencies is not available to the Home Office. Funding is allocated to Drug Action Team (DAT) areas, in this case Lancashire DAT.

In 1997–98 (pre-dating National Drugs Strategy) funding available to Lancashire DAT area totalled £670,000.

In 2003–04 the total drugs allocation for Lancashire was £6,015,000. In order to ensure consistency, figures supplied are based on funding streams associated with the National Drug Strategy and are readily verifiable. These funding streams are specifically targeted at tackling the harm caused to individuals, families and communities by the misuse of drugs. Other mainstream funding is made available at a local level; this varies both in amount and origin, as a result it is not possible to provide robust financial information.

2003–04

	£
Partnership capacity	118,000
Treatment pooled budget	3,980,000
Through care after care pump priming	35,000
Building safer communities[1]	1,147,000
Young people	735,000
Total	6,015,000

[1] Contains non-drug elements.

Emergency Services

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many administrators were involved, and at what cost, in each police authority, to deal with the paperwork resulting from emergency police vehicles captured on speed cameras contravening speed limits. [170733]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not collected centrally.

European Communities Association Agreement

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Ministers in his Department were informed of the letter from the UK Vice Consul in Bulgaria to the Home Office Business case Unit, of 20 November 2002, regarding the operation of the European Communities Association Agreement scheme. [166558]

Mr. Browne: The operation of the ECAA scheme, including letters to the Home Office about it, is covered by the investigation which Ken Sutton is undertaking of the operation of the ECAA scheme for Bulgaria and Romania. I do not wish to pre-empt the investigation by commenting on the issues before it is completed.

Explanatory Notes

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions the Department did not make explanatory notes available on the day a Bill was published in the last two years; and what steps are being taken to ensure that this does not occur in future. [165897]

Fiona Mactaggart: This has happened on only one occasion in the last two years. The guidance issued to Bill teams makes clear that "Explanatory Notes" must accompany the Bill and this is also reflected in the training they receive.

Forensic Science Service

Mr. Pound: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the outline business case and financial analysis of the privatisation of the Forensic Science Service will be published. [171397]

Caroline Flint: It is not intended to privatise the Forensic Science Service, but to develop the organisation as a public private partnership (PPP). The outline business case currently being prepared will look in detail at how to optimise the performance and economic prospects of the PPP and will include a

financial analysis of the impact of the proposed change of status. We expect to be able to announce the results of the work on the outline business case by July.

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many times since July 2003 he has met trade unions representing the Forensic Science Service workforce to discuss the future of the Service. [171759]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* Ministers last met formally with the Forensic Science Service trade union representatives on 20 October 2003. Since then there have been a number of helpful meetings at official level.

Immigration (Northern Ireland)

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions have been held between his Department and the Police Service of Northern Ireland regarding immigration irregularities in *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* south Belfast. [158610]

Mr. Browne: UK Immigration Service (UKIS) has an office in Belfast and there is regular contact between the Police Service for Northern Ireland (PSNI) and UKIS staff. At operational level, the police refer details of potential immigration offenders, and UKIS staff work with them to investigate illegal working allegations and other similar issues. At a more strategic level there is a local Immigration Organised Crime group, chaired by PSNI, with delegates from UKIS, the police and the Garda National Immigration Bureau, Dublin, which meets regularly to discuss matters relating to immigration crime in Northern Ireland (including cross border issues).

Apart from routine day-to-day contact in respect of immigration offenders throughout Northern Ireland, South Belfast has not been the subject of any special discussions in respect of immigration irregularities.

North London Mosque

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on *(a)* the policing of street preaching outside North London Central Mosque and *(b)* monitoring the compliance of views expressed in that preaching with the law. [169785]

Caroline Flint: The Commissioner of the Police for the Metropolis tells me that the activities outside the Finsbury Park Mosque are monitored by the Metropolitan police who have a duty to ensure public safety and to prevent crime and disorder. It is an offence to use threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour with intent or likelihood to stir up racial hatred. The police will take action where appropriate.

Road Traffic Offences

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1398W, on road traffic offences, if he will list the centres at which information about points on licences is recorded. [171914]

Caroline Flint: Information about the number of points on the licences of individual motorists is recorded on the database maintained by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency.

Speed Camera (Grape's Hill)

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the total value of fines levied as a result of the speed camera at Grape's Hill in Norwich from its installation until its removal. [171745]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* Information on the value of fines made at specific speed camera locations is not collected centrally.

Tetra

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Perth (Annabelle Ewing) of 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 354W, on Tetra, if he will set out details of the comprehensive programme of work on Tetra health issues; and what institutions are carrying out this work. [171915]

Caroline Flint: Following the publication in May 2000 of the Stewart Report on Mobile Phones and Health, we took expert advice from the National Radiological Protection Board's independent Advisory Group on Non-Ionising Radiation (AGNIR) on the health and safety aspects of TETRA technology.

The AGNIR experts confirmed that it was unlikely that the specific features of TETRA technology could pose a risk to health and suggested a number of areas where further research would be useful. These suggestions have been taken forward as follows:

The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) is assessing the effects of TETRA exposure on various types of cells. Dstl concluded that TETRA has no effect on calcium exchanges in cells. Further work on epileptiform activity and cognitive performance is underway.

Imperial College is carrying out a national health monitoring study of police users of Airwave.

The University of Birmingham and the University of Manchester are looking into patterns of work of Airwave users.

Microwave Consultants Limited are measuring Specific Absorption Rates (SARs) from TETRA equipment.

The National Radiological Protection Board have completed further work on modelling SARs.

The Radiocommunications Agency (now Ofcom) checks emission levels from TETRA base stations.

In addition, we are funding TETRA research as an adjunct to the Mobile Telecommunications and Health Research (MTHR) programme. Studies funded under this arrangement are selected and managed by the MTHR Programme Management Committee. As part of this adjunct programme, the Burden Neurological Institute in Bristol is examining possible effects of microwave radiation on the electrical activity of the brain.

These extensive studies have shown no evidence of any particular risk to health from TETRA.

Fuller details of the research programme are available on the Home Office website at: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/docs/tetra.html.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Environmental Performance

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission if he will place in the Library a copy of the review of environmental performance, which the Commission has commissioned. [171511]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The Report will be placed in the Library once it has been considered by the Board of Management.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Infant Deaths

Mr. Curry: To ask the Solicitor-General if she will make a statement on the progress of the Attorney-General's review into infant deaths following the Cannings Judgment. [171552]

The Solicitor-General: I would refer the hon. Member to the Attorney-General's statement, 5 May 2004, *Official Report, House of Lords*, column WS55.

TREASURY

Cancer

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the change in the incidence of cancer in each region since the Chernobyl nuclear accident. [171927]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mrs. Patsy Calton, dated 12 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning what assessment has made of the incidence of cancer in each region since the Chernobyl nuclear accident.

The Chernobyl nuclear accident occurred on 28th April 1986. The attached table gives the incidence of all cancers in England, from 1986 to 2000 (the most recent year for which data are available), by Government Office Region.

Changes over time in the number of cancers registered are affected by many factors unrelated to the Chernobyl accident. These include historic change in smoking patterns, increased testing and screening for specific cancers (e.g. prostate, breast, cervix), and improved ascertainment by regional cancer registries.

Directly age-standardised[1] rates per 100,000 population of newly diagnosed cases of all cancers[2] to residents[3] of England, by Government Office Region, 1986–2000

	England	North East	North West	Yorkshire and the Humber	East Midlands
1986	321	345	335	332	313
1987	328	333	333	334	324
1988	337	344	338	341	324
1989	337	351	344	338	322
1990	339	360	346	343	318
1991	340	353	354	344	333
1992	349	351	360	354	347

	West Midlands	East of England	London	South East	South West
1986	326	321	308	312	305
1987	328	330	326	323	323
1988	347	338	339	329	334
1989	340	330	342	332	333
1990	345	327	340	336	337
1991	350	321	338	334	335
1992	356	326	347	346	355

	England	North East	North West	Yorkshire and the Humber	East Midlands
1993	348	360	354	352	350
1994	352	359	374	355	346
1995	353	349	379	354	337
1996	351	373	379	354	354
1997	359	373	368	364	344
1998	357	394	374	360	345
1999	360	395	373	356	353
2000	361	393	375	373	355

	West Midlands	East of England	London	South East	South West
1993	357	322	336	350	359
1994	346	328	342	352	358
1995	358	337	353	354	347
1996	356	331	341	342	339
1997	349	345	372	359	354
1998	364	335	361	347	351
1999	362	337	351	352	381
2000	361	338	355	355	365

[1] Using the European standard population

[2] All cancers defined as all malignant cancers excluding non-melanoma skin cancer (International Classification of Diseases Ninth revision (ICD-9) codes 140–208, excluding 173; ICD-10 codes C00-C97, excluding C44)

[3] Figures relate to cancers recorded by English cancer registries, where the patient was identified as usually resident in England

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Coalminers' Compensation Scheme

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment the National Audit Office *(a)* has made and *(b)* has been asked to make of the loss to the taxpayer from double charging by solicitors under the coalminers' compensation scheme. [170742]

Nigel Griffiths: I am not aware that the National Audit Office (NAO) has made an assessment about solicitors double charging. The NAO sets its own priorities.

Customs and Excise

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what use of ion scanners is made by HM Customs and Excise. [171619]

John Healey: HM Customs and Excise use ion scanners at all main ports and airports in the UK, primarily to detect traces of prohibited Class A drugs in baggage, freight and vehicles. They also use them to train Customs officers from international partner countries in the fight against the illicit drugs trade.

Departmental Expenditure (Entertainment)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of the amount spent by his Department on official entertainment in each year from 1996–97 to 2004–05. [169008]

Ruth Kelly: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave to him and the hon. Member for North Wiltshire (Mr. Gray) on 24 March 2003, *Official Report*, columns 60–71W.

Expenditure on official entertainment for 2002–03 was £137,000. Figures exclude expenditure on major events such as G7 meetings of ECOFIN. 2003–04 figures will be available after finalisation of the annual resource accounts.

Financial Services and Markets Act

Ian Lucas: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what plans he has to review the conduct of the scheme operated under section 225 of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000; [172195]

(2) if he will order the amendment of the Dispute Resolution section of the Financial Services Authority's Handbook of Rules and Guidance to improve the speed of consideration of determinations; [172196]

(3) when he expects the review of the Financial Ombudsman Service to report; [172197]

(4) if he will make a statement on the operation of the Independent Assessor of the Financial Ombudsman Service. [172198]

Ruth Kelly: The Financial Ombudsman Service is an independent organisation. In November last year, I announced the two-year review of the operation of the Financial Services and Market Act 2000. As part of that review, I asked the Financial Services Authority and the Financial Ombudsman Service to review the circumstances in which the Financial Services Authority takes regulatory action instead of individual cases being determined by the Ombudsman and to consider introducing a process by which firms may appeal against Ombudsman decisions. The Financial Services Authority and the Financial Ombudsman Service plan to publish a joint consultation paper by early June.

Responsibility for setting timescale targets for the resolution of complaints is a matter for the Financial Ombudsman Service. The Financial Ombudsman Service sets out for consultation annually a draft Plan and Budget of its overall financial and workload targets, including the number of cases it expects to receive and the number it intends to resolve, overall costs, productivity rates, and average timescales within which it aims to resolve cases. Cases that are not resolved within 12 months are monitored by the Board of the Financial Ombudsman Service.

The role of the Independent Assessor is to carry out a final review of the service provided by the Financial Ombudsman Service, in cases where the consumer remains dissatisfied with the Financial Ombudsman Service, the Independent Assessor can investigative the Ombudsman's process and the behaviour of its staff. Disagreements about the merits of decisions are expressly excluded from his jurisdiction but is authorised to make findings and recommendations for redress in cases where he believes it is justified.

Iraq

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of Iraq's external debt. [171983]

John Healey: The latest IMF estimate suggests Iraq's external debt is approximately US$120 billion.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of Iraq's *(a)* gross national product and *(b)* income to the state in 2004–05. [171984]

John Healey: In April this year, the Coalition Provisional Authority forecast the Iraqi Government's total revenue for fiscal year 2004 at US$14.5 billion.

Figures for Iraq's Gross Domestic Product were published in October 2003 by the World Bank and United Nations in their Joint Iraq Needs Assessment. These very preliminary estimates showed GDP for 2004 to be in the range of $15–20 billion.

IT Equipment

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many businesses in South Ribble have benefited from the 100 per cent. tax exemption for the purchase of computer and internet equipment. [172000]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Huntingdon (Mr. Djanogly) on 5 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1505W.

Job Vacancies

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many job vacancies there were in South Ribble in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [171998]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. David Borrow, dated 12 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about job vacancies in South Ribble. (171998)

According to Jobcentre Plus administrative records, the number of unfilled vacancies notified to Jobcentres in Lancashire West Jobcentre Plus District was 4,730 on average during 1997. This represents only a proportion of all the vacancies available, as not all vacancies are notified to Jobcentres.

Figures are not available for South Ribble alone because the vacancies are allocated to local Jobcentres, not according to constituency boundaries, and because of the practice of notifying some vacancies centrally with one Jobcentre taking vacancies for others in the same district. Jobcentre vacancy statistics were withdrawn from National Statistics in September 2001 as a result of distortions to the data, which occurred following the introduction of new administrative procedures by Jobcentre Plus. Comparable figures for vacancies in 2003 are therefore unavailable.

Results from the ONS Vacancy Survey were released as National Statistics from July 2003, but are not available for local areas.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many job vacancies there were in Bootle in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [172331]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Joe Benton, dated 12 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about job vacancies in Bootle. (172331)

According to Jobcentre Plus administrative records, the number of unfilled vacancies in the Liverpool travel-to-work area was 4,403 on average during 1997. This represents only a proportion of all the vacancies available, as not all vacancies are notified to Jobcentres.

Figures are not available for Bootle alone because the vacancies are allocated to local Jobcentres, not according to constituency boundaries, and because of the practice of notifying some vacancies centrally with one Jobcentre taking vacancies for others in the same district.

Jobcentre vacancy statistics were withdrawn from National Statistics in September 2001 as a result of distortions to the data, which occurred following the introduction of new administrative procedures by Jobcentre Plus. Comparable figures for vacancies in 2003 are therefore unavailable.

Results from the ONS Vacancy Survey were released as National Statistics from July 2003, but are not available for local areas.

Unemployment

Mr. Benton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the level of unemployment was in Bootle in each year since 1997. [172330]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Joe Benton, dated 12 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment in the Bootle Constituency.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

The table below gives the annual average number of JSA claimants for the Bootle constituency for each year since 1997.

	Number of claimants
1997	4,368
1998	3,828
1999	3,516
2000	3,218
2001	2,873
2002	2,706
2003	2,543

WALES

Advisers/Consultants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how much his Department spent on external consultants and advisers in each of the last three years. [171879]

Mr. Touhig: The Wales Office has spent the following amounts on external consultants and advisers in each of the last three financial years:

	£
2001–02	44,650
2002–03	6,599
2003–04	587

Health Service Funding

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales pursuant to his oral answer of 5 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1329, on health service funding, if he will list the 10 hospitals which are planned or have been started in Wales. [172347]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* Since 2001, two hospitals—Neath/Port Talbot and St. David's, Cardiff—have been opened.

Two additional hospitals—the second Rhondda and Tenby hospitals—have completed business case development and received approval

The following six hospitals are currently going through various stages of business case development:

Holywell

Porthmadog

Blaenau Gwent (Ebbw Vale)

Caerphilly

Cynon Valley

Merthyr Community.

Nuclear Power Plants (Air Security)

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Secretary of State for Defence and *(b)* the First Secretary of the National Assembly for Wales on emergency planning procedures to deal with a serious nuclear incident since the release of information by the Ministry of Defence on 1 May 2004 on incidents involving military aircraft and the Berkeley nuclear installations. [171648]

Mr. Touhig: Further to the answer given to my hon. Friend by my right hon. Friend the Minister of State for the armed forces on 6 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1714W, I can confirm that in the UK, off-site civil nuclear emergency planning has been well established over many years. This includes emergency plans which are prepared for all UK nuclear sites by first tier local authorities under the Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2001. The emergency response arrangements are regularly tested in a programme of off-site exercises which bring together local and national organisations, and which are followed up both locally and nationally through the DTI-chaired Nuclear Emergency Planning Liaison Group.

Restricted areas of two nautical miles radius are in place around all major nuclear installations, which apply to both military and civil aircraft.

The Secretary of State for Wales meets with the Secretary of State for Defence and the First Secretary of the National Assembly for Wales on a regular basis to discuss a range of issues, including emergency planning.

Productivity

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what his policy is for *(a)* increasing the productivity and *(b)* cutting the costs of his Department. [172193]

Mr. Hain: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 148W.

Timber

Mr Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales whether his Department plans to contribute financially to the establishment of the second phase of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [167621]

Mr. Hain: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Minister of State for Environment and Agri-Environment on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 31W.

CABINET OFFICE

Panel for Regulatory Accountability

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office pursuant to his answers of 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1444W and 1404–405W, on the Panel for Regulatory Accountability, who the chairman of the Panel for Regulatory Accountability is. [172097]

Mr. Alexander: In future, any regulatory proposals likely to impose a major new burden on business will require clearance from the Panel for Regulatory Accountability chaired by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, and in his absence my right hon. Friend the Chancellor. I will chair panel meetings which consider specific regulatory and policy issues.

Regulatory Impact Assessments

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many regulatory impact statements have been brought to his attention in the last 12 months, with particular reference to the Evaluation of Regulatory Impact Assessments Compendium Report 2003–04, March 2004, pages 25–26. [171610]

Mr. Alexander: The Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) is a paragraph that can be included in the Cabinet paper or ministerial letter to colleagues seeking collective agreement to a proposal that impacts on business. The Small Business Service can have its view recorded in both the Regulatory Impact Assessment and the RIS. Such correspondence is routinely sent to all members of the relevant Cabinet Committee. As has been the practice under previous Administrations, Cabinet Committee correspondence is exempt from disclosure under Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. All Regulatory Impact Assessments (RIAs) must include an assessment of the impact of the proposal on small firms' except where the proposal solely affects the public services.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Employment Statistics

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* unemployment claimants and *(b)* job vacancies there were in each region of the UK in each of the last 12 months. [172127]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. George Osborne, dated 12 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployed claimants and job vacancies in each region of the UK in each of the last 12 months. (172127)

The attached Table 1 gives the number of claimants of Jobseeker's Allowance, seasonally adjusted, for each Government Office Region, and for the UK in total, for each of the 12 months up to March 2004.

The attached Table 2 shows the total numbers of job vacancies in the UK for each month, according to the ONS Vacancy Survey. These vacancy statistics are not available for regions. As these statistics only began in April 2001, they are not yet available on a seasonally adjusted basis.

Jobcentre vacancy statistics, which used to be available by region, were withdrawn from National Statistics in September 2001 as a result of distortions to the data which occurred following the introduction of new administrative procedures by Jobcentre Plus.

Table 1: Monthly average number of claimants of Jobseeker's Allowance (seasonally adjusted) April 2003—March 2004, UK Government Office Regions

Thousand

Government Office Region	*April*	*May*	*June*	*July*	*August*	*September*	*October*	*November*	*December*
2003									
March									
East Midlands	59.0	59.6	60.2	59.7	59.3	59.3	59.1	58.3	57.4
Eastern	58.5	59.2	59.4	58.6	58.0	57.8	57.5	57.5	57.0
London	172.0	172.8	172.8	171.6	170.9	170.5	170.2	169.3	168.6
North East	53.6	54.5	53.4	52.5	52.2	52.0	51.3	50.8	50.0
North West	112.9	113.9	113.4	112.1	110.6	110.4	109.5	107.7	105.9
Northern Ireland	34.3	35.0	35.1	34.1	34.5	34.6	34.7	34.3	34.0
Scotland	99.7	100.3	100.8	99.8	98.6	99.6	99.4	98.6	97.9
South East	75.7	76.3	76.5	76.2	75.9	76.2	76.0	75.9	75.3
South West	48.8	49.6	49.9	49.1	48.4	48.1	47.6	46.7	45.8
Wales	45.5	45.7	45.6	45.0	44.3	43.6	43.2	42.7	42.1
West Midlands	95.3	95.8	95.6	94.9	94.6	94.3	94.2	93.6	93.1
Yorkshire and The Humber	84.6	85.8	85.7	84.0	82.9	82.7	81.9	80.1	78.4
UK	939.9	948.5	948.4	937.6	930.2	929.1	924.6	915.5	905.5

Government Office Region	*January*	*February*	*March*
2004			
March			
East Midlands	55.6	*54.8*	54.7
Eastern	56.3	*56.4*	56.5
London	167.2	*166.0*	165.3
North East	49.1	*48.2*	47.7
North West	103.2	*103.2*	102.5
Northern Ireland	33.5	*33.0*	32.5
Scotland	96.2	*96.2*	95.9
South East	74.5	*74.0*	73.6
South West	44.6	*44.0*	43.7
Wales	41.5	*41.5*	41.5
West Midlands	92.6	*92.1*	91.6
Yorkshire and The Humber	77.4	77.0	76.7
UK	891.7	*886.4*	882.2

Source:
Jobcentre Plus administrative system.

Table 2: Monthly number of job vacancies (not seasonally adjusted) UK, April 2003 to March 2004

Thousand

Month/year	*Number of vacancies*
2003	
April	564.5
May	605.3
June	578.8
July	568.6
August	609.9
September	642.7
October	651.3
November	620.3
December	552.0
2004	
January	515.9
February	622.1
March	629.0

Source:
ONS Vacancy Survey.

Health and Safety

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he last met members of the Health and Safety Executive; and what was discussed. [168231]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 28 April 2004]:* My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State met with the Director General of the Health and Safety Executive together with the Chair of the Health and Safety Commission on 1 August 2002. He welcomed the Commission and the Executive to the Department, discussed and agreed their strategic priorities and arrangements for them to meet regularly with the Minister of State for Work.

My right hon. Friend also met with Deputy Director General (Policy) on 13 November and 18 November 2003. They discussed implementation of European legislation in the UK.

Jobcentre Plus

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) when the Jobcentre Plus Provider Liaison Group was formed; [168842]

(2) who the members are of the Jobcentre Plus Provider Liaison Group; [168843]

(3) what the main *(a)* function and *(b)* purpose is of the Jobcentre Plus Provider Liaison Group; [168844]

(4) what the selection process is for the membership of the Jobcentre Plus Provider Liaison Group; [168845]

(5) how often and where the Jobcentre Plus Provider Liaison Group meetings take place. [168846]

Jane Kennedy: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of the Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from David Anderson to Mr. George Osborne, dated 12 May 2004:

As Jobcentre Plus is an Executive Agency, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions has asked me to reply to your questions concerning the Jobcentre Plus Provider Liaison Group. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

The inaugural meeting of the Jobcentre Plus Provider Liaison Group was held on the 6th September 2002.

The Jobcentre Plus Provider Liaison Group's membership includes representatives from several of our largest work-based private sector providers, together with providers in the voluntary and community sector, smaller private providers and Further Education establishments. In addition, membership includes the Association of Learning Providers (ALP), a trade body for the work-based sector who represent approximately 30% of Jobcentre Plus providers. The Group is supported by a small secretariat from Jobcentre Plus. Full membership of the Group is set out in Annex 1.

The purpose of the Group is to provide a forum in which providers are consulted on changes to policy and operational processes. In practice this gives them the opportunity to comment upon policies from their perspective as organisations that deliver these policies. The Group enables Jobcentre Plus to obtain the views of providers from a wide background and should help ensure that our business can be delivered more effectively and efficiently.

There is no formal selection process. In order to ensure the arrangements are manageable, the Group has a membership of approximately 20. However, we do try to be inclusive as possible, and membership is potentially open to each of our providers. In setting up the group we attempted to ensure that a range of providers was represented. In addition to our inviting a number of the largest providers, each Jobcentre Plus Region was requested to nominate a local provider, to ensure that the Group offers views from smaller providers. Some Jobcentre Plus regions also hold their own meetings of local provider groups where there are region-specific issues to discuss.

The Group meets on a regular basis, usually bi-monthly, and meetings are held in Sheffield.

I hope this is helpful.

Annex 1: Jobcentre Plus Provider Group Membership

Contact	*Provider*
David Bailey	Action for Employment
Steve Marsland	Action for Employment
Pat Taylor	Personnel Evaluation Consultants
George Allon	BTCV
Roger Cole	Pelcombe Training
Stephanie Baslington	Rathbone
Janet Pibworth	Seetec
Jim McIntosh	Shaw Trust
Teresa Jolly/Colin Kearney	Sheffield City Council
George Baines	Standguide
Jim Gambles	Standguide
Martin Dunford	TBG learning
Dawn Marsh	The Training Network Group
A Townson	Bournemouth and Poole College
Gerard Irwin	Reed Co. UK.
Sian Woolson	Dash Training Ltd
Diane Prosser	Dash Training Ltd
Sharon Cooke	Bethany Group
Sarah Cooke	DHP enterprises
David Cameron	Scottish Council for voluntary organisations
Sarah Knight	Instant Muscle
Paul Warner	ALP
Adrienne Nolan	WACG LMD Skills and Int
Beth Simpson	DFES
Peter Jordan	LSC
David Williams	TD management Services
Jill Valentine	UFI

Pensions

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer of 23 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 709W, on pension forecasts, how many *(a)* employers and *(b)* pension providers participated in the service in each year since its introduction. [171100]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of employers and pension providers who participated in the combined pension forecast service, in each year since the combined pension forecast service was introduced is contained in the following table.

	Employers	*Pension providers*
2002 (up to)	5	2
2002–03	7	—
2003–04	64	2

In 2004–05 to date a further 59 employers have agreed to participate.

The table shows two pension providers, however an earlier answer provided on 5 June 2003, *Official Report*, column 546W, stated that four providers were participating.

The difference is accounted for by:

Countrywide Assd Caspil and Countrywide Assd Vax (listed as separate providers in the original reply) have now merged into a single organisation.

Liverpool Victoria Friendly Society was incorrectly described as a provider and has now been correctly classified as an employer.

Sure Start Maternity Grant

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many mothers in South Ribble have made use of the Sure Start maternity grant. [172142]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested, the available information is in the tables.

Sure Start maternity grants for Preston Social Fund District

	Applications	*Awards*
2000–01	1,276	1,106
2001–02	1,536	1,305
2002–03	1,836	1,531
2003 (April)	152	95

Sure Start maternity grants for area covered by Lancashire West Jobcentre Plus District

	May 2003 to March 2004
Applications	4,866
Awards	3,710

Notes:
1. South Ribble Parliamentary Constituency used to be part of Preston Social Fund District. In May 2003, Preston Social Fund District was combined with Blackpool Social Fund District and parts of South West Lancashire and, Lancaster and South Cumbria Social Fund Districts to form Lancashire West Jobcentre Plus District. The data for the two areas is not comparable.
2. Sure Start Maternity Grants were introduced on 27 March 2000. The very small number of cases for 1999–2000 have been excluded for data protection reasons.
3. Data is given for all applications and awards, irrespective of whether the application was made by the mother or her partner.

Source:
DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Iraq

9. **Bob Spink:** To ask the Secretary of State, Department for International Development, what support is being provided for the rebuilding of Iraq. [172243]

Hilary Benn: At the Madrid Donors' Conference in October last year, the Government announced a total UK pledge of £544 million towards the reconstruction effort in Iraq from April 2003 to March 2006.

DFID has now committed over £278 million for humanitarian and reconstruction assistance to Iraq. This includes £70 million for the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq, managed by the World Bank and the United Nations. We are also supporting Iraqi government policies and reforms that benefit the poor, and, in the south of Iraq, helping to restore infrastructure and develop the region's links with central government in Baghdad.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on current levels of *(a)* power generation, *(b)* water provision and *(c)* infrastructure construction in Iraq; and what steps have been taken to maintain provision of these services when contractors leave the country prematurely. [171420]

Hilary Benn: The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) reports that average electricity production is in the region of 4,000 megawatts (MW), approximately the same level as before the 2003 conflict. A number of generating units are undergoing maintenance and should be back in service by the summer peak demand period. The CPA's power generation target for 1 June is 6,000 MW.

It is estimated that immediately after the 2003 conflict coverage of water services was 60 per cent. of the urban and 30 per cent. of the rural populations. Considerable work has taken place since then to improve the quantity, quality and reliability of water services to the population. There are no complete statistics on current coverage, but informal estimates suggest that, in the south, supply has increased by 10 to 15 per cent. since May 2003. By the summer of 2004, water quality and volume in Basra is expected to have exceeded pre-conflict levels.

A total of US$32 billion was pledged for the reconstruction of Iraq at the Madrid Donors' Conference in October 2003. Very significant sums are now being committed to specific projects for the reconstruction of power and water infrastructure and in a wide range of other sectors including health, education, transport, irrigation, telecommunications, housing and oil production.

The maintenance of essential services is to a very large extent undertaken by Iraqis rather than by foreign contractors. However, it is clear that some reconstruction projects may be delayed as a result of restrictions imposed by the present security situation on the ability of contractors and development agencies to operate normally throughout the country.

Development Financing

10. **Julie Morgan:** To ask the Secretary of State, Department for International Development, if he will make a statement on mechanisms for financing development. [172244]

Hilary Benn: In January 2003 HM Treasury and the Department for International Development (DFID) launched a proposal for an International Finance Facility (IFF). The IFF is designed to "frontload" aid to help meet the internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The IFF has the following advantages; it provides the additional resources necessary to help achieve the MDGs, making funds available for education, health, economic development, debt relief and building trade capacity; it is the only feasible proposal at the moment which would deliver these resources; it locks in the political commitment of donors to Monterrey pledges and it provides the predictability and critical mass of aid needed for simultaneous and sustainable investment in developing systems across sectors, tackling the causes rather than the symptoms of poverty.

Commission for Africa

11. **Joan Ruddock:** To ask the Secretary of State, Department for International Development, if he will make a statement on the future programme of the Commission for Africa. [172245]

Hilary Benn: Following first meeting of the Commission on 4 May, consultation and outreach for submissions to the Commission's work will run from now until October, and consultation on the emerging conclusions of the Commission's work will then follow more detailed consultation plans will be posted on the Commissions website when it is up and running at the end of May.

The next meeting of the Commission will be in October, and the final meeting in early 2005 before the launch of the report around March/April 2005.

Sudan

12. **Sir Teddy Taylor:** To ask the Secretary of State, Department for International Development what assistance his Department is making available this financial year to Sudan. [172246]

Hilary Benn: I have allocated £35 million to Sudan for this financial year, in anticipation of a comprehensive peace agreement to end the civil war there. The Africa Conflict Prevention Pool has allocated a further £3.5 million. Last week I announced a further £10 million in response to the humanitarian crisis in Darfur, Western Sudan. Hence, £48.5 million are potentially available for Sudan this financial year.

Ethiopia

13. **Mr. Laurence Robertson:** To ask the Secretary of State, Department for International Development if he will make a statement on the development of irrigation systems in Ethiopia. [172247]

Hilary Benn: Dependence on rain-fed agriculture contributes to the high levels of vulnerability and chronic food insecurity found in Ethiopia. Less than 5 per cent. of the country's arable land is currently irrigated. The Government of Ethiopia recognises the need for appropriate forms of irrigation that will benefit smallholders as well as commercial farmers, in its poverty reduction strategy. Irrigation is an important component of the Government's Water Sector Development Programme. In addition, the Government are undertaking a large programme to promote rainwater harvesting at the smallholder farm level.

DFID supports such initiatives through assisting the development of Government's overall rural development strategies and financing implementation of the country's poverty reduction strategy with direct budget support.

Malawi

14. **Mr. Carmichael:** To ask the Secretary of State, Department for International Development if he will make a statement on the humanitarian situation in Malawi. [172248]

Hilary Benn: The harvest that has just been completed will be the principal determinant of the need for humanitarian action in Malawi over the next year. Preliminary reports suggest a lower harvest than last year's bumper crop, but with major shortfalls restricted to a few areas. In order to assess more accurately the 2004 harvest and its impact on food security and household vulnerability, the Malawi Government, donors and NGOs are undertaking a series of surveys. The results of these studies will be available by the end of May.

Development (School Involvement)

15. **Mr. Plaskitt:** To ask the Secretary of State, Department for International Development what support his Department is giving to projects designed to strengthen school involvement in raising awareness of development issues. [172249]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID is committed to ensuring that every child is educated about development issues, so that they can understand the key global considerations that shape their lives. DFID works closely with the four education ministries across the UK to ensure that the content of what is taught in schools is enriched by the inclusion of global perspectives.

DFID's Enabling Effective Support initiative supports the development of locally owned strategies to achieve comprehensive high quality support to teachers for the delivery of the global dimension in the curriculum and wider school life. Each year some 70 per cent. of DFID's Development Awareness Fund supports projects under this initiative. In 2003–04 the Fund allocated over £3.8 million to 43 projects including the production and promotion of resources for schools; Teacher Education projects; and the Global School Partnerships programme that supports links with schools in developing countries. In 2004–05 the Fund will support 33 projects at a projected cost of £4 million.

Africa

Ann McKechin: To ask the Secretary of State, Department for International Development what recent discussions he has had with the new Commission for Africa regarding the debt burden on Africa. [172240]

Hilary Benn: The first meeting of the Commission for Africa agreed that the debt burden in Africa will be an important issue for the Commission's work. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Trevor Manuel—the South African Finance Minister—and Ralph Goodale—the Canadian Finance Minister—will lead this work.

Angola

Mr Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans he has to assist the Government of Angola in preparing for forthcoming elections. [172083]

Hilary Benn: The Government of Angola has not yet set a date for the next elections, indicating that 14 steps, including conclusion of the new constitution and re-establishment of the Electoral Commission, are necessary before an election can take place.

DFID is supporting the electoral process. One of the key aims of our Country Engagement Plan for Angola is "a political system which allows all people to influence state policy and practice". Hence DFID is working closely with the international community and Angolan civil society in developing a strategy to support the forthcoming elections. Specifically, DFID is funding a large-scale programme to help civil society, the media and political parties to prepare for the elections. Through this project DFID envisage providing assistance on technical processes such as election monitoring, although details have yet to be agreed.

Once the date for the elections is set, DFID would anticipate working with other members of the international community to do more. DFID is also willing to consider supporting nationwide consultations on the new constitution. As of yet, there have been no clear indications on how the Government intends to carry out this process and how donors can best support it.

Mr Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what efforts have been made by his Department in the last two years to work with civil society in Angola on transparency issues; and what results have been achieved. [172082]

Hilary Benn: DFID completed its first Country Engagement Plan for Angola in September 2003. One of the three outcomes highlighted in the Plan is "government systems for raising and using resources which are transparent and give priority to poverty reduction". Since then DFID has made significant progress on developing and implementing a comprehensive strategy on transparency in Angola. This includes encouraging Angola to participate in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), contributing to the World Bank's Public Expenditure Management and Financial Accountability Review (PEMFAR), and assisting in development of a G8 Anti-corruption and Transparency (ACT) programme. We have also followed negotiations between the Government of Angola and the IMF on a new staff monitored programme for which greater fiscal transparency is a key pre-condition.

With respect to civil society in Angola, DFID is one of several donors contributing to the Transparency Coalition set up by the international NGO World Learning in September 2003. The coalition consists of six different national NGOs who are working together to raise awareness and disseminate information on

transparency issues throughout the country. The coalition recently put forward a proposal, which DFID has agreed to fund, to analyse and make accessible in layman's terms the complex and very technical Angolan National Budget (OGE). This should allow Angolan civil society to more actively participate in debates on the annual budget process. DFID has also participated in a new forum established by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) in Luanda to look at transparency issues. Through this forum, donors help keep civil society informed on developments in transparency at the political level.

Much of this transparency work is still in its early stages and it will take some time before we see the full effects. It is worth noting however, that one positive result is already evident. Within the Angolan media there is a more open and animated discussion on transparency issues and civil society has been actively participating in this.

Births

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the latest proportion is of births assisted by skilled birth attendants in each of the countries covered by his Public Service Agreement target. [172453]

Hilary Benn: The latest figures available on the proportion[1] of births attended by skilled birth attendants for the countries covered by our Public Service Agreement are set out in the following table.

[1].The percentage of deliveries attended by personnel trained to give the necessary supervision, care and advice to women during pregnancy, labour and the post natal period, to conduct deliveries on their own, and to care for new borns.

	Number
Asia	
Afghanistan	no data available
Bangladesh	13
Cambodia	34
China	70
India	42
Indonesia	56
Nepal	12
Pakistan	20
Vietnam	70
Sub-Saharan Africa	
Congo, Dem. Rep.	no data available
Ethiopia	10
Ghana	44
Kenya	44
Lesotho	60
Malawi	55
Mozambique	44
Nigeria	42
Rwanda	31
Sierra Leone	42
South Africa	84
Sudan	86
Tanzania	36
Uganda	38
Zambia	47
Zimbabwe	73

Children

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what representations he has received about the role of child-to-child clubs in Kenya in highlighting the phenomenon of female genital mutilation in Kenya. [171699]

Hilary Benn: DFID has received no such representations. However, our support for reproductive healthcare and safe motherhood includes work aimed at reducing the incidence—and eventual elimination—of female genital mutilation in Kenya.

Occupied Palestinian Territories

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State, Department for International Development pursuant to the statement of 29 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 372WH, on the Occupied Palestinian Territories, when he expects his Department to publish the country assistance plan for the Occupied Palestinian Territories. [172088]

Hilary Benn: Following extensive consultations with a wide range of partners in the UK, Palestine and Israel the Secretary of State has now approved the Country Assistance Plan. We expect formal publication to be in June and a printed copy will be placed in the Library of the House. An electronic version will be available on the DFID website shortly.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the statement of 29 April, *Official Report*, column 372WH, on the Occupied Palestinian Territories, what funding and support the negotiations support unit in the Occupied Palestinian Territories receives from his Department. [172089]

Hilary Benn: DFID has committed a total of £9.2 million to support the Palestinian Negotiation Support Unit (NSU). This funding covers the period 1999 to 2006. To date £5.25 million has been disbursed. This provides highly professional legal, policy and communications advice to help Palestinians develop detailed policy positions on complex issues in preparation for and during, permanent status negotiations. NSU's professionalism is widely praised, including by Israeli and US negotiators. We believe that the NSU's work represents an effective use of taxpayer's money.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the statement of 29 April, *Official Report*, column 372WH, on the Occupied Palestinian Territories, what funding and support the Palestinian civil police *(a)* has received and *(b)* is planned to receive from his Department; and how many people have been recruited to the civil police force as a result. [172090]

Hilary Benn: In 2003 DFID provided £700,000 for police vehicles to help increase the efficiency and visible presence of the Palestinian Civil Police. A DFID funded Police Adviser is currently working with the Palestinian Police and Ministry of Interior to assess the type of assistance that would most effectively help to build capacity within the Civil Police. This assistance is likely

to be in the form of technical assistance, training and equipment. It is too early to say what impact this will have on police recruitment.

Pipeline Revenues

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what safeguards are in place to ensure that revenues received by the countries through which the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline runs will receive will not be used to finance regional conflicts. [172416]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The BTC pipeline has the potential to deliver substantial economic benefits to Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey and it will strengthen regional co-operation, developing new economic and political links between the three host countries. All the international parties involved in the BTC pipeline (including BTC Co., EBRD and IFC) are keen to make sure that the revenues generated by the project do not exacerbate regional tensions. Mitigation measures are already in place, including an IMF approved oil fund in Azerbaijan, a commitment by BP to publish what it pays to the host Governments and support by the World Bank and IMF on budgeting and public expenditure management. Furthermore, Azerbaijan is in the first wave of countries to begin to implement the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). The EITI aims to increase the transparency of payments by extractives companies to Governments, as well as the transparency of revenues received by those host countries. Increasing transparency is a key component to reducing poverty, corruption, and the potential for conflict. The UK Government are helping Azerbaijan implement EITI, whereby BTC revenues are channelled through the State Oil Fund to ensure that the people of Azerbaijan benefit. We are also in discussions with the Government of Georgia on the possibility of their involvement in the EITI.

Sexual and Reproductive Health

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) when he will report progress on the Millennium Development Goal for the reduction in the proportion of 15 to 24-year-old pregnant women with HIV; [171676]

(2) when data will be available for the measurement of his Department's targets on HIV/AIDS policy in Africa. [171683]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The data for monitoring progress towards the target for a reduction in the proportion of 15 to 24-year-old pregnant women with HIV from a 16 per cent. prevalence rate is collected by the United Nations programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). UNAIDS will publish their Report on the Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic containing this data in Summer 2004.

The data will enable us to update progress towards DFID's Public Service Delivery target for HIV/AIDS (as stated above) in 16 key African countries. It will be published in the Department's Autumn Performance Report later in the year.

Small Arms

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the progress of the National Small Arms Action Plans in Southern African countries. [171677]

Hilary Benn: Under the joint DFID/FCO/MoD Global Conflict Prevention Pool Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) Strategy the UK Government have been supporting, since February 2003, a programme to conduct in-depth assessments of small arms issues. The aim is to develop and implement National Action Plans (NAPs) in four East and Southern African countries to address the problem of the proliferation and illicit trafficking of SALW. The NGOs Saferworld and SaferAfrica are undertaking the work together with national Governments and local civil society organisations in Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia and Uganda.

This process is most advanced in East Africa where a draft NAP is with the Kenyan National Security Council for approval. In the Southern African states of Mozambique and Namibia the process is not as advanced. In Namibia the preparatory phase commenced in late 2003 and the mapping process only began last month. In Mozambique the process has been delayed due to a variety of local circumstances, and the timetable is currently being re-assessed.

Although no formal assessments have yet been undertaken due to the preparatory nature of the work in Southern Africa, DFID is committed to evaluating what progress has been made and the effectiveness of the National Action Plans overall at the appropriate stages in the process. The NAPs will be regularly reviewed through on-going reports from the field and by undertaking more formal assessments as part of on-going programme management. An external review of the programme in East Africa is planned for June and this will guide future evaluations of the work in Southern Africa.

Sustainable Development

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what progress has been made on his Department's sustainable development strategy. [165431]

Hilary Benn: The International Development Act (2002) makes it clear that development assistance is

"assistance provided for the purposes of furthering Sustainable Development . . . "

It is also generally recognised that poverty reduction is a necessary prerequisite for achieving Sustainable Development. For this reason, DFID does not have a stand-alone Sustainable Development Strategy but rather considers Sustainable Development to be integral to the Department's work.

DFID leads on four specific areas in the UK's implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) agreed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002.

Water and Sanitation.

Integration of environmental considerations into Poverty Reduction Strategies.

Access to clean energy.

(Together with the Treasury) Financing for development.

DFID has completed a review of its water related activities and prepared a Water Action Plan reaffirming the importance of water resource management, supply and sanitation to poverty reduction.

DFID, along with other Departments, has been contributing to the consultation process currently underway to develop a new UK Sustainable Development Strategy. DFID shares the lead on developing the international dimensions of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy with the Foreign Office.

At a recent consultation meeting held during the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) organised to solicit the views of international agency representatives on the UK's Sustainable Development track record, DFID and the UK were praised for leadership in developing a better understanding of the links between poverty and environment. DFID's work has emphasised the importance of prudent environmental management to achieving poverty reduction and the other Millennium Development Goals.

DFID'S lead role in developing policy and implementation guidance on national strategies for sustainable development/poverty reduction strategies was also cited as an outstanding contribution to international Sustainable Development progress.

DFID's programmes with developing country partners are shaped by the priorities of those countries, what other donors are doing and where value can be added. These priorities are set out in developing countries' own development plans. DFID has been working with developing country partners to ensure sustainable development considerations underwrite these strategies if they are to be effective.

In addition to meeting the UK's own domestic obligations as signatories to various multilateral environmental agreements, the UK assists developing countries meet their own commitments.

For example, climate change is considered to be a key development issue because it is poor people and developing countries that are most vulnerable to its adverse impacts. DFID and other Departments, in partnership with developing countries, are considering options for a global carbon dioxide emissions reduction regime including the necessary incentive to encourage a transition away from carbon intensive economies.

DFID has made good progress towards the targets set out in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. This framework relates to the impact of our offices on the environment. DFID has published delivery plans, used alternatively fuelled vehicles, re-cycle more than 40 per cent. of our waste, purchase more than 50 per cent. green electricity and paper with a 75 per cent. recycled content. DFID is also one of the few departments to meet the water usage targets.

DFID's current building project at our office in East Kilbride achieved a Bream award with an "excellent" environmental rating and we have conducted an audit of local habitat and species. DFID has also built volunteering into our staff development planning.

Zimbabwe

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) how many representations his Department has received in 2004 on political manipulation of EU-funded food aid by the Zimbabwean Government; and when his Department will publish the results of the investigation announced in February into the alleged misappropriation of UK and EU aid; [171350]

(2) how many representations his Department has received in 2004 on UK and EU aid to Zimbabwe not being spent for humanitarian purposes; [171351]

(3) how many formal meetings his Department had in April with the World Food Programme regarding food aid to Zimbabwe; and whether the Zimbabwean Government's refusal of food aid formed part of discussions. [171352]

Hilary Benn: The risk of politicisation of humanitarian assistance, particularly food aid, has been regularly discussed in Parliament and with our international partners. As a result, significant emphasis is placed on monitoring incidents of political interference in the provision of humanitarian assistance.

Humanitarian assistance provided by the European Union and UK to Zimbabwe is channelled through UN agencies and NGOs. In collaboration with those agencies, DFID operates a policy of zero tolerance towards political interference—including political manipulation of aid—in humanitarian operations. The UN and DFID's NGO partners have procedures in place for those affected to report irregularities. Any such incidents are quickly identified, reported and followed up, including by suspending food distribution where appropriate. As a result of these measures, there has been minimal interference with international assistance. DFID and other donors and agencies also use the media when appropriate to publicise our activities and to explain the extent of donor support to Zimbabwe during the present crisis.

My reply to the hon. Member of Buckingham (Mr. Bercow) on 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 25W, set out the position on the report by the European Court of Auditors on the effectiveness of EC aid to Zimbabwe. There was no DFID announcement of a further investigation.

UK programmes in Zimbabwe provide both humanitarian assistance and support for the fight against HIV/AIDS. EC programmes provide humanitarian assistance and support for a range of social programmes. The EC and DFID have well established systems in place to ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches those for whom it is intended. DFID has not received any representation in 2004 on misuse of either UK or EC humanitarian assistance.

The DFID office in Zimbabwe is in close contact with the World Food Programme (WFP) and meets regularly with WFP, NGOs and other donors to discuss issues affecting WFP's operations.

The Government of Zimbabwe's decision not to make an immediate appeal to the United Nations for general food distributions is of concern to the humanitarian community. Although the Government of Zimbabwe appear confident of a good harvest there is considerable divergence of views on the crop forecast. The Government also remain unwilling to discuss with the international community what stocks they hold, and what volume of grains they expect to import to meet any deficit in domestic supply. Without an appeal WFP will face difficulty in planning, securing donor funding for and implementing emergency operations beyond the coming months when existing agreements and stocks will run out. DFID will continue to monitor the situation closely in collaboration with WFP and other partners.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

China

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the British negotiating position was with regard to the recent European Union discussions on the subject of lifting the EU arms embargo to China. [172510]

Mr. Rammell: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Boston and Skegness (Mr. Simmonds) on 29 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1147W.

Clemency Pleas

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on behalf of how many British citizens he has made pleas for clemency, broken down by country, since 1997. [172584]

Mr. Mullin *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not keep statistics on clemency pleas. But I refer the hon. Member to http://www.fco.gov.uk/Files/KFile/report2001.pdf for details on our clemency policy, which was amended in 2001.

Correspondence

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he intends to reply to the letter of 12 December 2003, from the hon. Member for Aylesbury, on behalf of Mrs. R. H. of Aylesbury, refs GU100/49991 and CON/6487, acknowledged by UK Visas on 14 January. [166017]

Mr. Mullin: My noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean replied on 4 May.

Green Minister

Mr. Breed: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what work his Department's Green Minister has undertaken in the last three months in that capacity; and what meetings his Department's Green Minister has attended in the last 12 months in that capacity; [171806]

(2) if he will list the meetings at which his Department has been present regarding the delivery of sustainable development across Government as co-ordinated by the Ministerial Sub-Committee of Green Ministers; [171807]

(3) what steps he is taking to promote the delivery of sustainable development within Government; [171808]

(4) what progress has been made with his Department's Sustainable Development Strategy. [171809]

Mr. Rammell: As the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) Green Minister, I participate fully in ENV(G) Committee activity. I took part in the launch of the consultation on the new UK Sustainable Development Strategy on 21 April this year. I will attend a Royal Parks presentation and discussion in St. James's Park in June to explore how sustainable development relates to the strengths of Government departments.

I am a member of the cabinet committee of Green Ministers. FCO officials attend pre-ENV(G) meetings co-ordinated by the Sub-Committee of Green Ministers. However, exemption 2 of Part 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information precludes me from divulging the details of cabinet committee business or attendance at meetings. The committee has helped the FCO and other Departments to consider how Government policies can best contribute to sustainable development.

As part of our commitment to Sustainable Development in Government the FCO has implemented an Environmental Management Systems (EMS) across its main London Offices which is certified to environmental standard ISO14001. This covers 78 per cent. of UK based staff and a further 20 per cent. of staff will be covered by an extension to our rural site at Hanslope Park in late 2004. The EMS promotes sustainable development principles in our day-to-day operations. The FCO is working with Defra, DFID and DTI to ensure that international issues are integrated into the new UK Sustainable Development Strategy. The FCO worked with DFID, Defra and DTI to organise a consultation event in New York on the back of the Commission on Sustainable Development 12 on international issues. A further consultation event will be organised in London in July.

The FCO's Strategy (UK International Priorities A Strategy for the FCO, December 2003 Cm 6052) establishes 'sustainable development, underpinned by democracy, good governance and human rights' as one of its eight international priorities.

The Strategy will cover a range of economic, social and environmental issues. It will identify specific actions that the FCO can take through multilateral and bilateral processes and organisations. For example, the strategy will identify how the FCO is working through UN and related international bodies, trade, finance and investment bodies, the EU, G8, the Commonwealth, international partnerships, bilateral action through our posts and programme funds and the UK's Overseas

Territories. The Strategy will also set out how the FCO is managing its Estate sustainably. Country action plans will also be developed in conjunction with posts and other stakeholders. We are working closely with other government departments, external stakeholders including the Sustainable Development Commission. We aim to complete the Strategy by autumn 2004.

Iraq

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the Government first indicated that the country of source for the uranium source in Africa by Iraq was Niger. [168284]

Mr. MacShane: The Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) stated in February 2003 that papers passed to the Agency concerning Iraqi attempts to procure uranium from Niger appeared to be forgeries.

The Government made clear at that time that it had further evidence to support the claim made in its September Dossier that Iraq had sought to procure uranium from Africa.

The first direct indication that we believed the source to be Niger was made in oral evidence to the Foreign Affairs Committee on 27 June 2003. The evidence is available on the UK Parliament website at: www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200203/cmselect/cmfaff/813/3062707.htm.

Japan

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will reopen discussions with Japan under Article 26 of the 1951 Peace Treaty; and if he will make a statement on the status of those who were British passport holders in 1945 who have not received compensation payments from the Government. [171392]

Mr. Rammell: This issue is currently under discussion between my Department and the MOD. I will write to the hon. Member in due course.

Middle East

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the Road Map for peace; and what role the Government is playing in the initiative. [171811]

Mr. Rammell: The Government are committed to progress towards peace in the Middle East based on the Quartet's roadmap. We are in close contact with both parties and Quartet members (UN, US, EU and Russia) about the political process. The 4 May Quartet statement sets out a balanced approach to encouraging progress. It closely reflects our views on priorities. Since its publication my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has met his Israeli, Palestinian and Egyptian counterparts to discuss next steps.

At a practical level, we are working to help the Palestinian Authority to fulfil its roadmap obligations on security. Although results so far are encouraging, the lack of progress on Phase One of the roadmap, since its publication in April 2003, has been disappointing. Israel should implement a settlement freeze and remove the settlement outposts erected since March 2001. The Palestinian Authority should undertake sustained, targeted and effective operations against terrorists. Both parties and the international community must work to regain the momentum.

Claire Ward: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with representatives of *(a)* Israeli and *(b)* Palestinian people to promote a peaceful settlement; and if he will make a statement. [171885]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary met both the Israeli Foreign Minister and the Palestinian Foreign Minister on 5 May 2004. The Government are committed to a Quartet roadmap-based peace process. As the Foreign Secretary told both Ministers, both sides need to put an end to violence and take the steps needed to rebuild basic levels of confidence and hope. We are pleased that the Quartet met on 4 May, and welcomed their statement setting out a balanced and constructive way forward. The Quartet reaffirmed the importance of the roadmap, and the need for both parties to meet their obligations under it.

Nuclear Non-Proliferation

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on progress at the Preparatory Committee meeting for the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference being held at the United Nations in New York. [171651]

Mr. MacShane: The Third Session of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for the 2005 Review Conference of the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in New York concluded on 7 May. The key procedural issues were agreed and this will enable all the necessary preparations for the 2005 Review Conference to go ahead. This outcome met the United Kingdom's main objective for this PrepCom.

The major issues of how to deal with nuclear proliferation and tackle compliance with States' non-proliferation obligations were fully discussed and the United Kingdom presented its ideas and views on these issues in a series of detailed statements. The UK gave full accounts of the practical steps we have taken towards nuclear disarmament and made a presentation on the verification of nuclear disarmament, dealing with the issue of warhead dismantlement.

The United Kingdom also distributed Publicity Material entitled "Making a Safer World" setting out our proposals on countering the proliferation of WMD and the initiatives we have taken; our record on nuclear disarmament; and how we ensure compliance with non-proliferation obligations.

We are now looking forward to working with other States Party and the President-designate of the Review Conference, Ambassador Duarte of Brazil, as he carries out his consultations in the period running up to the Conference in May 2005. It is the role of the Review Conference to take decisions on all issues and recommendations, and the UK will continue to play a major role in strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Nuclear Proliferation

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to promote new legislation to tackle nuclear weapons proliferation and the involvement in it of UK citizens and corporations operating from abroad; and if he will make a statement. [171923]

Mr. MacShane: Current legislation provides for the criminalisation of involvement in nuclear weapons proliferation by UK citizens or corporations including when operating from abroad. The Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001, which came into force on 14 December 2001, strengthened then existing legislation controlling chemical, nuclear and biological weapons. It introduced equivalent offences to those contained within the Chemical Weapons Act 1996 in respect of biological and nuclear weapons, and introduced a new offence of assisting or inducing certain weapons-related acts overseas. In the nuclear field these are:

knowingly causing a nuclear weapon explosion;

developing, producing, or participating in the development or production of, a nuclear weapon;

having a nuclear weapon in (his) possession;

participating in the transfer of a nuclear weapon; or

engaging in military preparations, or in preparations of a military nature, intending to use, or threatening to use, a nuclear weapon.

The Act applies to acts outside the United Kingdom when they are carried out by United Kingdom nationals, Scottish partnerships and bodies incorporated under the law in any part of the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man or any colony. We will keep under review the need for any further legislation.

Tackling the threat posed by the spread of weapons of mass destruction remains a top priority for the UK, as my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary made clear in his Statement to the House on 25 February 2004, *Official Report*, columns 46–49WS. The UK was instrumental in getting Security Council agreement to UNSCR 1540, passed on 28 April 2004. The UNSCR addresses a current gap in international law in addressing the problem of WMD proliferation by non-state actors and is a concrete example of the Security Council responding to a threat to international peace and security. It makes clear that all states have a responsibility to take steps to prevent WMD proliferation, and places legally binding obligations on all states of the UN under Chapter VII of the UN Charter (threats to international peace and security).

Overseas Recruitment

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what formal assistance his Department's overseas offices offer to UK-based recruitment agencies in the recruitment of education workers; and how many departmental staff are dedicated to offering such assistance. [170986]

Mr. Mullin: No staff of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office are specifically dedicated to the activity of assisting with the recruitment of education workers. The commercial and other services of overseas Posts of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office are open to eligible UK-based recruitment agencies as to other eligible UK businesses or organisations.

Paper Recycling

Mr. Breed: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what measures he has put in place to ensure that his Department meets the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post consumer waste. [171814]

Mr. Rammell: Targets for Sustainable Development in Government, including the DEFRA paper quick wins, are communicated within the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) as part of our Environmental Management System.

Our purchasing function is currently pursuing a new contract for 100 per cent. recycled copying paper. Until March 2004 we were purchasing 100 per cent. recycled paper but due to a mill closure we have recently been purchasing 80 per cent. recycled content paper in order to ensure continuity of supply.

Our Publication and Print Services teams within the FCO have been issued with guidance on the recycled content target for print publications. From May this year the teams have set a minimum recycled content of 75 per cent. post consumer waste for publications.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Sudan concerning *(a)* peace negotiations in the south of the country and *(b)* Darfur. [171389]

Mr. Mullin: My right hon. Friends, the Foreign Secretary and the Secretary of State for International Development, and I discussed these and other issues with the Sudanese Foreign Minister during his visit to London on 11 May.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement about the peace process in Sudan. [171827]

Mr. Mullin: The Sudan peace talks continue in Naivasha, Kenya, under the auspices of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development. The UK Special Representative last visited Naivasha on 7–8 May. The parties are hopeful that a framework peace agreement will emerge very soon.

Timber

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether his Department plans to contribute financially to the establishment of the second phase of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [167629]

Mr. Rammell: As timber procurement policy is the responsibility of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, I refer my hon. Friend to the reply given by my hon. Friend the Minister of State for the Environment and Agri-Environment (Mr. Morley) on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 31W.

United Arab Emirates

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on his recent visit to the United Arab Emirates; and what plans there are for future ministerial visits to foster *(a)* business links and *(b)* cultural relations. [168568]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary visited the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on 16–17 March. He met the Crown Prince and Deputy Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and the UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs. They discussed bilateral and regional issues. We welcome this opportunity to strengthen our relationship with the UAE.

Foreign engagements for the Foreign Secretary and other Ministers are kept under constant review. It is not our practice to announce such visits until they are firm. Because of the unpredictable nature of world events, final decisions on overseas visits are often not possible until very shortly before the day of travel.

Western Sahara

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Morocco encouraging co-operation with the Sahrawis. [172100]

Mr. Rammell: We regularly discuss the situation in Western Sahara with our contacts at all levels in the Moroccan Government. Most recently, my noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean discussed Western Sahara with the Moroccan Minister of Interior Mr. Sahel when he visited London on 28 April.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if the UK will press for an increase in the UN presence in the Western Sahara. [172104]

Mr. Rammell: United Nations Security Council Resolution 1541 which was adopted unanimously on 29 April 2004 calls on the Secretary-General to provide an evaluation of the mission size necessary for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara to carry out its mandated tasks, with a view towards possible reduction, in his next report due before 31 October 2004. Pending these results the Government have no current plans to call for an increase in the UN presence in the Western Sahara.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assurances have been given by the Moroccan Government regarding the safety of inhabitants of the Western Sahara. [172105]

Mr. Rammell: Ministers and Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials regularly raise with all parties to the Western Sahara dispute their responsibilities in the search for a fair and lasting solution to that dispute which allows for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action the Government is taking to encourage Morocco to resolve the territorial dispute in Western Sahara. [172107]

Mr. Rammell: We continue at Ministerial and official level to urge Morocco to engage constructively with the UN Secretary General's personal envoy, James Baker III, concerning the Peace Plan for Western Sahara, to reach a solution that is acceptable to all parties and allows for self-determination for the people of Western Sahara.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Departmental Expenditure (Entertainment)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what his latest estimate is of the amount spent by his Department on official entertainment in each year from 1996–97 to 2004–05. [169000]

Mr. Lammy: Expenditure by both Officials and Ministers on entertainment for the financial year 2003–04 was £79,050 (£64,718—covers costs related to Ministers and the Lord Chancellor, and £14,332—costs related to Officials), in 2002–03 was £43,378, in 2001–02 was £44,730, in 2000–01 was £60,768, in 1999–2000 was £71,166 and in 1998–99 was £45,087.

Information on previous years and the current year is not readily available.

FOI Requests

Tony Wright: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what charges will be made for information requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. [172103]

Mr. Lammy: The Freedom of Information Act provides that the Secretary of State may make regulations to determine what fee may be charged. Draft fees regulations were published in 2000. A working group has been considering changes to these regulations and final regulations will be brought forward by the Government in time for being in effect on 1 January 2005.

Mental Incapacity Bill

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment he has made of the implications of the judgement given in the European Court of Human Rights on 9 March in the Glass *v.* the UK case for the draft Mental Incapacity Bill. [172448]

Mr. Lammy: The Glass *v.s.* UK case relates to a child, whereas the draft Mental Incapacity Bill does not apply to persons under the age of 16.

However, the draft Mental Incapacity Bill proposes a statutory framework for decision-making on behalf of adults without capacity. The draft Bill stresses the importance of consultation with those engaged in caring for the person before making a decision. This would ensure that all professionals involved in making such decisions are aware of their roles and responsibilities. The Bill also proposes to introduce a new specialist and accessible Court of Protection, which would help to resolve such disputes when they arise in relation to adults without capacity.

Ministerial Visits

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will list visits made by each Minister in the Department between December 2003 and April 2004, broken down by *(a)* date, *(b)* constituency visited and *(c)* cost. [171558]

Mr. Lammy: The number of visits undertaken by Ministers in my Department are as follows:

Secretary of State and Lord Chancellor

	Constituency	*Cost(£)*
19 December 2003	Middlesbrough	638.60
2004		
9 January	Belfast South	1,529.70
29 January	Birmingham, Edgbaston	483.85
30 January	Derby North	
20 February	Edinburgh Central	758.76
2 March	Manchester, Blackley	1,043.63
12 March	Harrow East	[1]—
12 March	Oxford West and Abingdon	584.86
19 March	Watford	[1]—
26 March	Southwark Crown Court	[1]—
2 April	Button Coldfield	334.00
16 April	Worcester	[1]—
19 April	Leicester South	[1]—
30 April	Leeds North East	763.71
30 April	Bradford West	763.71

[1] No additional costs incurred aside from the normal cost of running the Ministerial car

Lord Filkin

	Constituency	*Cost (£)*
11 December 2003	Cardiff Central	792.91
12 December 2003	Manchester Central	514.81
2004		
9 January	Cambridge	[1]—
23 January	Kettering	[1]—
18 February	Belfast South	696.44
6 March	Harrogate and Knaresborough	620.64
26 March	Harrogate and Knaresborough	620.64
2 April	Loughborough	[1]—
22 April	Nottingham South	504.00

[1] No additional costs incurred aside from the normal cost of running the Ministerial car

Christopher Leslie

	Constituency	*Cost (£)*
12 December 2003	Shipley	[1]—
2004		
5 February	Reading	78.00
6 February	Liverpool	466.92
6 February	Central Manchester	96.00
20 February	Sheffield	198.63
22 March	Manchester	347.15
22 March	St. Helens	[1]—
22 April	Birmingham	354.00

[1] No additional costs incurred aside from the normal cost of running the Ministerial car

David Lammy

	Constituency	*Cost (£)*
25 February 2004	South Dorset	370.95
21 April 2004	Manchester Central	679.45

[1] No additional costs incurred aside from the normal cost of running the Ministerial car

Referendums

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the total cost has been of holding referendums in the UK since 1997. [172045]

Mr. Leslie: The total estimated cost of holding referendums in the UK since 1997, excluding Mayoral Referendums, is £9,600,000. The breakdown of costs is:

1997 Welsh Assembly Referendum £2,300,000.

1997 Scottish Parliament Referendum £4,350,000.

1998 Northern Ireland Good Friday Agreement Referendum £1,450,000.

1998 Greater London Authority Referendum £1,500,000.

30 Mayoral Referendums have also been held under the Local Government Act 2000. The figures for the cost of these referendums are not held centrally and have therefore not been included in the total.

Unmade Roads

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs who owns the unmade road at the bottom of Gordon Avenue and Harold Street in Queenborough, Isle of Sheppey. [171384]

Mr. Lammy: Land Registry currently holds information on the ownership of almost 19.5 million registered titled in England and Wales. This information is routinely made available to everyone, on the payment of small fee.

Land Registry processed over four million such requests in 2002–03, over 99 per cent. of which were processed within two working days of receipt. Methods of application for land registration services, and the fees payable, are prescribed by statute and it would be inappropriate for these to be circumvented by a Parliamentary Question.

I have asked the Chief Land Registrar to write to my hon. Friend setting out the options for acquiring this information.

PRIME MINISTER

Advisers/Consultants

Bob Spink: To ask the Prime Minister how much his Office spent on *(a)* external consultants and *(b)* special advisers in each of the last three years. [172341]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes, my office is part of the Cabinet Office. For the cost of external consultants for 2001–02 and 2002–03, I refer the hon. Member to the answer my hon. Friend the Minister for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Alexander) gave to the hon.

Member for North East Hertfordshire (Mr. Heald) on 22 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 561W. Final figures for 2003–04 are not yet available.

For special advisers, I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 15 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 836W to 837W.

GEC

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the dates of meetings he held with representatives of GEC in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 1998 and *(c)* 1999, broken down by subjects discussed. [173001]

The Prime Minister: I have meetings with a wide range of organisations and individuals. As with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings under exemptions 2 and 7 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Iraq

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his statement of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 21, on Iraq and the Middle East peace process, whether the employment of civilian *(a)* contractors and *(b)* interrogators in Abu Ghraib prison forms part of the political and military strategy in Iraq. [172052]

The Prime Minister: President Bush and I have both made clear, any abuse of human rights, torture or maltreatment of civilians in Iraq is wholly unacceptable and all cases will be investigated fully.

The employment of civilian contractors and interrogators in Abu Ghraib prison is a matter for the US authorities. As has been made clear, three UK military personnel worked in Abu Ghraib between January and April of this year to assist in the gathering of information important to the Coalition's aim of establishing stability in Iraq.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Prime Minister what representations he has received from hon. Members, and when, concerning maltreatment of Iraqi detainees by US forces. [172663]

The Prime Minister: As far as I am aware, as at Monday 10 May I had received one letter from one hon. Member on 30 April 2004, to which I have replied. As at Monday 10 May I had also received four written Parliamentary Questions from my hon. Friend, the Member for Hampstead and Highgate (Ms Jackson).

President Bush and I have both made clear, any abuse of human rights, torture or maltreatment of civilians in Iraq is wholly unacceptable and all cases will be investigated fully.

Productivity

Bob Spink: To ask the Prime Minister what his policy is for *(a)* increasing the productivity and *(b)* cutting the costs of his Office. [172180]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes, my office is part of the Cabinet Office. I refer the hon. Member to answer given to him by my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary on 10 May 2004. *Official Report*, column 148W to 149W.

NORTHERN IRELAND

All-terrain Vehicles

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to increase safety measures for the use of all-terrain vehicles and motorcycles; and if he will make a statement. [171766]

Angela Smith: There are no plans to increase safety measures for the use of all-terrain vehicles and motorcycles.

These vehicles are primarily intended for off-road use, particularly for agricultural/forestry purposes or leisure use. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) provides advice on the safe use of these vehicles, sometimes known as quad bikes or all-terrain cycles, for example on such issues as training, protective clothing and equipment, maintenance and safe driving methods. Free leaflets can be downloaded from the HSE website: www.hse.gov.uk.

The design and construction of these vehicles do not normally meet the requirements for unrestricted road use unless they are modified to comply with regulations on construction, use and lighting. Moreover, for such vehicles to be licensed for unrestricted road use they must also comply with the requirements of the EC Directive (92/61/EC) on type approval for motorcycles.

Drivers of these vehicles, when on a road, are required to hold an appropriate driving licence and have minimum third-party insurance.

Asbestos

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the buildings occupied by his departmental and agency staff which require *(a)* remedial work on and *(b)* removal of asbestos; what this work will cost; what budgets are available for this work for (i) 2004 and (ii) 2005; and what budget is available for future asbestos surveys. [159652]

Mr. Pearson: The following buildings occupied by staff of the 11 departments of the Northern Ireland Administration and its agencies have been identified as requiring remedial work or removal of asbestos.

Ballymena County Hall
Twickenham House, Ballymena
18 Castlewellan Road, Banbridge
6/8 Scarva Street, Banbridge
Churchill House, Belfast
Castle Buildings, Stormont Estate
Ladas Drive, Belfast
Health Estates, Belfast
Fermanagh House, Belfast
Netherleigh, Belfast
56/58 Ann Street, Belfast
20 College Gardens, Belfast

Hampden House, Belfast
Inniskeen House, Enniskillen
Commonwealth House, Belfast
State Building, Belfast
Stormont Estate Sub Station
Courier HQ, Stormont
Gate Lodge, Prince of Wales Ave, Stormont
Victoria Hall, Belfast
Craigantlet Buildings, Stormont
Boiler/Greenhouse, Stormont
1 Davey Street, Carrickfergus
8 Artillery Road, Coleraine
36 Thomas Street, Dungannon
15 East Bridge Street, Enniskillen
Castle Barracks, Enniskillen
45 Pound Street, Larne
4–6 Killane Road, Limavady
14 Asylum Road, Londonderry
Valencia Place, Newcastle
8 East Street, Newtownards
4 Glenford Way, Newtownards
32 Devenney Road, Omagh
42 Kings Street, Magherafelt
86 Main Street, Limavady
1A Belt Road, Londonderry
9 Robert Street, Newtownards
7/9 Conway Square, Newtownards
19 Mountjoy Road, Omagh
20 Derry Road, Strabane
Greenmount Campus (Main) (39 buildings)
Greenmount Campus (Abbey Farm) (4 buildings)
Greenmount Campus (Glenwherry) (8 buildings)
Loughry Campus (39 buildings)
Enniskillen Campus (10 buildings)
Veterinary Sciences Division (12 buildings)
Newforge (14 buildings)
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (Owned/Leased) (15 buildings)
Craigavon Driver and Vehicle Testing Agency
Omagh Driver and Vehicle Testing Agency
Armagh Driver and Vehicle Testing Agency
Training Centre at Felden

There are no separate budgets for all asbestos-related remedial or removal work, costs are contained within the annual maintenance budgets. No specific budgets have been set aside for future asbestos surveys.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what proportion of buildings occupied by *(a)* staff of the Department and *(b)* staff of the Department's executive agencies have been surveyed for the purpose of identifying the presence of asbestos prior to the implementation of the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002. [159660]

Mr. Pearson: Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) acting on behalf of Office estates and Building standards Division (OBD) of the Department of Finance and Personnel has surveyed 94 per cent. of the buildings within the office estate to identify the presence of asbestos.

Of the specialised buildings under the control of the various Departments 91 per cent. have been surveyed for the presence of asbestos.

It has not been possible to distinguish between buildings occupied by staff of the Department and staff occupied by the Department's agencies.

Contaminated Land

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland for what reasons part 3 of the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 has not yet been brought into operation; and if he will make a statement. [172370]

Angela Smith: I refer the hon. Lady to the answer I gave on 21 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 562–63W.

Domestic Rates

Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost to *(a)* his Department, *(b)* the Northern Ireland Rate Collection Agency, *(c)* the Northern Ireland Valuation and Lands Agency and *(d)* local authorities was of administering domestic rates in Northern Ireland in the financial years (i) 2001–02 and (ii) 2002–03; and what the estimated costs are for the financial years (A) 2003–04 and (B) 2004–05. [169955]

Mr. Pearson: It is not possible without incurring disproportionate cost to disaggregate the administration of domestic rates from non-domestic rates. The figures in table 1 as follows, are the direct costs, including non-cash, of administering all rates in relation to *(a)* the 11 departments of the Northern Ireland Administration *(b)* the Northern Ireland Rate Collection Agency and *(c)* the Northern Ireland Valuation and Lands Agency. Information is not readily held in relation to *(d)* local authorities and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Table 1

£000

	Outturn		*Estimate*	
	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
(a) Core Departments[1]	n/a	n/a	743	768
(b) Rate Collection Agency	7,505	7,328	8,914	10,223
(c) Valuation and Lands Agency	6,679	5,731	6,504	7,555

[1] Core Departments include the cost of policy development.

Educational Psychologists

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what funding he will make available to assist local authorities in the transition from a one year course to a three year doctorate for training educational psychologists. [171757]

Mr. Gardiner: The Department for Education and Skills is currently considering the proposals made by the British Psychological society for a three-year doctorate for the training of educational psychologists.

The Department of Education has been in discussion with the Queen's University of Belfast and the five Education and Library Boards about the implications for Northern Ireland if these revised arrangements are adopted.

A Northern Ireland decision on the matter will be taken in light of local needs and the resources available to the Department for future years.

Employer Training Pilots

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether Northern Ireland has been included in the Employer Training Pilots. [171716]

Mr. Gardiner: There are Employer Training Pilots running in 20 designated areas in England only. These are a HM Treasury initiative and at present there are no indications that they will be extended to Northern Ireland. However, the aims of the Pilots are closely allied to the Department for Employment and Learning's strategic objectives for workforce development. Department officials are therefore monitoring developments on the implementation of the Pilots particularly in regard to their effectiveness and value for money.

Farming

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken to assist the farming community in Northern Ireland to promote greater availability of home grown produce to consumers. [172065]

Mr. Pearson: The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and Invest Northern Ireland continue to work closely with processors in providing financial and technical support to ensure they are in a position to supply the retail multiples. There has also been liaison with the multiples to encourage them to increase trade with Northern Ireland suppliers. In addition the Farmers' Market Initiative, which concerns direct selling to consumers, has received funding under Leader and assistance has been granted to the Northern Ireland Festival of Food and Drink which seeks to promote the uptake of local produce.

Ice Hockey

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to promote the development of amateur ice hockey in Northern Ireland. [171926]

Angela Smith: Since 2001–02 a total of £4,150 has been provided, via the Sports Council for Northern Ireland, to the governing body for ice hockey in Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Ice Hockey Association (NIIHA), to help it promote the development of both professional and amateur ice hockey in Northern Ireland. In addition, the Sports Council is providing ongoing advice and guidance to a range of organisations involved in the promotion and development of amateur ice hockey in Northern Ireland. These include individual clubs, local authorities, the NIIHA and the Northern Ireland Ice Hockey Federation.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the Sports Council for Northern Ireland officially recognises any body governing ice hockey. [172079]

Angela Smith: At present the Sports Council for Northern Ireland officially recognises the Northern Ireland Ice Hockey Association (NIIHA) as the body governing ice hockey. I understand, however, that the NIIHA decided last year to reconstitute. Following this decision, the Sports Council entered into discussions with representatives of ice hockey in Northern Ireland in relation to the possibilities of official recognition for an alternative governing body for the sport. These discussions are still on-going and, until they are concluded, the Sports Council will continue to recognise NIIHA as the body governing ice hockey.

Illegal Fuel

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the amount of illegal fuel smuggled into Northern Ireland in 2003. [169932]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

In Northern Ireland, it is not possible to distinguish between the proportion of non UK duty-paid fuel accounted for by legitimate cross-border shopping and the proportion accounted for by cross-border smuggling and the misuse of rebated and low-tax fuels supplied for non-road use. Customs' latest estimates of the overall revenue loss both from legitimate cross-border shopping and from all forms of oils fraud, including smuggling, in Northern Ireland in 2000, 2001 and 2002 are set out in HM Customs and Excise's Annual Report and Accounts (HC 52) published in December 2003.

Customs' estimates for 2003 will be included in their Annual Report and Accounts for 2003–04.

Members' Salary/Allowances

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total *(a)* salary and *(b)* allowances available to an hon. Member who is also a Member of the Northern Ireland Legislative Assembly are. [172092]

Mr. Paul Murphy: With regard to the hon. Members' salaries and allowances, I refer the hon. Lady to the House of Commons Information Factsheet M5—"Members pay, pensions and allowances", a copy of which is available for the Information Office of the House and online at http: //www. parliament.uk/ document/upload/M05.pdf.

A Member of the Northern Ireland Assembly (MLA) who is a member of either House of Parliament will have their salary payable as an MLA reduced by two thirds, presently to £10,606. MLAs' allowances are payable in respect of their duties as Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly and are not reduced if an MLA is also

a Member of either House of Parliament. The allowances which MLAs may claim in respect of those duties are:

Office Cost Allowance—not exceeding £48,000 in any year
Travel Allowance
Subsistence Allowance
Disability Allowance—not exceeding £10,000 in any year
Travel Allowance—employees
Staff Pensions and Redundancy Allowance
Temporary Secretarial Allowance.

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the budget was for casework of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission in each year since its formation. [168166]

Mr. Spellar: The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission has provided me with the following details:

	Amount (£)
1999–2000	75,000
2000–01	75,000
2001–02	100,000
2002–03	115,000
2003–04	100,000

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many cases the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission has supported on behalf of individuals in each year since its formation. [168167]

Mr. Spellar: The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission has provided me with the following details:

	Cases
1999–2000	11
2000–01	15
2001–02	7
2002–03	10

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost was of each case supported by the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission in each year since its formation. [168168]

Mr. Spellar: The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission has provided me with the following details:

	Amount (£)
1999–2000	[1]26,520
	3,000
	7,527
	[1]28,179
	6,545
	7,500
	750
	375
	3,750
	1,700
	176
2000–01	[1]8,047
	[1]65,700
	3,967
	411
	100
	110
	250
	176
	470
	235
	1,469
2001–02	[1]80,000
	429
	117
	350
	800
	940
	625
2002–03	1,087
	500
	180
	294
	15,400
	5,500
	300
	220
	1,175
	470
2003–04	15,000
	7,500
	[1]8,300
	7,500
	863
	3,500
	7,500
	824
	588
	2,500
	1,270
	794
	1,335
	1,370
	5,000
	1,935

[1] Where a cost is marked incomplete, the case is either still ongoing or final costs have not been submitted. Similarly where the number of cases supported does not tally with the number of case costs listed, costs have not yet been submitted. It should also be noted that the costs associated with a case can be spread over several years and accrued accordingly in the annual accounts.

Case costs vary as some are simply legal opinion or an intervention to the Court while other cases have been supported to the Court of Appeal, House of Lords or the European Court of Human Rights.

Patient Exemption Fraud

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made towards meeting the targets for the reduction of patient exemption fraud in each Northern Ireland Health Board area; and what further targets have been put in place. [171796]

Angela Smith: The target for the reduction of patient exemption fraud is set at Northern Ireland, rather than at an individual Health Board, level.

2004–05 Priorities for Action sets a Northern Ireland target for patient fraud exemption of a 45 per cent. reduction from the 1999–2000 level by 31March 2005. The Department remains committed to the achievement of this target.

The most recent available results are in respect of 2002–03, which showed a reduction in the level of estimated patient fraud of around 37 per cent. compared to 1999–2000 levels.

Planning Policy

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on his Department's policy on the development of out-of-town supermarkets in Northern Ireland. [172033]

Angela Smith: The Department of the Environment (NI)'s policy on out-of-town development is set out in Planning Policy Statement 5—Retailing and Town Centres, published in June 1996. A copy has been placed in the Library.

The Department for Regional Development (NI) has commenced work on a review of PPS 5 and aims to publish a draft for consultation in the autumn. A copy of this will then be placed in the Library.

Plastic Bullets

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment has been made of the effects of using *(a)* tasers and *(b)* other devices in place of plastic bullets. [171754]

Mr. Pearson: The Association of Chief Police Officers is currently conducting a trial of the taser in five police forces. The fourth report of the NIO-led Steering Group published on 29 January provided a summary of the initial review of the trial and of the independent assessment of the medical implications on the use within ACPO guidelines of the taser. That medical assessment was set out more fully in the Steering Group's third report, published in December 2002.

The NIO-led Steering Group has assessed the potential of a wide range of commercial products as potential alternatives to the current L21A1 baton round but none to date have met the criteria for an acceptable, effective and less lethal option. The reports of the Steering Group set out the findings of the assessments in detail.

The fourth report also described the progress that the Government have made in developing two alternatives—the attenuating energy projectile and discriminating irritant projectile.

Public Bodies

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total cost to public funds was of departmentally-related public bodies to which public appointments are made in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [170489]

Mr. Paul Murphy: With the exception of 2003, the information on the cost of non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) in Northern Ireland is available in the 'Public Bodies' publication produced annually by the Cabinet Office. The last five editions are available in the Library.

Information on the cost of NDPBs for financial year 2002–03, which was not include in the Public Bodies 2003 publication, was compiled in December 2003. I have placed a table detailing these costs in the Library.

There are other bodies to which public appointments are made but that information is not held centrally.

Rugby

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what support the Government will provide to ensure the development of Ravenhill Rugby Ground to enable it to meet current standards. [170245]

Angela Smith: The Government have already provided, through the Sports Council for Northern Ireland's Interim Safe Sports Grounds Scheme, £559,981 to the Ulster Branch of the Irish Rugby Football Union to support essential health and safety works at Ravenhill Rugby Ground. We are also currently engaged in discussions with the Ulster Branch about a wide range of issues facing Rugby in Northern Ireland, including the further development of Ravenhill Rugby Ground and the possibility of additional Government support. Until the present discussions are concluded, it would be inappropriate to comment on whether and to what extent additional Government support might be provided to enable the Ground to meet current standards.

School Travel

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what the total amount of funding allocated to develop school travel plans in Northern Ireland in each of the last three years was; and how much funding has been allocated for further development; [172007]

(2) what assessment he has made of the safe routes to schools pilots that are being developed; when the final assessment report on the safe routes to schools pilots will be published; and if he will make a statement. [172010]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has written to the hon. Lady directly in response to these questions.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin to Lady Hermon, dated 11 May 2004:

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has asked me to respond to your recently tabled Parliamentary Questions about funding allocated to develop school travel plans in Northern Ireland and what assessment has been made of the six safe routes to schools pilots that are being developed.

You will be aware that, as proposed by the Regional Transportation Strategy 2002–12, Roads Service has been working to address the issue of the 'school run', given its impact on morning traffic congestion, through the "Safer Routes to Schools" initiative with the aim of encouraging more children to walk, cycle and use public transport for their journey to school.

The Department of Education, the Department of the Environment Road Safety Team and other agencies are working alongside Roads Service in this project. The following six schools are currently participating in the initiative:

St. Joseph's College, Belfast;

Oakwood Integrated Primary School, Dunmurry;

Wallace High School, Lisburn;

St. Anthony's Primary School, Craigavon;

Parkhall College, Antrim; and St. Brigid's College, Londonderry.

This is the first time a schools initiative to promote sustainable modes of transport in response to a traffic congestion issue has been undertaken in Northern Ireland. Measures at the six schools are mainly exploratory and at different stages of development. The overall aim is to assist each school in developing a travel plan, which sets out a package of measures for reducing the number of car trips made to school. Where appropriate, Roads Service will subsequently introduce improvements to the roadway such as installing pedestrian facilities and traffic calming measures to facilitate children who may want to walk, cycle and use public transport. Additionally, other measures such as cycle shelters and lockers are provided by the Department of Education inside the schools premises.

To get the school travel initiative started, Roads Service and its partners have spent nearly £85,000 over the last three years (2001/02-£ nil, 2002/03-£48,391, 2003/04-£36,253) on assisting development of travel plans for the participating schools. The funding was used to investigate existing infrastructure and facilities at the schools, examine accident data, undertake surveys to establish baseline school travel information and pay for the training of a Travel Plan Co-ordinator who was appointed to champion the initiative in the schools. This work was followed by the preparation of draft travel plans, which were given over to the schools to take ownership of and develop in line with the ethos of the school and its thinking on the sustainable transport concept. No specific funding has been allocated yet for the further development of travel plans as resources are being concentrated for the time being on the pilot group of six schools. However, it is intended, as part of the next stage of the initiative, to develop a practical support package that encourages other schools to engage in the travel plan process.

The improvements to the infrastructure and facilities at each of the pilot schools will be completed this financial year. While we will undertake a preliminary assessment at the end of the school year 2004/05 of how successful these measures have been, initial work including installation of cycle shelters at the schools has had very positive results and generated an increase in cycling among pupils for the school journey. It is anticipated that the planned infrastructure work to the road network adjacent to the schools should have equal effect in facilitating and encouraging more children to use sustainable modes of transport.

I hope this information is helpful.

Sport Governing Bodies

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what criteria are applied by the Sports Council in recognising a governing body for any sport when there is more than one potential candidate. [172078]

Angela Smith: The Sports Council for Northern Ireland applies the policy criteria adopted by Sports Councils across the United Kingdom in recognising a governing body for any sport. This states that only one body will be recognised per sport. In addition, in recognising a body, criteria are applied under the headings of constitution and management, structure and organisation, promotion of the activity, safety and impact. When there is more than one potential candidate for any sport, the decision is based on which body best meets these criteria.

Sporting Venues

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what support he is providing to ensure that Casement Park remains a venue for Gaelic games. [172285]

Angela Smith: I have already provided, through the Sports Council for Northern Ireland's Interim Safe Sports Grounds Scheme, £150,000 to the Antrim County Board of the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) to help ensure that Casement Park remains a venue for Gaelic Games. The Sports Council has also recently begun discussions with the Ulster Council of the GAA, which is responsible for the overall development of Gaelic sports in Northern Ireland, about the future capital priorities for Gaelic games including those relating to Casement Park. Until these discussions are completed it would not be appropriate to comment on what additional support might be provided to ensure that Casement Park remains a venue for Gaelic Games.

Translink

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many new buses were purchased by Translink for use in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [172062]

Mr. Spellar: Translink advise that buses purchased in the last five years are as detailed as follows.

	Buses purchased
2003–04	193
2002–03	17
2001–02	52
2000–01	41
1999–2000	124

Women's Aid Helpline

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether funding will be provided to ensure the continued operation of the Women's Aid 24-hour helpline; and if he will make a statement. [171760]

Angela Smith: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety is liaising with NI Women's Aid and I have met with the organisation regarding the projected funding deficit for 2004–05 in respect of their helpline. When all considerations have been determined a decision will be made and it is hoped that this matter will be resolved as a matter of urgency.

TRANSPORT

Aylesbury Southern Distributor Road

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of whether the proposed Aylesbury southern distributor road should *(a)* be a dual carriageway, *(b)* be on an embankment and *(c)* have grade separated junctions. [172166]

Mr. Jamieson: None. The Secretary of State has not received a proposal for delivery of the Aylesbury southern distributor road so is not undertaking any assessment.

However, we anticipate that the local authority will submit proposals in due course to deliver this scheme.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the cost of the Aylesbury southern-distributor road proposed in the Cross-Government Statement on the draft Milton Keynes and South Midlands sub-regional strategy; how it is planned that the road should be funded; and what his current estimate is of the timescale for the project. [172167]

Mr. Jamieson: The Secretary of State has not received any proposals relating to the Aylesbury southern distributor road and, therefore, has made no estimate of the cost.

It is for the Local Authority to bring forward specific proposals for a suitably phased scheme for funding under the Local Transport Plan process, taking into account developer contributions.

The indicative timescale for this scheme is set out in the draft Milton Keynes and South Midlands sub regional strategy.

Bus Partnership Forum

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what activities have been undertaken by the Bus Partnership Forum; and how often it has met in each year since its creation. [171938]

Mr. McNulty: I Chair the Bus Partnership Forum, which brings together senior representatives of the bus industry and local government, and first met in July 2002. Since then the Forum has met a further three times, January and July 2003 and on 23 February 2004.

Through the work of a number of task and finish groups and the official level steering group, the Forum is tackling problems that may hinder further growth in the industry and is identifying practical solutions. Achievements to date include:

publication of a report on understanding customer needs;

agreeing a code of practice on service stability (limiting the number of timetable changes made per year) for local implementation;

publication of a CD-ROM resource pack on bus priorities;

publication of model agreements on joint ticketing schemes as a way of encouraging further schemes;

and commissioning the first national survey of bus punctuality, with a view to establishing realistic standards and targets.

Further work is in progress on performance monitoring and integrated ticketing and a report on innovative transport and social inclusion issues is due in the summer of 2004.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* expenditure and *(b)* administration costs of the Bus Partnership Forum were for each year since 1997. [171972]

Mr. McNulty: The forum was established in July 2002. The cost of administering the Forum is negligible and is met from the existing budgets of the constituent organisations. No additional public expenditure has been incurred from the work of the Forum over and above that already planned for in existing research and consultancy programmes.

Bus Stops

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what percentage of bus stops in *(a)* rural and *(b)* urban areas outside London have real time bus information. [171973]

Mr. McNulty: In April 2002, DfT awarded £20 million supplementary credit approval (SCA) to support 19 local authorities (LA) and passenger transport executives (PTE) in providing real time information (RTI) on their local bus services. The SCA programme ended at the end of March 2004. It has been used to support the provision of:

over 2,600 buses equipped to provide RTI

nearly 1,300 at-stop signs now providing RTI

12 new or extended websites

seven new or extended SMS services.

The transport direct team (TDT) is currently working on a national database of bus stops and public transport interchange points. Bus stops are recorded by LA, rather than by rural and urban areas. The information provided below is therefore broken down into PTEs and shire counties. PTEs are amalgamations of adjacent urban LAs, and as such have been used as an indication of urban areas. Shire counties have been taken to represent rural areas. The TDT database holds a total of 277,363 bus stops in England, of these 65,954 are in the PTEs outside London and 191,760 in the shire counties.

In late 2003, a survey of bus real time information capability in English local authorities, recorded 361 at stop RTI signs in the PTEs outside London, and 2,067 at stop RTI signs in the shire counties. In addition to signs, there are "virtual stops", which provide bus real time information through short messaging service (SMS). The total number of stops equipped with this capability is: 22,639 in the PTEs and 3,933 in the shire counties.

	PTEs (excl. London)	*Shire counties*
No bus stops	65,055	194,632
RTI signs	361	2,067
SMS capability	22,639	3,933
Total RTI	23,000	6,000
Total percentage	35.4	3.1

Note:
Table 1: RTI enabled bus stops for shire counties and PTEs.

For PTEs outside London, the percentage of bus stops capable of providing RTI to passengers is 35.4 per cent. For the shire counties the percentage is 3.1 per cent. This figure is skewed towards the PTEs due to the large number of stops that have SMS capability. For at stop signage only, the figures are 0.5 per cent. for PTEs and 1.1 per cent. for shire counties.

Car Sharing

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much funding has been given by his Department, and its predecessors, in each year since 1997 towards the *(a)* development and *(b)* promotion of (i) car clubs, (ii) car sharing and (iii) the Carplus scheme. [172292]

Mr. McNulty: Car sharing was featured as part of the Government's sustainable development campaign, 'Are Your Doing You Bit' prior to 2000. For example, as part of the programme, the Department's predecessor DETR contributed setting up costs of £150,000 to establish the Edinburgh City Car Club in 1999.

Building on this the Department has been promoting car sharing through its published guidance and initiatives on work place and schools travel plans and by funding bursary schemes.

Since 1999 the Department has been supporting the Carplus car club advisory service with the following annual grants:

1999—£37,000
2000—£38,000
2001—£103,000
2002—£53,000
2003—£60,000
2003—£60,000

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will estimate the average occupancy of motor vehicles for each year since 1997. [172335]

Mr. McNulty: Occupancy figures for cars and light vans for Great Britain from the National Travel Survey are as follows:

1997—1.60
1998—1.59
1999—1.59
2000—1.59
2001—1.59
2002—1.58

Figures for 2003 are not yet available.

Crime Prevention

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on progress of the Government's strategy for crime prevention on public transport. [171889]

Mr. McNulty: The Government are raising the profile of public transport crime as an issue which needs to be addressed by a partnership approach between operators, local authorities, the police, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs), and other interested parties.

Examples of effective partnership working include the work of the National Route Crime Group to reduce the risks posed by acts of trespass on railway property and associated acts of vandalism. This and other local and national initiatives have led to a 32 Per cent. reduction of vandalism on the railways in 2002–03. The Secure Stations Scheme encourages train operators to work with other organisations to improve the 'whole journey' experience of rail passengers. Currently approximately two thirds of all overground rail journeys and one half of all London Underground journeys involve passengers starting or finishing their journey at a Secure Station. The Safer Travel on Buses and Coaches Panel is looking at ways to combat assaults, anti-social behaviour and vandalism on vehicles and property. The Panel has recently produced practical guides to protect bus and coach crews.

The British Transport Police (BTP) also play a vital role in keeping Britain's railways safe and secure, and pleasant to use. The Force works closely in partnership with those who manage the railway, staff and tenants, and local police forces. BTP covers crime from serious violent and sexual offences to pick-pocketing and car crime. It also takes a lead in combating the anti-social behaviour that can impact so much on those who use and work on the railway. Other examples of the spreading of crime prevention good practice include a toolkit on reducing crime on public transport, and good practice case studies to improve personal security in bus travel. Department for Transport guidance (to be issued this summer) to local transport authorities on giving greater emphasis to accessibility issues within Local Transport Plans will encourage authorities to adopt a partnership approach with CDRPs, local partners in the health, education and welfare to work sectors, and the local community to address crime and the fear of crime issues as one way of improving people's ability to access jobs and key services.

Delegated Examiner Tests

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what the inspection and supervisory regime is for *(a)* institutions and organisations and *(b)* individuals who carry out delegated examiner tests; [171939]

(2) which institutions and organisations carry out delegated examiner tests on behalf of the Driving Standards Agency; and how many candidates *(a)* entered tests and *(b)* were successful, broken down by institution and organisation; [171940]

(3) what the procedure is for permission to be given for delegated examiner tests to take place. [171971]

Mr. Jamieson: A number of organisations are authorised to carry out driving tests for their staff. The organisations are fire brigades, police forces, the Ministry of Defence and some bus companies. The bus companies have to hold a Public Service Vehicles operator's licence.

The Secretary of State for Transport has to be satisfied that these organisations make proper arrangements for conducting tests and keeping proper records, before granting his approval to the appointment of the examiners who may conduct the tests.

Before being appointed, the examiners have to successfully complete the same four week training course that examiners employed by the Driving Standards Agency are required to undertake.

The Agency is responsible for the subsequent supervision of the standards of the examiners, which involves quarterly supervision visits to the organisations to check that tests are conducted and assessed to the required standard.

The number of tests conducted by the fire and police authorities and bus companies last year, and the pass rates have been placed in the Libraries of the House. Equivalent figures for the Ministry of Defence are not available.

Driving Test Centres

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) which driving test centres have refused to accept candidates because of a lack of capacity at the centre within *(a)* nine weeks, *(b)* 12 weeks and *(c)* more than 12 weeks of a practical test appointment being requested; [171967]

(2) what estimate his Department has made of the number of people who will seek a driving test in 2004–05; [171968]

(3) what the average waiting time is for practical driving tests for *(a)* cars, *(b)* motorcycles, *(c)* large goods vehicles and *(d)* passenger carrying vehicles, broken down by test centre. [171970]

Mr. Jamieson: Candidates are able to book driving tests with the Driving Standards Agency by phone, by post or online via the internet. They can also amend their appointment by phone or post to seek an earlier or later date, so appointment availability at individual test centres continually varies. No applicant for a driving test is refused an appointment.

The Agency has a national target for the average annual waiting time for a practical car driving test in England, Scotland and Wales of six weeks. The national average waiting time at the end of April for car tests was 9.2 weeks. Against the national average waiting time target for a motorcycling test of four weeks, the waiting time was 4.6 weeks. Against the national average waiting time target for a lorry or bus driving test of three weeks, the waiting time was 4.9 weeks.

The latest information about appointment availability for each type of test, at each test centre has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

In order to reduce the current high waiting times for tests in Great Britain the Agency recruited 283 new driving examiners in the last financial year and plans to recruit a further 330 in the coming year. An extra 7.30 am test slot is being added to weekday programmes in some test centres and tests are now offered on Sundays. The Agency is deploying as many driving examiners as possible from Scotland to the London and South East area to tackle the problem of high waiting times there. In the context of its Business Plan for 2004–05, I have set the Agency a target to bring national waiting times for a car driving test down to six weeks by January 2005.

The Agency estimates that it will handle 1,563,000 applications for practical car driving tests in 2004–05. The current pass rate for the practical car driving test is 43 per cent., so the applications will include a number from candidates who have been unsuccessful at a previous test attempt—some of whom will delay reapplying for a further test for over a year. Taking these factors together suggests that between 670,000 and 940,000 people will be making applications in the coming year.

Home Zone Challenge

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which local authorities applied for funding under the Home Zone Challenge scheme; and how much each authority received. [171974]

Mr. McNulty: A table has been placed in the Libraries of the House which lists the 110 authorities that applied for funding and their respective maximum allocations.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what measures his Department have put in place to ensure that money given under the Home Zone scheme *(a)* achieves value for money and *(b)* meets the original conditions of the bid. [171975]

Mr. McNulty: The payment of grant through the Home Zones Challenge is subject to terms and conditions which form an agreement for funding the work programme submitted by the authority in its original bid. The terms and conditions set out the requirements relating to value for money and changes, if significant, to the work programme. Copies have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

The Secretary of State has appointed a consultant to assist with the management of the Home Zones Challenge, to monitor progress of the schemes and to disseminate good practice. Local authorities are required to provide quarterly finance and progress reports and the schemes are reviewed regularly at regional meetings. Authorities are visited on occasion by officials from the Department and/or the management consultant to review individual schemes.

Light Rail

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department has taken to encourage *(a)* local authorities, *(b)* private sector bodies and *(c)* organisations and institutions involved in light rail to share best practice. [171946]

Mr. McNulty: The departmental officials meet regularly with scheme promoters and hold seminars from time to time to disseminate best practice and encourage dialogue between promoters. The Department has also part funded Leeds University's Institute of Transport Studies 'Consult Database' a web-based tool designed to disseminate best practice in local transport planning.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) which light rail systems that share road space with road traffic have priority over road traffic; [171949]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of the percentage of proposed new light rail systems that will run across surfaces shared with road vehicles; and if he will make a statement; [171950]

(3) what percentage of current light rail networks run along surfaces shared with road vehicles. [171951]

Mr. McNulty: It is for the promoters to assess the appropriate level of sharing and traffic priority, in the light of local circumstances. All the current and proposed light rail systems have sections of street-running and some degree of priority at junctions.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what estimate his Department has made of the amount of heavy rail track still in use that would be suitable for shared use by light rail systems; and if he will make a statement; [171952]

(2) sport how many kilometres of track are shared by light rail and heavy rail vehicles. [171953]

Mr. McNulty: There are currently about 13 kilometres of track that is shared by light rail and heavy rail vehicles. The Department has made no assessment of the amount of the existing heavy rail network that could be shared with light rail services. However, The Passenger Transport Executive Group on Light Rail is currently looking at the feasibility of more sharing of track between light and heavy rail services and will be presenting their finding to the Department in due course.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what common safety and operational regulations are applied to heavy and light rail projects concerning dangers to pedestrians and motorists. [171955]

Mr. McNulty: A number of regulatory provisions apply to both heavy and light rail systems. These include: the Level Crossings Act 1983; the Railways and Other Transport Systems (Approval of Works, Plant and Equipment) Regulations 1994; the Railways (Safety Critical Work) Regulations 1994, and the Railway Safety (Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 1997. All are relevant statutory provisions under The Health and Safety at Work Etc Act 1974.

The measures necessary to meet these provisions reflect scheme specific risk, and so will vary depending on the nature and characteristics of the rail system concerned.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which local authorities have indicated to his Department that they are actively considering building tram and light rail systems. [171961]

Mr. McNulty: Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire county councils, Hampshire county council and Portsmouth city council, Blackpool borough council, along with all the Passenger Transport Executives have indicated to the Department that they are actively considering light rail proposals.

Local Transport Schemes

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the 19 major local transport schemes referred to on page 19 of his Department's Annual Report 2003; and how much funding each received. [171937]

Mr. McNulty: There is no reference to major local transport schemes on page 19 of the Department for Transport's 2003 Annual Report. The new major schemes approved in the 2002 annual local transport settlement, along with their funding allocations, are listed in the table as follows:

	£ million
Norwich Interchange	9.8
A43 Corby Link Road	12.7
Nottingham City Centre Scheme	11.8
North Middlesborough Accessibility Improvements	10.9
Sunderland Central Route	9.1
North Manchester Business Park	20.2
Merseytram Line 1	170
Wigan Inner Relief Route	19.5
Ashton Northern Bypass Stage 2	7.7
A5 8 Blackbrook Diversion	7.9
A57 Cadishead Way	19.9
Warrington Bus Interchange	6.4
A228 Leybourne and West Mailing Corridor Improvement	19.9
Ryde and East Wight Gateway	5.6
A24 Ashington to Southwater	19
A24 Horsham—Capel Improvement	38.6
Mereoak Roundabout	6.3
Walsall Town Centre Transport Package	11.3
Reighton Bypass	6.6

Motorway Bridges

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many unused and obsolete bridges are in place over motorways in England and Wales; if he will list their locations and who is responsible for each of them; and how many are scheduled for *(a)* repair and *(b)* removal or demolition. [172044]

Dr. Howells: There are 11 unused bridges in place over motorways in England for which the Highways Agency is responsible. Bridges over motorways in Wales are the responsibility of the National Assembly for Wales. The location of the bridges in England is shown in the following table.

Location	*Status*
M1 Junction 26 and Junction 27 (midway) near Greasley	Scheduled for removal
M23 near Hooley (2 bridges)	Possible removal pending the outcome of the preferred scheme for the M23/A23 Hooley junction improvement
M1 Dry Culvert Crossing near Shepshed	—
M40 Great Pinley accommodation bridge near Warwick	—
Ropple Rail Overbridge on the M50	—
A46 Budbrooke Lodge Farm near Warwick	—
M5 near Puriton, Somerset	—
M25 Junction 5 Sevenoaks	—
M1 near Luton	—
M45 south of Rugby	—
M1 Junction 26 and Junction 27 (midway) near Greasley	—

Network Rail

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether *(a)* he, *(b)* other Ministers in his Department and *(c)* departmental officials have met representatives of Network Rail to discuss the industrial dispute with the RMT Union. [171223]

Mr. McNulty: My hon. Friend the Minister of State for Transport met the Chairman, Chief Executive and other senior Network Rail officers on 27 April and this issue was one of the items discussed. Departmental officials have also had contacts with Network Rail on this issue.

Parliamentary Questions

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how many *(a)* Ordinary Written and *(b)* Named Day Questions his Department received in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary session, broken down by month; [171189]

(2) what proportion of *(a)* Ordinary Written Questions to his Department were answered within five sitting days of tabling and *(b)* Questions for a Written Answer on a named day received a substantive answer on that day in (i) the 2002–03 parliamentary session and (ii) this parliamentary session, broken down by month. [171190]

Mr. McNulty: Ministerial colleagues and I endeavour to reply to parliamentary questions within the required deadlines wherever possible. At 5 May 2004, the Department for Transport had answered 4,744 written questions tabled since 13 November 2002, the beginning of the 2002–03 Parliamentary Session. This comprised 3,941 written ordinary questions (90 per cent. of which were answered within five sitting days) and 803 named day questions (76 per cent. of which were given a substantive answer on the specified date). The following table shows the monthly breakdown.

	Ordinary written			*Named day*		
		Number and percentage[1] answered within five sitting days			*Number and percentage[1] answered on date specified*	
	Numbered tabled	*Number*	*Percentage[1]*	*Number tabled*	*Number*	*Percentage[1]*
2002–03 session						
November 2002[2]	199	184	93	109	84	77
December 2002	205	201	98	57	44	77
January 2003	342	295	86	65	46	71
February 2003	217	201	93	20	14	70
March 2003	308	234	76	45	38	84
April 2003	197	186	94	27	21	78
May 2003	233	216	93	35	24	69
June 2003	248	214	86	43	34	79
July 2003	214	209	98	29	25	86
August 2003	—	—	—	—	—	—
September 2003	183	177	97	24	20	83
October 2003	258	231	90	54	44	82
November 2003[3]	181	174	96	29	26	90
Total	2,785	2,522	91	537	420	78
2003–04 session						
November 2003[4]	71	62	87	6	6	100
December 2003	191	168	88	52	34	65
January 2004	247	202	82	73	45	62
February 2004	196	169	86	50	41	82
March 2004	286	261	91	62	52	84
April 2004	165	148	90	23	14	61
Total	1,156	1,010	87	266	192	72

[1] Rounded to the nearest percentage point.
[2] 13 November to 30 November 2002.
[3] 1 November to 20 November 2003.
[4] 26 November to 30 November 2003.

Public Transport (Wirral, South)

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many rural bus services in Wirral, South are supported by rural bus grants. [172691]

Mr. McNulty: Rural Bus Subsidy Grant (RBSG) is paid to local transport authorities, in the case of Wirral, South this is the Merseyside Passenger Transport Executive (PTE). It is for the authority to decide which services should be supported with the grant. We understand from the PTE that one rural bus service in Wirral, South is provided by RBSG.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of priority bus lanes have been created in Wirral, South since 1997. [172692]

Mr. McNulty: There is one priority bus lane in Wirral, South 0.2miles long on the southern carriageway of the New Chester Road (B5136). It was created in 1997.

Rail Franchises

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what costs have been incurred by the Strategic Rail Authority in respect of the tendering process for the Integrated Kent Franchise; and what the anticipated final costs are.– [171224]

Mr. McNulty: Expenditure by the SRA of approximately £1.8 million has been incurred to date on the tendering of the IKF and the total cost is expected to be £3.85 million.

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether a public sector comparator will be undertaken to establish whether South Eastern train passenger services could be provided more economically and efficiently than under a franchise agreement if the service were to be run through South Eastern Trains. [171225]

Mr. McNulty: Under the provisions of the Railways Act 1993, as amended by the Transport Act 2000, the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) is able to act as operator of last resort for any railway franchise but only on a temporary basis. Section 30 of the Act gives the SRA powers to

"secure the provision of services until such a time as they begin to be provided under a franchise agreement".

The Act reflects the Government's policy that passenger train services should be operated by private companies. It does not provide powers to the SRA to take such services

"back into the public sector"

on a permanent basis.

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials from his Department have met representatives of the (i) Stagecoach Group and (ii) other private train operators and consortiums in relation to the proposed Integrated Kent Franchise. [171226]

Mr. McNulty: No. The franchising process is a matter for the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) which holds regular discussions with both existing and prospective franchise operators as part of discharging its duties.

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he has received a report from the Strategic Rail Authority on the discussions that have taken place between the Chair of the Authority and the Stagecoach Group in relation to the Integrated Kent Franchise. [171227]

Mr. McNulty: No. Any such discussions are a matter for the Strategic Rail Authority.

Railway Crimes

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many crimes were *(a)* reported and *(b)* subsequently led to a conviction (i) on trains, (ii) at stations and (iii) on railway property in each year since 1997. [171906]

Mr. McNulty: The British Transport Police (BTP) have provided the following information on the total number of crimes reported and the total number of detections since 1998; information is not readily available for earlier than 1998. A split between trains, stations and other railway property is not available. Prosecutions and convictions are a matter for the Crown Prosecution Service.

Table 1: England and Wales

	Total crime	*Total detections*	*Detection rates (percentage)*
1998–99	107,769	35,916	33
1999–2000	110,604	33,614	30
2000–01	103,198	30,183	29
2001–02	104,292	23,647	23
2002–03	119,333	24,225	20
2003–04	123,463	26,400	21

Table 2: Scotland

	Total crime	*Total detections*	*Detection rates (percentage)*
1998–99	10,324	3,676	36
1999–2000	9,794	2,882	29
2000–01	9,859	3,250	33
2001–02	9,452	2,918	31
2002–03	10,323	2,694	26
2003–04	9,860	3,081	31

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many individuals working on the railways have been the victim of a crime while at work in each year since 1997. [171907]

Mr. McNulty: The British Transport Police (BTP) have provided the following information on numbers of railway staff who have been victims of crime while at work since 1999; information is not readily available for earlier than 1999.

Railway staff—victims of crime while at work

	England and Wales	*Scotland*
1999–2000	3,437	235
2000–01	3,571	236
2001–02	3,715	231
2002–03	4,283	264
2003–04	4,518	391

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many acts of vandalism were reported on railway property in each year since 1997. [171908]

Mr. McNulty: The British Transport Police (BTP) have provided the following information on acts of vandalism for both Incidents and Offences recorded since 1998; information is not readily available for earlier than 1998.

Table 1: Acts of vandalism—Incidents

	England and Wales	*Scotland*
1998–99	7,835	999
1999–2000	8,531	1,091
2000–01	8,592	1,063
2001–02	9,424	1,153
2002–03	8,667	1,059
2003–04	11,720	1,094

Table 2: Acts of vandalism—Offences recorded

	England and Wales	*Scotland*
1998–99	5,738	835
1999–2000	6,013	813
2000–01	5,783	753
2001–02	5,499	531
2002–03	5,903	599
2003–04	7,989	563

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many crimes were committed in railway stations in each year since 1997. [171909]

Mr. McNulty: The British Transport Police (BTP) have provided the following information on crimes committed at stations, in station car parks, on railway lines and on other railway land since 1999; information is not readily available for crimes committed solely on stations or for earlier than 1999.

	England and Wales	*Scotland*
1999-2000	83,449	8,336
2000–01	78,526	8,217
2001–02	79,110	7,969
2002–03	86,791	7,968
2003–04	89,229	7,544

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* train and *(b)* station staff were attacked in each year since 2000. [172337]

Mr. McNulty: The British Transport Police (BTP) have provided the following information on crimes committed against railway staff while on duty:

	Total number of crimes committed
1999–2000	1,297
2000–01	1,340
2001–02	1,436
2002–03	1,921
2003–04	2,273

The figures supplied represent the total number of assaults against railway staff; a split between train and station staff is not available.

Railways

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects that the Strategic Rail Authority will have developed the November 2005 Performance Trajectory with the train operating companies and the National Task Force. [171400]

Mr. Darling: The National Task Force (which includes representatives of the ORR, SRA, train operator owner groups and Network Rail), on behalf of the rail industry, has developed a performance trajectory to help them measure progress on industry efforts to improve rail performance. The National Task Force will review the trajectory in October 2004.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he expects the Strategic Rail Authority to achieve delivery of the Train Operating Company operational performance trajectory projections for November. [171401]

Mr. Darling: The Strategic Rail Authority believes that the increased focus on improving operational performance will enable the train operating companies to continue an upward performance trend between now and November 2004.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the railway and land sites which have been identified by the Strategic Rail Authority as being suitable for disposal since 2002. [171403]

Mr. Darling: Since the end of 2002, the Strategic Rail Authority has identified 36 sites as suitable for disposal. The table lists the sites.

Location	*Site description*
Alloa	Site of former crossing at Hilton Road Whinhill
Aylesbury	Railway club and sports ground Perm Road
Banbury	Fields by Woodford closed line
Banbury	South end of closed line in Woodford Halse
Bexhill	Former Galley Hill sidings
Brize Norton	Part of former Fairford br[illegible]
Cassington	Part of former Fairford branch
Castlethorpe	Former goods yard
Challow	Former station yard
Colchester Town	Lower Yard, Magdalene Street
Corby	Land at Cottingham Road
Dunstable	Land at Skimpot Road/Jeans Way
Elstree	Former goods yard
Exeter	Former goods yard
Exeter	Land and building (Red House)
Exeter	Tan Lane former goods yard
Formby	Andrew's Lane
Frome	Former east goods yard
Glasgow	Eastfield Depot
Goring-by-Sea	Land south of railway
Greenhithe	Land by station
Haltwhistle	Alston branch
Hullavington	Former goods yard
Horwich	Land at site of former railway works
Hunslet	Land between Ivory Street and Jack Lane
Kincardine	Plot of land beneath electricity pylon
Kings Lynn	Land at Extons Place
Lechlade	Part of former Fairford branch
Liverpool, James Street	Moor House
Melrose	Leaderfoot Viaduct
Reddish	Former depot, Wayland Road
Shoreham-by-Sea	Land at Queens Place
Tunbridge Wells	Former goods yard
Walsall	Land off Littleton Street West
Watford	Wiggenhall Road
Wivelsfield	Land at Rockery Lane

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he envisages the full restoration of passenger rail services between Coventry and Nottingham. [171505]

Mr. McNulty: The change in service will be permanent. The decision to curtail direct services is aimed at better matching services to demand and improving performance. This was determined under the

Strategic Rail Authority's "Midland Main Line/East Midlands Route Utilisation Strategy", on which they consulted last year. Passengers will be able to travel from Nottingham to Nuneaton, from where a shuttle service will operate to Coventry.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Education Services (South Ribble)

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what public funding has been spent on adult *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy in South Ribble in each of the last five years. [171707]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* The estimated total spend on Skills For Life (the Government's strategy for literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners from pre-entry level up to and including level 2) and on Key Skills (essential skills of communication, application of number and information technology), from April 2001 to July 2003, in the Lancashire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area is set out in the following table:

£000

	Basic skills	*Key skills*
April 2001 to July 2001[1]	3,370	1,270
August 2001 to July 2002	6,577	1,857
August 2002 to July	7,815	1,948

[1] The figures for April to July 2001 include costs incurred from August 2000 on learning aims continuing into April 2001.

From the information available to the LSC it has not been feasible to obtain estimates at constituency level or separate figures by subject without incurring disproportionate cost. Likewise it has not been feasible to obtain comparable figures for periods before April 2001 when the Skills for Life strategy was launched and the LSC was formed, but information shows it was considerably less than at present.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many and what percentage of 11-year old pupils in South Ribble reached Level 4 in *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English in each of the last seven years; [171660]

(2) how many and what percentage of pupils in South Ribble reached the *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English standard in each of the last seven years. [171662]

Mr. Miliband: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I have given to the hon. Member of Westmorland and Lonsdale (Mr. Collins) on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column. 34W.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teacher vacancies there were in South Ribble on the last date for which figures are available; and what steps he is taking to reduce them. [171708]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* Information on teacher vacancies is not available by constituency as it is collected at local education authority level. In January 2003, the latest information available, there were 40 full-time teacher vacancies in Lancashire local education authority.

Like other areas, since 1997 South Ribble has benefited from the initiatives that the Government has put in place to recruit and retain teachers and to increase the number of staff supporting them in schools. Since 1997, the number of full-time equivalent regular teachers in maintained schools in the former Lancashire LEA area has risen by 390, from 11,870 to 12,260 in 2003. Over the same period, the number of full-time equivalent school support staff in the area has grown by 2,870 from 3,620 to 6,490 in 2003.

Adult Literacy and Numeracy

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of progress in meeting his Department's target to improve adult literacy and numeracy skills. [169738]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 4 May 2002]:* Skills for Life is the national strategy for improving the adult literacy, language (English for Speakers of Other Languages—ESOL) and numeracy skills needs of all post-16 learners, from pre-entry level up to and including Level 2. It aims to help create a society where adults have the basic skills they need to find and keep work and participate fully in society thereby increasing the economic performance and social cohesion of the country.

Following the launch of Skills for Life in March 2001, we have made significant progress towards our Public Service Agreement target of achieving 1.5 million adults with better basic skills by 2007.

We are confident that we have met our milestone of 470,000 achievements by July 2003. We are also on track to meet our interim target of 750,000 achievements by 2004. In terms of participation, from April 2001 to July 2004 an estimated 2.1 million learners will have taken up 4.3 million Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funded basic skills learning opportunities.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what public funding has been spent on adult *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy in Cambridgeshire in the last five years. [170842]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The estimated total spend on Skills For Life (the Government's strategy for literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners from pre-entry level up to and including level 2) and on key skills (essential skills of communication, application of number and information technology), from April 2001 to July 2003, in the Cambridgeshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area is set out in the table.

£000

	Basic skills	*Key skills*
April 2001 to July 2001[1]	610	389
August 2001 to July 2002	2,354	577
August 2002 to July 2003	4,376	345

[1] The figures for April to July 2001 include costs incurred from August 2000 on learning aims continuing into April 2001.

It has not been feasible to obtain comparable figures for periods before April 2001 when the Skills for Life strategy was launched and the LSC was formed, but information shows it was considerably less than at present.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what public funding has been spent on adult *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy in Oldham West and Royton in each of the last five years. [170908]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The estimated total spend on "Skills For Life" (the Government's strategy for literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners from pre-entry level up to and including level 2) and on Key Skills (essential skills of communication, application of number and information technology), from April 2001 to July 2003, in the Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area is set out in the following table:

£000

	Basic skills	*Key skills*
April 2001 to July 2001[1]	8,925	2,598
August 2001 to July 2002	15,369	3,586
August 2002 to July 2003	27,258	4,210

[1] The figures for April to July 2001 include costs incurred from August 2000 on learning aims continuing into April 2001.

From the information available to the LSC it has not been feasible to obtain estimates at constituency level or separate figures by subject without incurring disproportionate cost. Likewise it has not been feasible to obtain comparable figures for periods before April 2001 when the Skills for Life strategy was launched and the LSC was formed, but information shows it was considerably less than at present.

Apprenticeships

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many residents of Liverpool, Walton have secured apprenticeships in each year from 1997 to 2003. [166964]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Modern Apprenticeship data are not available at parliamentary constituency level. The table shows the number of learners to have completed their modern apprenticeship framework in the Greater Merseyside LSC area in 2001/02 and 2002/03. Some learners gain an NVQ, but do not complete the rest of their framework—these are also shown separately in the table. Comparable data for the years prior to 2001/02 are not available due to changes in the way data are collected.

	Leavers achieving the whole framework	*Leavers achieving NVQ only*	*Total achievers*[1]
2001/02	1,300	900	2,200
2002/03[2]	1,800	900	2,800

[1] Totals may not equal sum of columns due to rounding

[2] 2002/03 figures are provisional

Source:

LSC Individualised Learner Record

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many residents of West Lancashire have undertaken apprenticeships in each of the last five years. [171492]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not available at parliamentary constituency level. Nor is the information available on a consistent geographical basis over the last five years. However, the following table shows the number of starts on modern apprenticeships in the Lancashire LSC area between April 2001 and the end of July 2003, as well as the number of starts from April 1998 to March 2001 in the two TECs that amalgamated into Lancashire LSC—ELTEC and LAWTEC.

Time period[1]	*TEC/LSC*	*Advanced MA*	*Foundation MA*
April 1998 to March 1999	ELTEC	1,000	400
	LAWTEC	1,600	100
April 1999 to March 2000	ELTEC	800	1,100
	LAWTEC	1,900	1,800
April 2000 to March 2001	ELTEC	900	1,300
	LAWTEC	1,800	2,100
April 2001 to July 2002	Lancashire LSC	1,900	4,100
August 2002 to July 2003	Lancashire LSC	1,500	3,300

[1] TECs reported the figures in financial years. LSC reports figures in academic years. The first LSC 'year' was 16 months in order to bring the financial year figures into line with academic years.

Sources:

TEC Management Information.

LSC Individualised Learner Record.

Care NVQ

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many places are available on the NVQ level 2 course to study care *(a)* in England and *(b)* broken down by region; and if he will make a statement. [171008]

Alan Johnson: Information on the number of available places to study National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) is not held centrally. However, the following table shows the numbers of enrolments on NVQ level 2 care courses in England in (i) Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funded further education (FE) and (ii) LSC funded work based learning for young people (WBLYP), broken down by region in 2002–03.

Enrolments on NVQ work based learning 2 care courses in LSC funded further education (FE) and for young people (WBLYP) in England by region: 2002–03

Region	*FE*[1]	*WBLYP*	*Total*[2]
North East	1,900	1,500	3,400
North West	3,800	3,400	7,100
Yorkshire and Humberside	2,300	2,300	4,500
East Midlands	3,000	1,400	4,400
West Midlands	3,900	1,900	5,800
East of England	1,500	1,800	3,300
Greater London	2,700	700	3,300

Enrolments on NVQ work based learning 2 care courses in LSC funded further education (FE) and for young people (WBLYP) in England by region: 2002–03

Region	FE[1]	WBLYP	Total[2]
South East	2,700	2,100	4,800
South West	3,700	2,000	5,700
England[2]	25,300	17,000	42,400

[1] FE figures are provisional.
[2] totals may not add up due to rounding.
Source:
Individualised Learner Record.

Departmental Work

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what work his Department's Green Minister has undertaken in the last three months in that capacity; [166782]

(2) what meetings his Department's Green Minister has attended in the last 12 months in that capacity; [166783]

(3) if he will list the meetings at which his Department has been represented regarding the delivery of sustainable development across Government as co-ordinated by the Ministerial Sub-committee of Green Ministers. [166784]

Mr. Charles Clarke: As Green Minister for the Department for Education and Skills I meet regularly with other Government Departments, Non-Government Organisations and external partners to take forward the Sustainable Development agenda. For further information on my Department's progress on Sustainable Development I refer the hon. Member to the answer I have given today to question 166786.

It has, however, been established practice under successive Governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees. This practice is now formalised by Exemption 2 of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Education Circulars

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the circular documents that were sent by *(a)* the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, *(b)* Ofsted and *(c)* his Department to (i) primary and (ii) secondary schools between 1 January 2003 and 31 December 2003; and how many pages each document contained. [167560]

Mr. Miliband: The following pages show the documents that were sent, including the number of pages, during the period 1 January 2003 and 31 December 2003 from *(a)* the Department for Education and Skills *(b)* the Office for Standards in Education and *(c)* the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to (i) primary schools and (ii) secondary schools.

In total, 34 documents were sent to all primary schools and 41 documents were sent to all secondary schools in the period from the Department for Education and Skills.

Nine documents were sent to all primary schools and 17 documents were sent to all secondary schools in the period from the Office for Standards in Education, and a total of 22 documents were sent to all primary schools and 21 documents were sent to all secondary schools in the period from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

Where a document has been sent to all primary and all secondary schools it will appear in the totals for both primary and secondary above. Details of each document and how many pages each contained have been placed in the Library.

Annex A: Documents sent from the Department for Education and Skills to all primary and secondary schools between 1 January 2003 and 31 December 2003

Primary schools	Pages
January	
NLNS refresher pack	26
Spectrum	10
Languages for all: Languages for life	25
Sure Start	9
KS2 letter from Stephen Twigg	2
February	
Raising standards and tackling workload	32
Spectrum	12
Introduction to e-communications	2
Building schools for the future	20
March	
Early Years Headcount	3
Write here: write now	2
Spectrum	20
Survey of absences in school	5
April	
Notification of move to e-payment system	2
Spectrum	16
May	
Spectrum	16
Excellence and Enjoyment	50
June	
Spectrum	28
Threshold payments	1
Safeguarding children from abuse	30
September	
Implementation Review Unit: poster	1
Implementation Review Unit: publicity leaflet	2
Data collection by type of special educational needs	10
Schoolteachers pay and conditions document 2003	180
Travelling to school: flyer on sustainable school transport	1
Guidance under S133 of the Education Act 2002	14
Spectrum 67	22
October	
Spectrum 68	12
Pupil achievement tracker (CD-ROM)	1
Performance management support materials	1
Research topic paper on the impact of parental involvement in children's education	6
November	
Speaking, listening, learning: working with children in Key stages 1 and 2	152
Spectrum 69	12
December	
Spectrum 70	12
Secondary schools	
January	
Spectrum	10
Languages for all: languages for life	25

Annex A: Documents sent from the Department for Education and Skills to all primary and secondary schools between 1 January 2003 and 31 December 2003

Primary schools	*Pages*
February	
Peter Housden letter re e-batch	2
14–19 Outcome Pack	10
Raising standards and workload	32
A new specialist system	50
Specialist system TSE	2
KS3 targets	2
Spectrum	12
Building schools for the future	20
March	
Spectrum	16
Survey of absences in schools	5
National non stat spec—careers	30
Protecting children from abuse	5
April	
12th youth cohort study	5
Notification of move to e-payment system	2
Spectrum	16
May	
Spectrum	16
June	
Safeguarding children from abuse	30
Threshold guidance	1
Spectrum	28
September	
Implementation Review Unit: poster	1
Implementation Review Unit: publicity leaflet	2
Data collection by type of special educational needs	10
Schoolteachers pay and conditions document 2003	180
Travelling to school: flyer on sustainable school transport	1
Guidance under S133 of the Education Act 2002	14
Education maintenance allowances (EMA)—guidance leaflet	6
Principles underpinning the organisation of 16–19 provision (summary)	8
Spectrum 67	22
October	
Spectrum 68	12
Research topic paper on the impact of parental involvement in children's education	6
Performance management support materials	1
Pupil achievement tracker (CD ROM)	1
November	
Direct communication with young people	20
KS3 National Strategy: Targeting level 5 and above—teaching responses to reading	122
KS3 National Strategy: Year 9 booster kit—English 2003	170
Spectrum 69	12
KS3 National Strategy: GCSE booster pack	76
Future of higher education: changes to student finance	8
December	
Spectrum 70	12

Notes:
1. There were no circular documents sent to schools in July or August 2003.
2. 'Spectrum' is the DfES monthly catalogue of publications, and source of information and news of interest to schools.

Annex B: Documents sent from the Office for Standards in Education to all primary and secondary schools between 1 January 2003 and 31 December 2003

	Date	*Schools*	*Pages*
Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools: Standards and Quality in Education 2001–02	5 February 2003	All	106
Area Inspection Framework Consultation	10 February 2003	Secondary	22
Good assessment in secondary schools	3 March 2003	Secondary	41
Key Stage 3 Strategy: Evaluation of second year	14 March 2003	Secondary	32
Writing in English as an Additional Language at Key Stage 4 and Post-16	17 March 2003	Secondary	74
Curriculum 2000: Implementation	21 March 2003	Secondary	27
Bullying: Action taken in secondary schools	25 March 2003	Secondary	33
Framework for Inspecting Schools (May 2003)	30 May 2003	All	57
Excellence in Cities and EAZs: management and impact	2 June 2003	Secondary	78
Key Stage 4: towards a flexible curriculum	10 June 2003	Secondary	53
The School Sports Co-ordinator Programme: Evaluation of Phases 1 and 2, 2001–03	16 June 2003	All	40
Leadership and Management of Schools: What Ofsted inspections tell us	27 June 2003	All	48
Boys' achievement in secondary schools	11 July 2003	Secondary	58
The education of six-year-olds in England, Denmark and Finland	23 July 2003	Primary	63
Area Inspection Framework	22 September 2003	Secondary	22
The education of asylum-seeker pupils	22 October 2003	All	38
Handbook for Inspectors—Inspection of Connexions Partnerships	18 November 2003	Secondary	89
Provision and support for traveller pupils	9 December 2003	Primary	21
National Literacy and Numeracy Report 2003	9 December 2003	Primary	66
Leadership and management: managing the school workforce (leaflet)	16 December 2003	All	4

Annex C: Documents sent from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to all primary and secondary schools between 1 January 2003 and 31 December 2003

	Date	*Schools*	*Pages*
KS1 and KS2 standards report	January 2003	Primary	2
KS3 standards report	January 2003	Secondary	2
Foundation Stage Profile (+ order form)	January 2003	Primary	2
A-level circular	January 2003	Secondary	1
Using mathematics to raise achievement	January 2003	All	1
KS1 audit	January 2003	Primary	1
Citizenship Key stages 1–4 Guidance on assessment recording and reporting	February 2003	All	1
New perspectives on spoken English in the classroom	February 2003	All	1

Annex C: Documents sent from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to all primary and secondary schools between 1 January 2003 and 31 December 2003

	Date	Schools	Pages
Introduction or revised VCEs postponed to September 2005	March 2003	Secondary	1
Checklist and packing sheets for Key Stage 2 tests 2003	March 2003	Primary	2
Checklist and packing sheets for year 7 progress tests 2003	March 2003	Secondary	2
Checklist and packing sheets for Key Stage 3 tests 2003	March 2003	Secondary	2
Drugs, alcohol and tobacco	March 2003	All	1
Update to the exemplar scheme of work for ICT at Key stages 1 and 2	April 2003	Primary	1
KS1 Test circular 2003 with HDF	April 2003	Primary	3
Test dates for 2004	May 2003	All	1
Diagnostic software CD-ROM -	June 2003	All	1
2003 KS2 level threshold tables	July 2003	Primary	2
2003 KS3 level threshold tables	July 2003	Secondary	2
2003 Year 7 level threshold tables	September 2003	Secondary	2
Work-related learning for all at key stage 4: guidance for implementing the statutory requirement from 2004	September 2003	Secondary	2
Changes to the Key stage 4 curriculum: guidance for implementation from 2004	September 2003	Secondary	2
KS1 ARA	October 2003	Primary	2
KS2 ARA	October 2003	Primary	2
KS3 ARA	October 2003	Secondary	2
Year 7/8 ARA	October 2003	Secondary	2
Religious education and collective worship	October 2003	All	1
2003 Testbase and implications for Key stages 1, 2 and 3	October 2003	All	1
School-based assessment video (CD format)—Assessment for learning: Involving pupils	November 2003	All	1
2004 Key stage 1 statutory tasks for English and mathematics	December 2003	Primary	2
2004 Key stage 1 statutory tasks for English and mathematics (independent schools)	December 2003	Primary	2
2004 Key stage 1 tasks for English and mathematics and copies of 2003 tests for English and mathematics	December 2003	Primary	2
Data Handling Toolkit	December 2003	All	1

Education Maintenance Allowance

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what cost estimate his Department has made of the educational maintenance allowance over the next three years. [167989]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department estimates the cost of the Education Maintenance Allowance Scheme over the next three financial years to be:

	£ million
2004–05	275
2005–06	403
2006–07	476

These estimates take account of the phased roll-out to one cohort at a time and the cost of administering, promoting and evaluating the scheme. They take account of new estimates on population of young people and household income distribution.

Education Services (Bootle)

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how much public funding has been spent on repairing schools in Bootle in each year since 1997; [172678]

(2) how much funding each school in Bootle has received from the New Deal for Schools. [172680]

Mr. Miliband: The majority of capital support is allocated to schools and local education authorities (LEAs) by formula, and they decide how to invest it in line with their asset management plans. The Department does not, therefore, have complete information about capital investment at constituency level. Table A sets out the capital support given by the Government to Sefton LEA since 1997–98, in total and by programme, including devolved formula capital grants to each school. Table B shows the schools in the Bootle constituency that benefited from investment through the New Deal for Schools (NDS) programme, which ran between 1997–98 and 2000–01.

Table A— Sefton LEA Capital Allocations

£000

Type	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05*	2005–06*
Additional NDS Grant (615)	—	—	—	—	141	—	—	—	—
Assistance with AMPs	—	—	39	—	—	—	—	—	—
Basic L C Vap	—	—	—	—	101	573	735	—	—
Basic Need	70	217	683	1589	2950	1804	903	550	716
City Learning Centres	—	—	—	—	1200	—	—	—	—

Table A— Sefton LEA Capital Allocations

£000

Type	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05*	2005–06*
Class Size initiative	—	359	659	186	525	137	—	—	—
Condition	—	—	—	—	1842	2794	3665	—	—
Devolved Formula	—	—	—	2043	1677	2556	3990	2763	—
Modernisation (Primary)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1174	—
Modernisation LEA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Modernisation LEA	—	—	—	—	—	943	1534	2113	2830
Modernisation VA	—	—	—	—	—	333	928	1821	1070
NDS1	836	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
NDS2	—	442	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
NDS3	—	—	1862	—	—	—	—	—	—
NDS4	—	—	—	3628	—	—	—	—	—
Nursery Provision	—	—	—	66	—	—	—	—	—
School Labs	—	—	—	198	198	—	—	—	—
School Security	76	95	96	96	67	58	—	—	—
School Access Initiative	30	70	150	210	348	429	650	385	383
Secondary Learning Support Units	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	—	—
Seed Challenge	—	—	—	196	220	373	370	367	—
Specialist Schools	—	—	—	100	—	200	—	—	—
Staff Workspace	—	—	—	—	—	76	156	—	—
Supplementary Credit Approvals	70	230	585	66	89	448	—	—	—
Targeted Capital Funding	—	—	—	—	—	3698	3999	—	—
Voluntary Aided School Grant	552	389	488	1003	1788	1558	—	—	—
Total	1634	1802	4562	9388	11146	15980	16930	10229	4999

Note:
*Further allocations to be announced

Table B—NDS Allocations to school in the Bootle Constituency

£

	School	Project details		Grant awarded
1997–98	Hillside High School	Conversion and refit of lab	LEA wide grant	[1]836,000
	St.Winefride's RC Infant School	Major structural repair due to ground subsidence	LEA wide grant	[1]836,000
	Litherland High School	Replace felt roof	LEA wide grant	[1]836,000
	The Grange Primary School	Wet rot repairs and external painting	LEA wide grant	[1]836,000
1998–99	Litherland High School	Heating repairs		55,850
	Linacre Primary School	Heating repairs		61,435
2000–01	Hillside High School	Replace temporary classrooms		528,513
	Bootle High School	Boiler replacement package	Project including 4 schools	[2]368,283

[1] For NDS 1 grant was allocated for Sefton LEA wide projects, part of which was used for work at each of 4 schools in the Bootle constituency. The LEA will be able to say how much was allocated to each school.

[2] Allocation shown is the total for package of project within Sefton LEA which included the school shown which is in the Bootle constituency. The LEA will be able to say how much was allocated to the school.

Further Education

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what changes he has made to the fee structure for Level 2 courses in further education; and what steps he is taking to ensure the maintenance of employer contributions to those courses. [171422]

Alan Johnson: No changes have yet been made to the fee structure for Level 2 courses in further education institutions. From September this year we will be trialling, in the North East and South East regions, a new entitlement enabling adults in the labour force without a full level 2 qualification to have access to free tuition for their first full level 2 qualification. Where a learner is taking a publicly available course in further education through this entitlement there will be no tuition fee cost to the learner or their employer. We will continue to expect colleges to collect fees from employers for customised provision. From September the Learning and Skills Council's funding assumption that for dedicated provision employers pay above the standard fee assumption for individual learners will be abolished. As outlined in our White Paper '21st Century Skills—Realising Our Potential' we will consult the sector later this year on changes to the fees framework from 2005–06.

Higher Education (Preston)

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on higher education in Preston in each of the last seven years. [168123]

Alan Johnson: The only publicly funded institutions providing higher education in Preston are Preston College and the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN). The amounts of public funding spent in academic years for which figures are available are shown in the table. Expenditure was by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), and by the Student Loans Company (SLC).

£ million

	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
HEFCE funding of the University of Central Lancashire [2]	33	37.5	41	42	45	47.5	50
HEFCE funding of Preston College [3]	n/a	n/a	64[1]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total SLC expenditure [4]	n/a	n/a	21.62	30.8	37.11	40.01	n/a

[1] Thousand

[2] These figures represent the Basic Teaching and Research Grant. In addition, the University has received an additional £42 million over the seven years for various activities and initiatives, including:Funding for Teaching and Learning; the Collaborative Research Scheme; Higher Education Reach Out to Business and the Community; Restructuring Funds; Inherited Liabilities; Poor Estates; Project Capital; Access Funds; Teachers' Pension Scheme; and New Technology Institutes.

[3] The 1999/2000 figure is the Basic Teaching Grant from HEFCE. Preston College transferred their directly funded student numbers to the University of Central Lancashire from 00/01 and HEFCE do not hold information on the amount of funding passed by UCLAN to Preston College in connection with students studying at the College under their franchise arrangements. Figures for HNC and HND provision funded via the Further Education Funding Council prior to 1999/2000 are not held centrally.

[4] Expenditure by the Student Loans Company includes fees, loans (cash costs) and the Dependants Grant. Data prior to 1999/2000 is not available. Expenditure information on other grants (Disabled Students' Allowances, Care Leavers' Grant and Travel Grant) that were, until 2003/04, paid through local education authorities is not held centrally.

Learn Direct

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the annual cost to his Department for its contract with Learn Direct is. [170024]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 30 April 2004]:* The Department currently agrees an annual contract with Ufi/learndirect. However, from August 2004 the LSC will assume responsibility for the planning and funding of learndirect provision, support and development for the learndirect Information and Advice Service and support and development for UK online centres. The Department has therefore agreed a four month contract with Ufi/learndirect the cost of which is £24.972 million.

The cost is broken down as follows:

central and development costs for learndirect learning—£19.389 million

support and development for learndirect Information and Advice Service—£4.083 million

support and development for UK online centres—£1.5 million

Learning and Skills Councils

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on success rates of *(a)* the North London Learning and Skills Council and *(b)* the Learning and Skills Councils in England on average in the latest year for which figures are available. [170660]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: These are matters for the Learning and Skills Council. Mark Haysom, the Chief Executive will write to my hon. Friend and place a copy of the reply in the Libraries.

Level 4 (Bootle)

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of 11 year old pupils in Bootle reached level four in *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English in the last seven years. [171299]

Mr. Miliband: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I have given to the hon. Member of Westmorland and Lonsdale (Mr. Collins) on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column. 34W.

School Funding

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the impact of changing the basis of school funding from the periods coterminous with the Government and local government financial years to an academic year. [171768]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* Aligning schools' budgets to the school year would better reflect schools' planning cycles, supporting headteachers and Governing Bodies to make further progress in both schools' financial management and school improvement activities.

The practicality, time scales and best means of moving to three year budgets aligned to the school year will depend on decisions to be taken about the schools' funding regime for 2006–07 and beyond. The Government will consider what changes are required to the schools' funding regime in light of experience of the measures introduced for 2004–05 and 2005–06 to improve stability in individual schools' budgets. Any changes will be fully discussed with local government and schools representatives.

School Standards Fund

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what grants for primary and secondary schools have been available through the Standards Fund since its creation; and on what date each was *(a)* introduced and *(b)* closed. [171085]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows for each Standards Fund grant supporting schools and pupils: the year in which it was introduced into the Standards Fund, and the final year of operation. The table also show where grants have merged, or where the grant has been transferred to another agency.

The Standards Fund was created in 1998–99 replacing the previous specific grant programme, Grants for Education Support and Training (GEST). The table also shows which Standards Fund grants continued from the GEST programme.

Many of the programmes supported through the Standards Fund are for specific time limited projects and programmes to encourage activities to be continued at local level.

The Government are considering further rationalisation of specific grants to provide a single grant for schools, to allow them to access improvement projects and programmes according to their own needs and priorities.

Standard Fund Grants since 1998–99

		Introduced	*Final year*	
Baseline Assessment	GEST	1998–99	1998–99	merged into School Improvement Grant in 1999–2000
Assessment: Verification Key Stage 1	GEST	1998–99	1998–99	merged into School Improvement Grant in 1999–2000
Assessment: Supply Cover	GEST	1998–99	1998–99	merged into School Improvement Grant in 1999–2000
Training for Key Stage 2 Teacher Assessment	GEST	1998–99	1998–99	merged into School Improvement Grant in 1999–2000
Books for Schools	GEST	1998–99	1998–99	
Specialist Teacher Assistants	GEST	1998–99	1998–99	
National Professional Qualification for Headship	GEST	1998–99	2001–02	transferred to National College for School Leadership
Family Literacy	GEST	1998–99	2001–02	transferred to Basic Skills Agency in 2003–04
New Deal for Schools Capital Funding	GEST	1998–99	2001–02	
School Effectiveness/ School Improvement	GEST	1998–99	2002–03	
Qualifications	GEST	1998–99	2002–03	
Improving Attendance and Behaviour/Social Inclusion	GEST	1998–99	2002–03	
School Security	GEST	1998–99	2002–03	
Drug Prevention and Advice	GEST	1998–99	2003–04	
Special Educational Needs	GEST	1998–99	2003–04	merged into School Development Grant in 2004–05
Specialist Schools	GEST	1998–99	n/a	
Effective Use of National Curriculum Results		1998–99	1998–99	
Special Educational Needs: Regional Co-ordination Pilot Projects		1998–99	1998–99	
Work Related Learning at Key Stage 4		1998–99	1999–2000	merged into School Improvement Grant in 2000–01
Recruitment Strategy Managers/Local Recruitment Measures		1998–99	1999–2000	
Removal of Outside Toilets		1998–99	1999–2000	
Energy Management		1998–99	1999–2000	
Public/Private Partnership Pilots		1998–99	1999–2000	
School Leadership: Serving Heads		1998–99	2001–02	transferred to National College for School Leadership
Induction for Newly-Qualified Teachers		1998–99	2002–03	not in operation in 1999–2000 and 2000–01 funding transferred to Education Formula Spending baseline
Reduction of Infant Class Sizes		1998–99	2002–03	
Out of School Hours Learning/ Study Support		1998–99	2003–04	merged into School Development Grant in 2004–05
Advanced Skills Teachers		1998–99	2003–04	
National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies/ Primary Strategy		1998–99	n/a	
Key Stage 3 Literacy and Numeracy/Key Stage 3 Strategy		1998–99	n/a	
Football League Study Support Centres/Playing for Success		1998–99	n/a	
Health Education Partnerships		1998–99	n/a	
Beacon Schools		1998–99	n/a	
National Grid for Learning/ Information Communication Technology in Schools		1998–99	n/a	
Laptops for Heads of Small Primary and Special Schools		1999–2000	1999–2000	
School Asset Management Plans		1999–2000	1999–2000	
Working Environment Fund		1999–2000	2000–01	
Best Practice Research Scholarships		1999–2000	2000–01	
Support for Parent Governor Representatives		1999–2000	2000–01	merged into School Improvement Grant in 2001–02
Family Numeracy		1999–2000	2002–03	transferred to Basic Skills Agency in 2003–04
Administrative Support in Small Schools/Small Schools Fund		1999–2000	2002–03	merged into School Support Staff Grant in 2003–04
Travellers and Displaced Persons[1]		1999–2000	2002–03	merged into Vulnerable Children's Grant in 2003–04
Excellence in Cities		1999–2000	n/a	
City Learning Centres		1999–2000	n/a	
Small/Excellence in Cities		1999–2000	n/a	
Education Action Zones		1999–2000	n/a	
Music Services		1999–2000	n/a	
Ethnic Minority Achievement[2]		1999–2000	n/a	
Pilot Partnership Initiatives		2000–01	2000–01	
New National Curriculum		2000–01	2001–02	merged into School Improvement Grant in 2002–03
Supported Early Retirement Scheme for Heads		2000–01	2001–02	
New Models for LEA Services		2000–01	2001–02	

Standard Fund Grants since 1998–99

	Introduced	Final year	
School Laboratories for the 21st Century	2000–01	2001–02	
Pupil Support Allowance	2000–01	2002–03	
Teaching Assistants	2000–01	2002–03	merged into School Support Staff Grant in 2003–04
Performance Management Support and Training	2000–01	2002–03	
Improving Adult: Pupil Ratios in Reception Classes	2000–01	2002–03	
Children of Asylum Seekers	2000–01	2002–03	merged into Vulnerable Children's Grant in 2003–04
Teenage Pregnancies	2000–01	2002–03	merged into Vulnerable Children's Grant in 2003–04
Summer Schools for Gifted and Talented Pupils	2000–01	n/a	
Excellence Challenge/ Aimhigher	2000–01	n/a	
Teacher Incentives/Golden Helios	2000–01	n/a	
Training Schools	2000–01	n/a	
Fresh Start	2000–01	n/a	
Devolved Formula Capital for Schools	2000–01	n/a	
Seed Capital Challenge	2000–01	n/a	
National Grid for Learning: Regional Broadband Consortia	2000–01	n/a	
Pupil Learning Credits	2001–02	2002–03	
Learning Support Units	2001–02	2002–03	
Recruitment and Retention Fund	2001–02	2002–03	
Teachers' Sabbaticals	2001–02	2002–03	
Welcome Back Bonus	2001–02	2002–03	
Grammar/Non-Selective School Partnerships	2001–02	2002–03	
Children in Public Care	2001–02	2002–03	merged into Vulnerable Children's Grant in 2003–04
Sick Children	2001–02	2002–03	merged into Vulnerable Children's Grant in 2003–04
Key Stage 2 Class Sizes	2001–02	2002–03	
Information Management Strategy	2001–02	2002–03	
Early Professional Development Pilot Scheme	2001–02	2003–04	
School Achievement Awards	2001–02	2003–04	
Classrooms of the Future	2001–02	2003–04	

Standard Fund Grants since 1998–99

	Introduced	Final year	
School Improvement Projects/Targeted Improvement Projects	2001–02	n/a	
Diversity Pathfinders	2001–02	n/a	
Child Protection Co-ordinators	2001–02	n/a	
Condition Funding	2001–02	n/a	
Targeted Capital Projects	2001–02	n/a	
Interactive Whiteboards	2001–02	n/a	
Training for Educational Visits Coordinators	2002–03	2002–03	
Building the Room for Improvement	2002–03	2002–03	
Staff Workspaces	2002–03	2003–04	
Learning through Landscapes	2002–03	2003–04	
Laptops for Teachers	2002–03	2003–04	merged into ICT in Schools Grants in 2004–05
Electronic Registration Systems in Secondary Schools	2002–03	2003–04	
Behaviour Improvement Programme	2002–03	n/a	
Fast Track Payments	2002–03	n/a	
Extended Schools	2002–03	n/a	
e-Learning Credits	2002–03	n/a	
Information Communication Technology Pilot Projects	2002–03	n/a	
Primary Foundation Stage Profile	2003–04	2003–04	
School Support Staff	2003–04	2003–04	merged into School Development Grant in 2004–05
School Support Staff: Training and Development	2003–04	2003–04	merged into School Development Grant in 2004–05
Gypsy-Traveller Achievement Project	2003–04	2003–04	
Gifted and Talented Pupils: Sports Grant	2003–04	2003–04	
Transforming School Workforce Pathfinder Projects	2003–04	2003–04	
Leadership Incentive Grant	2003–04	n/a	
Targeted Improvement Grant	2003–04	n/a	
Study Support: Quality Development Programme	2003–04	n/a	
Primary Behaviour Pilot	2003–04	n/a	
Local Education Authority Support for School Workforce Remodelling	2003–04	n/a	
Federations	2003–04	n/a	
Leading Edge Schools	2003–04	n/a	

Standard Fund Grants since 1998–99

	Introduced	*Final year*	
Raising Achievement of African Caribbean Pupils	2003–04	n/a	
National Primary Strategy EAL Pilot	2003–04	n/a	
Vulnerable Children	2003–04	n/a	
Enterprise Learning Pathfinders	2003–04	n/a	
Key Stage Language Pathfinders: Recurrent	2003–04	n/a	
14–19 Pathfinders	2003–04	n/a	
London Challenge Projects	2003–04	n/a	
School Development Grant	2004–05	n/a	a combination of eight previously separate grants
School Travel Advisers	2004–05	n/a	

n/a = The grant continues in 2004–05.

[1] Paid as a separate grant outside the Standards Fund prior to 1999–2000.

Note:

GEST means that the grant continued from the previous grant regime.

School Transport

Kevin Brennan: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will estimate the cost of reducing the three-mile limit for free travel to secondary schools to two miles; and if he will make a statement. [172026]

Mr. Charles Clarke: We do not collect information which would allow us to make this estimate.

Post-16 Education/Employment

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of those aged 16 to 18 years are *(a)* unemployed, *(b)* in training, *(c)* in work and *(d)* in full-time education, broken down by (i) ethnic group and (ii) gender. [171718]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Provisional estimates of 16 to 18-year-olds participating in education, training and employment by gender for the latest academic year, end 2002, are shown in the table:

Participation in education, training and employment by labour market status and by gender for end 2002

Percentage *Activity*	*Females*	*Males*	*All*
In full-time education	60	53	57
In training[1]	16	20	18
In work (excluding those education and training)[2]	14	16	15
ILO Unemployed[3]	4	7	6
Inactive[4]	5	3	4
Total[5]	100	100	100

[1] 'In training' includes those young people in work based learning (WBL), employer funded training (EFT) and other education and training (OET).

[2] Some young people in education and training will also be in employment. However, these numbers have not been included in the 'In work' figures.

[3] 'ILO unemployed' covers anyone who is out of work and available to start work in the next two weeks, but has either looked for work in the last four weeks or is waiting to start a job they have already obtained.

[4] 'Inactive' includes those neither in employment nor ILO unemployed, that is—not active in the labour market.

[5] The totals are calculated from unrounded figures and so may not be the sum of the individual cells.

Data for 16 to 18-year-olds participating in education, training and employment by ethnic group in England are not published by the Department.

Sustainable Development Strategy

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress has been made with his Department's Sustainable Development Strategy. [166786]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Sustainable Development Action Plan for Education and Skills was launched in September last year. The action plan has four key objectives: education for Sustainable development (ESD); environmental impact of the DfES and its partner bodies; environmental impact of the education estate; and local and global partnership activity. We are already making progress in several areas against the Action Plan. The following are just some examples.

We are supporting subject associations in their work to build on ESD within the curriculum.

On food in schools, we are working with Defra on guidance for school governor organisations. Through website forums we will invite feedback from school managers, governors and parents and report on Food Procurement Implementation.

We are working closely with the Department for Transport, and have jointly published "Travelling to School: An Action Plan5" which gives guidance on sustainable school travel.

Colleges and universities are developing as sustainable organisations, promoting themselves as exemplars and sharing best practice with other institutions.

The Skills agencies have created an online 'toolkit' to encourage, support and promote best practice throughout the sector.

Internationally, we are contributing to the drafting of the United Nations strategy on ESD.

Vocational Qualifications

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many 14 and 15-year-olds were studying for vocational qualifications in each year since 2001. [171244]

Alan Johnson: Since 2001, the numbers of 15-year-olds entered for General National Vocational Qualifications, either Part One or Full, were as follows:

	Number
2001	22,413
2002	64,494
2003	123,600

Data on the numbers studying vocational qualifications is not available.

Vocational Training

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many 14 and 15-year-olds are studying for *(a)* NVQs and *(b)* vocational GCSEs. [171245]

Alan Johnson: The Department does not collect data on the numbers of 14 and 15-year-olds presently studying NVQs and GCSEs in vocational subjects. Rather the Awarding Bodies makes available data on the numbers of entries and the results thereof for particular qualifications. This information is routinely placed in the House of Commons Library in the autumn.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Parental Leave

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many men *(a)* requested and *(b)* received paternity pay prior to 6 April 2003 in each year since 1997, broken down by (i) region and (ii) income. [171296]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Statutory Paternity Pay was introduced in 2003 for fathers of children born or expected to be born on or after 6 April 2003 and adopters of children placed for adoption on or after 6 April 2003. Statutory Paternity Pay was therefore not paid before 6 April 2003, except to a small number of fathers whose children were born prematurely.

Some employers will, of course have offered contractual paternity leave and pay to their staff before April 2003. Contractual provision is not recorded centrally but surveys suggest that where this provision was available fathers used it.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many men took *(a)* parental leave and *(b)* time off for dependants in each year since 1997 prior to 6 April 2003, broken down by (i) region (ii) income and (iii) length of leave. [171295]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to provide the information requested since take up of parental leave and time off for dependants are not recorded centrally. However, a recent survey commissioned by the DTI (The Second Work-life Balance Survey: Results from the Employees' Survey, Employment Relations Research Series No. 27) suggests that 4 per cent. of all parents with dependant children took parental leave in the year preceding the survey.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many women have taken *(a)* ordinary maternity leave and *(b)* additional maternity leave (i) in each year since 1997 up until April 2003 and (ii) since April 2003, and how many women have taken 52 weeks maternity leave, broken down by region. [171301]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Take-up of maternity leave is not recorded centrally, and the regional figures cannot be provided. It is possible to make an estimate of the numbers of mothers taking ordinary maternity leave based on employer returns to Inland Revenue for payment of Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) they recover. Nationally around 300,000 women receive SMP each year. Some of the women will take additional maternity leave, but as SMP is not paid during additional maternity leave, it is not possible to estimate the number taking additional maternity leave.

In addition, there will be some women who will qualify for maternity leave but not SMP (because they do not meet the earnings criteria) and similarly some who qualify for SMP but not leave (because they are employed earners for the purposes of SMP but not employees in order to qualify for leave).

British Coal

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the Department has been given Treasury approval to retain surpluses payable to it out of the Mineworkers' Pension Scheme during the last five years to offset expenditure on liabilities inherited from British Coal. [164382]

Nigel Griffiths *[pursuant to his reply, 19 April 2004, Official Report, c.66–67W]:* I regret it covered only the three financial years 2001–02 to 2003–04 and I am taking the opportunity to clarify that for the preceding financial years, the position was as set out in the Government's Expenditure plans 2000–01 to 2001–02 (Cm 4611) which was placed in the Libraries of the House, and which stated:

> "These figures include receipts of 50 per cent. of the surpluses in the coal pension funds which are required under the Coal Industry Act 1994 to be paid into the consolidated fund, except in so far as they may be retained to offset expenditure on liabilities inherited from British Coal."

This reflected the special arrangements agreed between the Department and Her Majesty's Treasury as part of the DTIs CSR to ensure the Department's ability to pay coal health claims as quickly as possible.

Business (South Ribble)

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new businesses have started up in South Ribble since 1997. [172145]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales, including 2,600 in Lancashire County (which contains the constituency of South Ribble), in the fourth quarter of 2003. The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before. There were 10,200 business start-ups in Lancashire County in 2003. Data for counties are not available for before 2003.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for South Ribble and West Lancashire local authorities (which contain the constituency of South Ribble) are shown in the table for the period 1997 to 2002. Data for 2003 will be available in autumn 2004.

VAT registrations: 1997–2002

	South Ribble	*West Lancashire*
1997	275	260
1998	300	245
1999	255	290
2000	280	265
2001	240	285
2002	250	265

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service, available from: www.sbs.gov.uk/statistics/vatstats.php

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government has taken to help small businesses in South Ribble since 1997. [172146]

Nigel Griffiths: The Business Link Operator for North and West Lancashire has provided assistance to 2,083 enterprises in the South Ribble constituency since 2001. The Small Business Service (SBS) was set up as an agency of the Department of Trade and Industry in April 2000. Contracts were exchanged with a national network of 45 Business Link Operators (seven in the North West) to provide Business Support to small and medium sized enterprises from April 2001. Before this date Government Support to businesses was provided through Training and Enterprise Councils and the Small Business Service does not have access to this data.

The type of assistance provided by the Business Link Operator includes pre-starts, start up advice, intensive assists, IT support, Investors In People.

In addition under the Enterprise Grant Scheme three companies have received offers of grant with a total value of £167,883 since 1997. This scheme has now come to a close from the 1 April 2004.

Business Regulation

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total *(a)* staff numbers and *(b)* resource budget of the Departmental Regulatory Impact Unit has been since its inception. [168611]

Ms Hewitt: Information about staff numbers and resource budget of the Departmental Regulatory Impact Unit since its inception could not be ascertained without disproportionate cost. However since 2002 the unit has had an average of six full time staff and for the financial year 2004–05 has a total resource budget of £350,000.

Businesses (Sittingbourne and Sheppey)

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many workers in Sittingbourne and Sheppey have benefited from the national minimum wage. [170293]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to provide estimates specifically for the constituency of Sittingbourne and Sheppey. However, based on the Office for National Statistics' Low Pay data released in 2003, the DTI estimates that around 120,000 people in the South East stood to benefit from the introduction of the National Minimum Wage in April 1999. Between 80,000 and 100,000 people were expected to have benefited from the October 2003 uprating of the National Minimum Wage.

Care Staff

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Health about the impact of flexible working for carers on the demand for paid care staff. [172001]

Mr. Sutcliffe: My officials are in discussion with all interested Government Departments, including officials from the Department of Health, to explore how flexible working arrangements can help carers. This is part of on-going work which will inform the review of the flexible working law in 2006 and shape future policy. It is too early to consider the implications on the demand for paid care staff.

As part of this work, we are aiming to hold two roundtables involving employers and individuals who have caring responsibilities, such as those caring for elderly or sick relatives. The roundtables will explore how individuals balance work and caring responsibilities, including how different working patterns suit both carers and their employers. We are discussing the roundtables with the Department of Health and bodies representing carers.

The Government's work-life balance campaign seeks to persuade all employers of the business case to adopt work-life balance policies and to follow best practice by providing flexible working opportunities across the workforce. This applies equally to those providing paid care as it does to those providing unpaid care.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what definition he will use of the term carer in relation to the planned introduction of the right to flexible working for carers; and if he will make a statement; [170974]

(2) when plans for the right to flexible working for carers will be implemented; and if he will make a statement. [171009]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government are committed to reviewing the impact of the right to request flexible working and has no plans to extend the provisions of the law until after the review in 2006.

Currently, the law provides eligible parents of children under 6 and disabled children under 18 with a legal right to apply to work flexibly. An issue that the review will consider, which my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has indicated should be a priority, is extending the law to wider groups of carers, such as carers of elderly or sick relatives. Definition of terms relating to any extension to the law as an outcome of that review, including carers, will be something that will be addressed at that time.

Corporate Governance

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many FTSE 250 companies have recruited at least one non-executive director from the not-for-profit sector. [172383]

Jacqui Smith: This information is not held centrally and could be collected only at disproportionate cost.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the change in proportion of non-executive directors of FTSE 250 companies following the publication of the Tyson Report. [172384]

Jacqui Smith: As recommended by the Tyson Report, the Department commissioned a study by Cranfield University on the diversity of all directors in FTSE 100 companies. This report has now been presented to my Department. In addition, I have participated in a series of roundtables hosted by leading businesses which debated the issues surrounding diversity in the boardroom in an open and constructive manner. We are currently consulting the Financial Reporting Council and a range of business and other organizations on how best to build on these initiatives and will be making an announcement later in the year.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has for promoting a register of talented candidates from the not-for-profit sector for consideration for non-executive director posts, as recommended in the Higgs Report. [172390]

Jacqui Smith: The Higgs Review made a number of recommendations to stimulate the inclusion of a more diverse range of people on company boards. These were taken forward by the Tyson Group, which decided against developing a list of candidates from the non-commercial sector.

The Government welcome the creation of registers of suitably skilled people, across a range of sectors, to assist companies in identifying potential candidates for non-executive board positions. Such registers should be co-ordinated by the relevant professional or affiliated body.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many FTSE 250 companies publish their recruitment procedures for non-executive directors; and what plans she has to encourage such publication. [172391]

Jacqui Smith: This information is not collected centrally. This is a matter for companies and their shareholders and is a provision of the Financial Reporting Council's Combined Code. The provision applies on a comply or explain basis to all listed companies, and for all board appointments, and came into effect for reporting years beginning on or after 1 November 2003.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to provide a deadline by which FTSE 250 companies should publish their recruitment procedures for non-executive directors. [172392]

Jacqui Smith: This is a matter for companies and their shareholders and is a provision of the Financial Reporting Council's Combined Code. The provision applies on a comply or explain basis to all listed companies. and for all board appointments, and came into effect for reporting years beginning on or after 1 November 2003.

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she intends to reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 25 March with regard to Jenny Edwards. [172262]

Ms Hewitt: I replied to my right hon. Friend's letter seeking support for the Early Day Motion 576—Corporate Responsibility on 7 May 2004. As outlined in my reply, my Department published draft Regulations on the Operating and Financial Review for consultation on 5 May.

Electricity Network

Mr. Laurence To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 18 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 501W, on the electricity network, how many warnings have been issued by National Grid Transco about low levels of spare electricity generating capacity *(a)* this year and *(b)* in each of the previous seven years for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [172543]

Mr. Timms: National Grid have issued the following system warnings as part of normal operations to inform the market that its projected reserve is not fully met:

	Amount of system warnings
2004	[1]2
2003	13
2002	7
2001	18
2000	41
1999	13
1998	2
1997	1

[1] To date

Energy Bills

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what percentage of households with electricity accounts she estimates the regulator has been successful in enforcing Standard Licence condition (Electricity) 17 in inspecting meters every two years; [171487]

(2) what percentage of gas accounts she estimates Ofgem has been successful in enforcing Standard Licence condition (Gas) 17 in inspecting meters every two years. [171488]

Mr. Timms: Regulation of gas and electricity is the responsibility of the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM). I understand that the Chairman of the Authority will write to my hon. Friend about the matters he has raised.

Energy Supply

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent discussions she has had with energy companies about the integrity and security of supply; and if she will make a statement. [172544]

Mr. Timms: Department of Trade and Industry Ministers hold regular meetings with electricity companies to discuss a wide range of issues, including the integrity and security of energy supplies.

Fireworks

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how long the consultation period on the proposals to prohibit the possession of fireworks was. [171594]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The consultation on the emergency Fireworks Regulations 2003 was launched on 5 November and closed on 26 November—making a total of three weeks of consultation.

Due to the temporary nature of the regulations, they are due to be repealed and incorporated into a comprehensive package of draft measures designed to tackle the misuse of fireworks resulting from supply and use. The consultation was launched on 23 April and will run till 2 July 2004.

Insolvency Service

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what powers the Insolvency Service's Prosecution Section has to investigate people in breach of *(a)* disqualification orders and *(b)* bankruptcy orders. [171614]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Insolvency Service's Prosecution Section (now Criminal Allegations Team) does not have any powers to investigate people who are in breach of *(a)* disqualification orders and *(b)* bankruptcy orders.

Allegations that individuals are breaching their disqualification orders or bankruptcy orders, which are supported by evidence and documentation are referred by the Criminal Allegations Team to the Department's Legal Services Directorate (Prosecutions), where a lawyer reviews the papers and decides on the course of action to be taken. If the lawyer concludes that the matter is suitable for a criminal investigation, an investigation officer is instructed to conduct such investigation and where necessary take witness statements for any prosecution.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many calls have been received by the Disqualified Directors Hotline of the Insolvency Service's Prosecution Section in the last 12 months; how many cases were taken forward by the Legal Services Directorate as a result; and if she will make a statement. [171615]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Disqualified Director's Hotline is now called "the Enforcement Hotline" but the telephone number remains the same.

For the period May 2003 to April 2004 there were 807 calls made to the Hotline and these included invalid calls eg hang ups.

From these calls, 166 questionnaires were sent out and on the basis of the information received 36 cases were referred to the Legal Services Directorate (LSD) and of these 25 were accepted by LSD for full investigation. Most of these cases will still be under investigation.

Mineworkers' Pension Scheme

Tony Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what meetings she has held with trustees of the Mineworkers Pension Scheme in the last year; when the meetings were held; and what subjects were discussed. [170329]

Nigel Griffiths: I met the Trustees of the Mineworkers' Pension Scheme, along with those of the British Coal Staff Superannuation Scheme, on 30 March 2004. We discussed the Government's commitment to the pension schemes, including the Guarantee arrangements and the agreement to award RPI increases to members despite there being deficits in both schemes.

The Trustees reiterated their view that the Government Guarantee negotiated in 1994 allows them to take a balanced amount of risk in their investments helping the funds to grow and pay around 30 per cent. bonuses to scheme members. Without the Guarantee the Trustees would have had to follow a much more cautious investment strategy that would not have generated the surpluses we have seen.

National Minimum Wage

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many workers in Huntingdon constituency have benefited from the national minimum wage. [170862]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to provide estimates specifically for the constituency of Huntingdon. However, based on the Office for National Statistics' Low Pay data released in 2003, the DTI estimates that around 90,000 people in the Eastern region stood to benefit from the introduction of the National Minimum Wage in April 1999. Between 80,000 and 90,000 people were expected to have benefited from the October 2003 uprating of the National Minimum Wage.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many workers in Oldham West and Royton have benefited from the national minimum wage. [170937]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to provide estimates specifically for the constituency of Oldham West and Royton. However, based on the Office for National Statistics' Low Pay data released in 2003, the DTI estimates that around 140,000 people in the North West stood to benefit from the introduction of the national minimum wage in April 1999. Between 130,000 and 160,000 people were expected to have benefited from the October 2003 uprating of the national minimum wage.

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many workers in West Lancashire have benefited from the national minimum wage. [171726]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to provide estimates specifically for the constituency of West Lancashire. However, based on the Office for National Statistics' Low Pay data released in 2003, the DTI estimates that around 140,000 people in the North West stood to benefit from the introduction of the national minimum wage in April 1999. Between 130,000 and 160,000 people were expected to have benefited from the October 2003 uprating of the national minimum wage.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many workers in South Ribble have benefited from the national minimum wage. [172147]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to provide estimates specifically for the constituency of South Ribble. However, based on the Office for National Statistics' Low Pay data released in 2003, the DTI estimates that around 140,000 people in the North West stood to benefit from the introduction of the National Minimum Wage in April 1999. Between 130,000 and 160,000 people were expected to have benefited from the October 2003 uprating of the National Minimum Wage.

Businesses (Huntingdon)

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new businesses started up in Huntingdon constituency in each year since 1997. [170780]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales, including 1,300 in Cambridgeshire county (which contains the constituency of Huntingdon), in the fourth quarter of 2003. The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before. There were 5,000 business start-ups in Cambridgeshire County in 2003. Data for counties are not available for before 2003.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Huntingdon Local Authority (which contains the constituency of Huntingdon) are shown in the table for the period 1997 to 2002. Data for 2003 will be available in Autumn 2004.

VAT Registrations: 1997–2002

	Huntingdon
1997	535
1998	540
1999	485
2000	520
2001	485
2002	515

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service, available from: www.sbs.gov.uk/statistics/vatstats.php

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Nuclear Power

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has had with British Energy about extending the life of Dungeness B nuclear power station; and if she will make a statement. [172546]

Mr. Timms: My officials have regular discussions with British Energy on a range of issues affecting the company. Any decisions about extending the life of Dungeness B or any other British Energy nuclear power station would be a matter for the company who would need to evaluate the safety, technical and economic case, within the overall regulatory framework.

Parliamentary Questions

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many *(a)* Ordinary Written and *(b)* Named Day Questions her Department received in (i) the 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary session up to the most recent date for which figures are available, broken down by month; [170776]

(2) what proportion *(a)* Ordinary Written Questions to her Department were answered within five sitting days of tabling and *(b)* Questions for a Named Day received a substantive answer on that day in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary session up to the most recent date for which figures are available, broken down by month. [170777]

Ms Hewitt: The information requested is as follows:

	Ordinary Written PQs			*Named Day PQs*		
	Total answers	*Answers within 5 days*		*Total answers*	*Answers on named day*	
	Number	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Number*	*Percentage*
2002–03						
November	76	73	96	A monthly breakdown cannot be given		
December	156	129	83			
January	267	225	84			
February	183	150	82			
March	294	203	69			
April	236	178	75			
May	208	171	82			
June	402	296	74			
July	255	215	84			

	Ordinary Written PQs			Named Day PQs		
	Total answers	Answers within 5 days		Total answers	Answers on named day	
	Number	Number	Percentage	Number	Number	Percentage
Recess	45	30	67			
September	158	140	89			
Recess	53	47	89			
October	211	183	87			
November	323	253	78			
Total	2867	2293	80	723	247	34
2003–04						
November	0	0	0	0	0	0
December	225	190	84	58	18	29
January	405	317	78	71	26	48
February	340	230	68	72	24	35
March	458	338	74	105	39	22
April	251	225	90	30	10	27
Total	1679	1300	77	336	117	32

Note:
DTI figures are based on sittings days.

We endeavour to answer all Parliamentary Questions within the Parliamentary deadlines whenever possible. In addition I refer the hon. Gentleman to a reply given by my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House on 3 March 2004, *Offical Report*, column 907W.

Post Offices

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many sub-post offices were closed in each of the past three years up to March in *(a)* the East of England, *(b)* Suffolk and *(c)* the parliamentary constituency of Bury St. Edmunds. [171869]

Mr. Timms: I am advised by Post Office Ltd. that data on post office closures by county or parliamentary constituency are not available in the form requested as the company does not require this data for its operational purposes. However, I understand that since March 2000 the company has recorded details of post office closures on the basis of Government Region and in the East of England region as a whole, the numbers of net closures were as follows:

East of England Region

	Number
2000–01	70
2001–02	21
2002–03	33

Post Office Ltd. produces statistics on post office closures on a quarterly basis. The latest data on net closures by region currently available for year 2003–04 is to the end of December 2003. Data for the quarter to end March 2004 is expected shortly. There were 61 net closures of post offices in the East of England region to the end of December 2003. These figures include a total of 55 closures in the East of England region under the urban reinvention programme since its commencement in late 2002.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what *(a)* Post Office, *(b)* Royal Mail and *(c)* Government functions are (i) provided by all sub-post offices, (ii) provided by some sub-post offices at the discretion of *(A)* the sub-postmaster, *(B)* Post Office Ltd and *(C)* others, (iii) provided by all Crown post offices and (iv) provided by some Crown post offices at the discretion of *(1)* the manager, *(2)* Post Office Ltd. and *(3)* others. [171936]

Mr. Timms: These are operational matters for Post Office Ltd. and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when the decision to turn Taunton Crown Post Office into a SPAR store with post office facilities was taken; and if she will make a statement. [171990]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what consultation took place between the Government and the main clearing banks prior to the introduction of the Post Office card accounts; and what advice Ministers received on these matters. [172319]

Mr. Timms: Extensive consultation took place between the Government and the banking industry. The result of those negotiations was that all the main High Street banks and the Nationwide Building Society agreed to make a significant contribution to universal banking services at the Post Office. They are contributing £180 million towards the Post Office card account and are each providing access at Post Offices to a basic bank account product. Universal banking services were successfully launched on 1 April 2003.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to her answer of 28 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1163–64W, on rural post offices, for what reasons she will not publish Postcomm's advice on future levels of support; and when the Department will complete its consideration of this advice. [172547]

Mr. Timms: As I made clear in my answer of 28 April, Postcomm's advice on the future of the rural post office network was submitted to the Government in confidence. There are good reasons for this. The report contains detailed material which is commercially sensitive, both in relation to Post Office Ltd. and to the many individual businessmen and women who own and

run sub-post offices. While I do not rule out the publication in due course, it would be inappropriate to publish it before the Government has taken any decisions on the future of the rural network. The Government is currently considering that advice and will take decisions on the shape of the rural post office network after 2006 in good time to allow for a smooth transition from the current support arrangements. The current funding arrangements for the rural post office network have nearly two years to run yet.

Radio Frequency Identifiers

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the likely change in the number of jobs in the retail sector as a result of the implementation of radio frequency identifier devices. [170163]

Mr. Sutcliffe: To date, DTI has not conducted any assessment of the likely change in retail staff numbers as a consequence of the implementation of RFID technologies.

Regulatory Reform

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the progress of the *(a)* measures in the Regulatory Reform Action Plan and *(b)* regulatory reform orders which her Department has proposed but not completed. [171613]

Nigel Griffiths: The updated Regulatory Reform Action Plan, published in December 2003, contains over 600 deregulatory and simplification measures under way across Government. I am advised that over 300 of these measures have already been delivered.

The DTI proposed 10 Regulatory Reform Orders in the Regulatory Reform Action Plan; two have been implemented, three are in the scrutiny process and the remaining five will be the subject of consultation exercises.

Renewable Energy

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research she has commissioned on the balance between profit and investment associated with renewable energy development. [170173]

Nigel Griffiths: The Government have created an attractive investment framework for renewable energy developments through the creation of the Renewables Obligation and, for certain technologies, additional support through capital grants. This is in support for our policy goals of securing 10 per cent. of electricity from renewables by 2010 and further significant contributions from this sector 2020 and beyond.

However the specific economics of individual renewable energy projects will differ on a case by case basis for a variety of reasons, notably the location of the project and the technology involved. Those seeking to develop or finance renewable energy developments must reach their own views on the economics of individual projects.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her policy is on renewable energy. [170792]

Mr. Timms: The Government's target for renewables is that, by 2010, 10 per cent. of our electricity sales will come from renewable sourced electricity. The target is challenging as we are starting from a low base.

The Government's main policy mechanism for achieving the target is the Renewables Obligation (and Renewables Obligation Scotland). Introduced in April 2002, it places an obligation on all licensed electricity suppliers to supply a specified and growing proportion of their sales from electricity generated from a range of eligible renewable sources.

Through the Renewables Obligation (RO), we are looking to accelerate the development of renewables in a wide range of sources and technologies. In order to encourage a more vigorous and diverse renewable energy sector, the Government have also allocated a total of £350 million over four years for capital grants and research grants to promote forms of renewable energy that are further from becoming commercially competitive. This includes among other things grants of £117 million for offshore wind, £66 million for energy crops and biomass, £25 million for solar photovoltaics (PV), £10 million for community schemes and £5 million for wave and tidal demonstration projects.

Scottish Power

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she last met representatives of Scottish Power Plc; who was present; and what was on the agenda for discussion. [171781]

Ms Hewitt: I have had no recent meetings with representatives of Scottish Power.

My right hon. Friend the Minister for Energy, E-Commerce and Postal Service, met with representatives of Scottish Power on 11 March to discuss a number of issues relating to electricity supply. Also present were DTI officials.

Social Chapter

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the effects of the EU Social Chapter on the residents of Oldham West and Royton. [170939]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The residents of Oldham West and Royton have benefited from the EU Social Chapter by having their employment rights extended to include:

the right to parental leave which gives parents the right to 13 weeks unpaid leave at the birth or adoption of a child;

the entitlement of part-time workers to the same pro-rata terms and conditions of employment as full-time workers, thereby removing any discrimination and improving the quality of part-time jobs;

the provision that once a prima facie case has been made in an employment tribunal claim, the burden of proof is placed on the defendant (usually the employer), who will need to demonstrate that sex discrimination has not occurred;

rights under the fixed term work directive that provide equal treatment and prevent abuse of fixed term contracts;

rights under the European works council directive which requires companies with at least 1,000 employees in total and at least 150 workers in each of the two member states, to establish structures for consulting workers on issues that affect them and;

in addition, the information and consultation of employees directive, to be implemented in the UK by March 2005, establishes a right to new minimum standards for workforce communication and involvement in large firms.

Timber

Ms. Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether her Department plans to contribute financially to the establishment of the second phase of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [167618]

Mr. Timms: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 31W.

Travel Agents

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make it her policy to require travel firms not bonded with ABTA or ATOL to display this information when advertising their services. [172027]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) is soon to make recommendations to Government on the possible extension of financial protection for consumers in the event of failure of air travel firms. I understand from their published draft advice that CAA may recommend an extension to mandatory protection, but I also expect the proposals to address the scope for improving transparency regarding protection for travel arrangements.

VAT

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many businesses have *(a)* registered and *(b)* deregistered for VAT in each year since 1997 in each local authority area in East Sussex. [169849]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales, including 1,100 in East Sussex County, in the fourth quarter of 2003. The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before. There were 4,700 business start-ups in East Sussex County in 2003. Data for each local authority in East Sussex County are not published by Barclays. Barclays start-up data for counties in England and Wales have only been published for 2003. Barclays closure data for counties in England and Wales have not been published.

DTI figures for VAT registrations and de-registrations for each local authority in East Sussex County are shown below for the period 1997 to 2002. Data for 2003 will be available in autumn 2004.

VAT registrations: 1997–2002

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
East Sussex County	1,745	1,605	1,610	1,575	1,535	1,540
Eastbourne	255	215	240	210	235	215
Hastings	195	180	200	205	185	205
Lewes	355	335	290	275	285	280
Rother	335	290	285	285	265	275
Wealden	610	585	590	595	565	565

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service

VAT de-registrations: 1997–2002

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
East Sussex County	1,435	1,335	1,430	1,430	1,475	1,475
Eastbourne	225	200	205	210	195	235
Hastings	170	180	170	170	175	190
Lewes	260	260	255	265	280	230
Rother	265	230	300	285	290	315
Wealden	510	460	500	500	535	505

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Work-Life Balance Study

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the findings were of the second Work-Life Balance study's accompanying employee survey report. [170519]

Mr. Sutcliffe: "The Second Work-Life Balance Study (WLB2): Results from the Employees' survey" was published in March by my Department as report number 28 in the Employment Relations Research Series. It is based on a survey carried out by MORI in January and February 2003. Key findings from the study are as follows:

There was a high level of support for work-life balance amongst employees with 95 per cent. agreeing that 'people work best when they can balance their work and other aspects of their lives'. However, they were also clear that business considerations should still come first with three-fifths (60 per cent.) agreeing that employees should not expect to 'change their working pattern if to do so would disrupt the business'.

Reported availability of work-life balance practices appeared to have increased since 2000 for several arrangements, but varied considerably from 67 per cent. of employees who said part-time working was available to only 20 per cent. who said that working from home on a regular basis was available.

There has also been an increase in take up of several flexible working practices since 2000. Where employers provided flexible arrangements, take up among employees in the previous year and with their current employer was highest for flexitime (55 per cent.) and working from home (54 per cent.), but lower where hours of work (and thus pay) would be reduced such as for job-sharing (15 per cent.).

A sixth of employees (17 per cent.) had approached their employer in the last two years to make a request to change how they regularly work for a sustained period of time, and 77 per cent. said their request had been agreed. Almost one-third

(29 per cent.) of mothers had requested a change in how they regularly worked from their employer in the last two years, compared to only 12 per cent. of fathers.

However, there was some employee concern, particularly among men, about the consequences of adopting flexible working practices in terms of their job security and career prospects. Although when asked about various working patterns and leave arrangements, only in the case of working reduced hours (such as part-time working) did more employees consider that adopting this way of working would negatively affect their career (51 per cent.) than those who stated that it would not (38 per cent.).

The findings indicate strong support for work-life balance among employees. The increases in provision and take up indicate a shift towards improved work-life balance for employees, and the Department has encouraged this trend through the new employment rights introduced in April 2003. This legislation gives new rights to parents including introducing paternity and adoption leave for the first time, and the right to request flexible working for parents of children under six-years-old and of disabled children under 18-years-old (with a statutory duty on the employer to consider the request), as well as increasing maternity pay and leave.

The report is available free from publications @ dti, or can be downloaded from the DTI website.

Workers' Rights (South Ribble)

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the benefits to the residents of South Ribble of new rights for night workers. [172138]

Nigel Griffiths: The Working Time Regulations came into force on 1 October 1998. The regulations limit working time to 48 hours per week averaged over a 17-week reference period. For night workers the limit is eight hours per day on average, including overtime where it is part of a night worker's normal hours of work. There is no opt-out from the night working time limit.

Night workers are entitled to 11 hours rest between working days, one day's rest per week, and a 20-minute in work rest break if the working period is longer than six hours.

All night workers should be offered a free health assessment before they start working night and thereafter at regular intervals for as long as they are working nights. The health assessments should take account of the nature of the work and the restrictions on a worker's working time under the regulations. Workers who suffer from problems as a result of working at night, should as far as practicable be offered alternative day work.

All workers are entitled to four weeks paid annual leave. There is no specific data available for night shift workers in South Ribble.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents in South Ribble have benefited from a reduction of the working week to 48 hours. [172139]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations provide workers with the right to refuse to work more than 48 hours on average, if they do not want to. Numbers for South Ribble are not available, however it has been estimated that around 300,000 workers resident in the North West region stood to benefit from the introduction of the weekly working time limits in 1998.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many and what percentage of women in South Ribble have taken 26 weeks maternity leave since 1997. [172148]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Take-up of maternity leave is not recorded centrally. It is possible to make an estimate of the numbers of women taking maternity leave based on employer returns to Inland Revenue of the Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) they recover (since 2003 this has covered the first 26 weeks of leave). Figures for the take-up of SMP are not available on a regional basis, but nationally around 300,000 women receive SMP each year.

In addition, there will be some women who will qualify for maternity leave but not SMP (because they do not meet the earnings or length of employment criteria for SMP) and similarly some who qualify for SMP but not leave (because they are employed earners for the purposes of SMP but not employees in order to qualify for leave).

HEALTH

Abortions

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average cost of an NHS abortion was in each of the past three years; and what the total cost of NHS provision of abortions was in each year. [171508]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table:

National health service funded abortions performed in NHS hospitals in England

	Average cost of an NHS abortion[1] *provision (£)*	*Total cost of NHS abortion (£ million)*
2000–01	393.00	32.7
2001–02	415.00	35.7
2002–03	469.00	38.2

[1] Average cost of a day case surgical abortion.

Source:
National Schedule of Reference Costs, Appendix 1C.

Blood Transfusion

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what work is being undertaken by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence into the most efficient use of alternatives to blood transfusions in the NHS. [164110]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the response I gave him on 21 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 548–49W.

The Chief Medical Officer's national blood transfusion committee is looking at how to encourage the most efficient use of blood donations in the national health service.

Breast Cancer (Preston)

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of women in Preston with suspected breast cancer saw a specialist within two weeks in each of the last five years. [168102]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected on a constituency basis. The information shown in the table relates to the national health service organisations serving the Preston area.

Waiting times for first consultant out-patient appointment for suspected breast cancer following urgent GP referral

	NHS Trust	Seen within 2 weeks	
		Percentage	Number
1999–2000	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	94.5	52
2000–01	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	100.0	169
2001–02	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	100.0	240
2002–03	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	238
2003–04	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	279

Note:
Lancashire Teaching Hospitals was established on 1 August 2002 from the acute services of Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust and Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust

Source:
DH form QMCW.

Care Qualifications

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the number of home care workers who have *(a)* obtained and *(b)* have yet to obtain NVQ level 2 in care. [171006]

Mr. Hutton: This information is not collected centrally. Since April 2004, the regulation and inspection of domiciliary care services has been the responsibility for the commission for social care inspection (CSCI). Information about the numbers of staff and their qualifications are provided to the CSCI as part of the registration process. Aggregate information is therefore likely to become available after March 2005.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the availability of courses in NVQ level 2 in care; and if he will make a statement. [171007]

Mr. Hutton: The nature of the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 2 in care and its assessment precludes the provision of courses specifically designed to support study for this qualification. Candidates require access to specific educational or training courses according to their existing level of knowledge and skill. Such courses are provided locally and information about them is not collected centrally by the Department.

Topss England and the Learning and Skills Council have been working to ensure that social care employers have robust NVQ frameworks and increased number of NVQ assessors and verifiers in place so that staff can complete NVQs in care.

Catheter Laboratories

Andrew Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many catheter laboratories there are at Manchester Royal Infirmary; when the last new one was opened; how many patients were treated in its first 12 months of working; and what the levels of throughput were of the older laboratories over the same period. [170143]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not collected centrally and is a matter for the Central Manchester and Manchester Children's Hospital National Health Service Trust.

Chief Medical Officer's Report

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the reasons are for the delay in the publication of the report on health and activity written by the Chief Medical Officer and due to be published last year; [165238]

(2) if he will publish the report on health and activity written by the Chief Medical Officer last year. [165247]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Chief Medical Officer's (CMO) report, "At Least Five a Week", was published on 29 April. It is the authoritative source document on the health benefits of physical activity for England. The report includes the most up-to-date academic literature and was fully peer reviewed before publication.

Dentistry

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will take further measures to increase the availability of NHS dentistry. [168095]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Government are committed to rebuilding and restoring national health service dentistry to improve oral health. New legislation in the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 will underpin a modernised, high-quality primary dental service, properly integrated with the rest of the NHS. The aim is to deliver better access to services, better working lives for dentists and their teams, better oral health and an improved patient experience.

As part of the new arrangements, the current remuneration system, which is based on item of service fees, will be abolished and replaced by a much simpler contract. Under transitional arrangements we are developing a simple but robust 'base contract' which all dentists and primary care trusts (PCTs) will be able to put in place from 2005. These transitional arrangements will provide protection of dentists gross earnings for three years to enable them to come off the treadmill of item of service fees, to see their patients at intervals appropriate to their oral health needs and to modernise and adjust their workload. These proposals are set out in "Framework proposals for primary dental services in

England from 2005" which was published on 24 February and on which we have been seeking views from dental representative bodies.

In the meantime we have provided new investment totalling £90 million to NHS dentistry over the last year. £59 million will support access and is aimed at increasing access to NHS dentistry for patients. Strategic health authorities have been advised of their shares and are working with their PCTs to address access issues. £30 million is to support information technology and the balance of £1 million will support organisational development locally.

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures he is taking to improve NHS dentistry for pensioners in Gloucester. [169984]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We have provided new investment totalling £90 million to national health service dentistry over the last year. £59 million will support access, and strategic health authorities (SHAs) have been advised of their shares and are working with their primary care trusts (PCTs), including those in Gloucestershire, to address access issues. £30 million is to support information technology and the balance of £1 million will support organisational development locally.

In Gloucestershire, the existing dental access centres offer emergency and routine dental treatment—this is prioritised according to patients' needs and the demands placed on the service.

All the PCTs in Gloucestershire have been invited by Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA to submit proposals to improve access to dental care, funded through the SHA's £2 million share of the access funding. They are also exploring the possibility of establishing an outreach-teaching pilot for dental and dental therapy students with Bristol University.

West Gloucestershire PCT is one of the 16 PCTs in England with which the NHS dentistry support team is working. The support team has made several visits to Gloucestershire towards the end of 2003, and an action plan to establish new dental practices in Cinderford, in the Forest of Dean, and Gloucester City will be agreed by the end of April 2004. Additionally, work is underway to explore the potential for overseas recruitment in Gloucestershire.

This work is to improve NHS dentistry for all patients in Gloucester including pensioners.

Departmental Annual Report

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the production of his Department's latest annual report cost; how many copies were printed; how many copies of it were sold at its cover price; to whom copies of the report have been provided free of charge; and how many copies were provided free of charge. [171145]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The total cost to the Department of producing the 2004 Departmental report was £27,532. This included £20,577 for design, typesetting and artwork and a further £6,955 for the cost of the copies ordered by the Department.

This year 1,500 copies of the report were printed.

Those who receive free copies of the departmental report are chief executives of strategic health authorities, departmental senior civil service, directors of social care, parliamentary Libraries, Her Majesty's Treasury and Department of Health Ministers' private offices. This came to a total of over 640 copies that were provided free of charge.

Information is not yet available on how many reports have been sold at the cover price.

The report is also available on the Department's website at

http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/AnnualReports.

Departmental Procurement

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of the *(a)* crockery, *(b)* cutlery and *(c)* glassware procured by his Department over the last five years is of British manufacture. [170801]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Crockery and cutlery in use in the Department for catering and hospitality is supplied by the Department's catering contractor.

Digital Hearing Aids

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when digital hearing aids will be available on the NHS in the constituency of Blackpool, North and Fleetwood. [170591]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Digital hearing aids have been available on the national health service from the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Hospitals NHS Trust since January 2004. Priority is currently being given to new patients who require a hearing aid for the first time. However, existing patients are eligible for consideration subject to agreed criteria.

Drug Addicts

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in Heywood and Middleton are receiving drug treatment. [168538]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In 2000–01, there were 712 people receiving drug treatment in Rochdale. This is the latest available data. Data broken down by drug action team for 2001–02 and 2002–03 have not been finalised.

Exubera Inhaler

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the Exubera inhaler will gain a certificate of a medicinal product and become available on the NHS to diabetics. [170535]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As with all marketing authorisation applications, before Exubera is granted a licence and becomes available in the United Kingdom it must be fully evaluated in relation to the appropriate standards required in the relevant European rules and

regulations on medicinal products. Data submitted in support of the application will need to demonstrate that the safety, quality and efficacy of the product are satisfactory for its intended use.

Food Procurement

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his Department's policy is towards local food chain procurement; and what attempts he has made to amend his Department's competitive tendering rules. [170140]

Mr. Hutton: The National Health Service Purchasing and Supply Agency (PASA) and NHS Estates have produced an action plan, entitled "Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative", on behalf of the Department. The action plan was produced in response to the action on farming and food programme and it focuses on promoting sustainability in terms of NHS food procurement. This plan can be viewed at the PASA's website at www.pasa.nhs.uk or copies can be requested from the Corporate Affairs Manager, NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency, 80 Lightfoot Street, Chester CH2 3AD.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his Department's policy is towards special dietary provision by health trusts with reference to *(a)* halal, *(b)* kosher and *(c)* vegan diets. [170141]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Ensuring patients have access to adequate nutrition is a key component of effective health care. National health service trusts should have arrangements in place to ensure that the individual dietary needs of all patients can be met whether these arise from clinical need, cultural or religious requirements, or individual choice.

The NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency is currently re-negotiating two new central agreements for the provision of special diets and authentic ethnic food. The process is currently under way for developing the specifications for these with religious and cultural leaders and with dieticians and the British Dietetic Association to ensure authenticity and acceptability of the products.

General Practitioners

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* average cost of each patient consultation to a general practitioner and *(b)* average (i) hourly and (ii) daily cost to the NHS of a general practitioner's time was in the last year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [168716]

Mr. Hutton: Data on general and personal medical services expenditure and activity are included in the Department's annual reports.

The report for 2004—Cm 6204—was published on 29 April 2004, and figure 7.5 of the report shows that expenditure per consultation was £17.42 in 2002–03.

The Report is available in the Library and on the Department's website at http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/AnnualReports/DHAnnualReportsArticle/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4080936&chk=OsqvVR

General practitioners are self-employed contractors to the national health service and so determine their own hours of work and the hours of work of the staff that they employ to assist them. It is not possible, therefore, to estimate hourly or daily rates for a GP's time.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) under what circumstances a general practitioner may make a charge to patients for signing official documents; and if he will make a statement; [169746]

(2) if he will issue guidance to primary care trusts on suitable levels for charges by general practitioners for signing documents; [169756]

(3) if he will list the official documents and certificates which require a general practitioner's signature; and what action he is taking to satisfy himself that the level of charges by general practitioners for such signatures are reasonable. [169757]

Mr. Hutton: General practitioners are required to sign the following prescribed list of medical certificates:

To support a claim or to obtain payment either personally or by proxy; to prove incapacity to work or for self-support for the purposes of an award by the Secretary of State; or to enable proxy to draw pensions etc.

To establish pregnancy for the purpose of obtaining welfare foods.

To secure registration of stillbirth.

To enable payment to be made to an institution or other person in case of mental disorder of persons entitled to payment from public funds.

To establish unfitness for jury service.

To support late application for reinstatement in civil employment or notification of non-availability to take up employment owing to sickness.

To enable a person to be registered as an absent voter on grounds of physical incapacity.

To support applications for certificates conferring exemption from charges in respect of drugs, medicines and appliances.

To support a claim by or on behalf of a severely mentally impaired person for exemption from liability to pay the Council Tax or eligibility for a discount in the amount payable.

They must also sign prescription forms. If the doctor is asked to sign another document, such as a passport application form, he or she is not obliged to do so. However, if the GP does do this work, he or she is entitled to charge a fee. There are no plans to issue guidance on the level of this fee since successive Governments have regarded it as a private matter to be agreed upon between doctor and patient.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much income general practitioners lost in 2003–04 owing to not meeting specific targets imposed on them by his Department in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [170206]

Mr. Hutton: No targets have been imposed on general practitioners in any of the last three years.

Guide Dogs

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what financial support is given to train guide dogs for the blind. [171536]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* The Government do not fund the training of guide dogs. The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association is a registered charity and has not requested core funding from the Department or from the National Lottery.

Health Checks (Over-75s)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what tests are contained in the general practitioner health check for all patients aged 75 or over who request it and have not had a consultation within the last 12 months. [169717]

Mr. Hutton: Tests to be undertaken in the health check for patients aged 75 and over are not specified. It is a matter of practitioners' clinical judgment, based on the patient's needs arising from the consultation.

Health Directorates

Angela Eagle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list for each local health directorate in England the number of *(a)* men and *(b)* women elected. [164632]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Health Services

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many residents in Bootle awaiting heart surgery have had the option of choosing an alternative hospital for quicker treatment in the last 12 months. [169263]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of suspected cancer patients in Bootle saw an NHS consultant within two weeks in each of the last seven years. [169265]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information from 2000–01, the earliest available, is shown in the table. BOOTLE—Waiting times for first consultant outpatient appointment for suspected cancer following urgent GP referral.

	Quarter	NHS Trust	Seen within two weeks	
			Percentage	Number
2000–01	4	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100	665
2001–02	1	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100	683
2001–02	2	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100	712
2001–02	3	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100	878
2001–02	4	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100	795
2002–03	1	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100	916
2002–03	2	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100	992
2002–03	3	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100	1066
2002–03	4	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100	1019
2003–04	1	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100	1094
2003–04	2	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100	1150
2003–04	3	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100	1151

Source:
Department of Health form QMCW.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many inpatients in Crosby had to wait more than *(a)* three, *(b)* six, *(c)* nine and *(d)* 12 months for treatment in each year since 1997; and what the percentage change in each year was in each case. [164307]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not collected on a constituency basis but at national health service trust level. This information is shown in the tables.

Selected Trusts in Crosby area: Counts of finished admission episodes (valid waiting list and booked cases) by time waited grouping—NHS hospitals, 1997–98 to 2002–03

Time waited grouping	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
0 to 3 months	38,836	35,102	36,452	37,931	35,230	34,472
more than 3 to 6 months	4,618	5,478	5,672	5,740	5,723	5,652
more than 6 to 9 months	2,384	2,896	2,414	2,778	3,174	2,597
more than 9 to 12 months	1,685	1,918	1,947	2,353	2,033	2,607
more than 12 months	2,753	3,377	2,990	2,636	2,235	1,749
Total admissions	50,276	48,771	49,475	51,438	48,395	47,077

Selected Trusts in Crosby area: Counts of finished admission episodes (valid waiting list and booked cases) for aggregated time waited groupings—NHS hospitals, 1997–98 to 2002–03

Time waited grouping	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
0 to 3 months	38,836	35,102	36,452	37,931	35,230	34,472
more than 3 months	11,440	13,669	13,023	13,507	13,165	12,605
more than 6 months	6,822	8,191	7,351	7,767	7,442	6,953

Selected Trusts in Crosby area: Counts of finished admission episodes (valid waiting list and booked cases) for aggregated time waited groupings—NHS hospitals, 1997–98 to 2002–03

Time waited grouping	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
more than 9 months	4,438	5,295	4,937	4,989	4,268	4,356
more than 12 months	2,753	3,377	2,990	2,636	2,235	1,749
Total admissions	50,276	48,771	49,475	51,438	48,395	47,077

Selected Trusts in Crosby area: Year-on-year percentage change of finished admission episodes (valid waiting list and booked cases) for aggregated time waited groupings—NHS hospitals, 1997–98 to 2002–03

Time waited grouping	1997–98 to 1998–99	1998–99 to 1999–2000	1999–2000 to 2000–01	2000–01 to 2001–02	2001–02 to 2002–03
0 to 3 months	-9.6	3.8	4.1	-7.1	-2.2
more than 3 months	19.5	-4.7	3.7	-2.5	-4.3
more than 6 months	20.1	-10.3	5.7	-4.2	-6.6
more than 9 months	19.3	-6.8	1.1	-14.5	2.1
more than 12 months	22.7	-11.5	-11.8	-15.2	-21.7

Notes:
1. A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
2. Figures are grossed for coverage, except for 2001–02 and 2002–03, which are not yet adjusted for shortfalls.
3. Time waited statistics from Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) are not the same as the published waiting list statistics. HES provides counts and time waited for all patients admitted to hospital within a given period whereas the published waiting list statistics count those waiting for treatment on a specific date and how long they have been on the waiting list. Also, HES calculates the time waited as the difference between the admission and decision to admit dates. Unlike published waiting list statistics, this is not adjusted for self-deferrals or periods of medical/social suspension.
4. Trusts in Crosby Area:
REM Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust
REQ Southport and Formby Hospitals NHS Trust
RJV West Lancashire NHS Trust
RVY Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust.
5. Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust was created on 1 April 1999 from Southport and Formby Hospitals NHS Trust and part of West Lancashire NHS Trust. The figures for West Lancashire NHS Trust for 1997–98 and 1998–99 are for the whole trust. It is not possible to identify the proportion of this figure attributable to Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust.
Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of suspected cancer patients in Wigan saw an NHS consultant within two weeks in each of the last seven years. [169348]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information from 2000–01, the earliest available, is shown in the following table.

Waiting times for first consultant outpatient appointment for suspected cancer following urgent GP referral.

	Quarter	NHS Trust	Seen within two weeks: Percentage	Seen within two weeks: Number
2000–01	4	Wigan and Leigh Health Services NHS Trust	100	146
2001–02	1	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	214
2001–02	2	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	232
2001–02	3	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	304
2001–02	4	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	346
2002–03	1	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	306
2002–03	2	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	337
2002–03	3	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	353
2002–03	4	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	337
2003–04	1	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	396
2003–04	2	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	393
2003–04	3	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	447

Source:
Department of Health form QMCW.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on NHS waiting times for heart surgery in Wigan. [169349]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In February 2004, no patient waited more than nine months for heart surgery at The Central Manchester and Manchester Children's Hospital National Health Service Trust or the South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of women in Wigan with suspected breast cancer saw a specialist within two weeks in each of the last five years. [169352]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the following table.

Waiting times for first consultant outpatient appointment for suspected breast cancer following urgent GP referral

	Quarter	NHS Trust	Seen within 2 weeks: Percentage	Seen within 2 weeks: Number
1999–2000	1	Wigan and Leigh Health Services NHS Trust	100	19
1999–2000	2	Wigan and Leigh Health Services NHS Trust	100	31

Waiting times for first consultant outpatient appointment for suspected breast cancer following urgent GP referral

	Quarter	NHS Trust	Seen within 2 weeks	
			Percentage	Number
1999–2000	3	Wigan and Leigh Health Services NHS Trust	100	53
1999–2000	4	Wigan and Leigh Health Services NHS Trust	100	59
2000–2001	1	Wigan and Leigh Health Services NHS Trust	100	48
2000–2001	2	Wigan and Leigh Health Services NHS Trust	100	68
2000–2001	3	Wigan and Leigh Health Services NHS Trust	100	80
2000–2001	4	Wigan and Leigh Health Services NHS Trust	100	71
2001–2002	1	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	89
2001–2002	2	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	93
2001–2002	3	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	93
2001–2002	4	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	106
2002/03	1	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	107
2002–2003	2	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	88
2002–2003	3	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	120
2002–2003	4	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	88
2003–2004	1	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	93
2003–2004	2	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	98
2003–2004	3	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	100	110

Source:
DH form QMCW.

Hospitals (Bedside Televisions)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action his Department intends to take to resolve the problems in some hospitals where bedside televisions cannot be switched off. [169722]

Mr. Hutton: The bedside televisions provided can be switched off and no action is therefore required. Patients can turn off screens or turn them to face the wall if they prefer.

Immigrant Medical Inspections

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which bodies have had the prime responsibility for making available medical staff to support local authorities in their functions related to the Control of Disease Act 1984 during the NHS reorganisations of the last five years; and whether funding has followed these changes. [156843]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Long-standing central guidance has been that the local consultant in communicable disease control (CCDC) should normally be the local authority proper officer for the purposes of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984. Local authorities also look to the national health service to provide medical officers for the purposes of the port health regulations which are made, or deemed to be made, under powers in the Act.

In the last five years, CCDCs have been employed by health authorities, primary care trusts (PCTs—which were created in three waves, from April 2000, April 2001 and April 2002) and, from 1 April 2003, the Health Protection Agency (HPA).

From 2003–04, funding previously allocated to health authorities has been made available directly to PCTs. From April 2003, all PCTs which transferred staff to the HPA were top-sliced in line with the expenditure associated with the staff transferred. This included the funding for CCDCs and their teams.

Internet Medicine Sales

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list websites which have been *(a)* closed and *(b)* required to amend their web pages by their internet service providers following representations made by (i) the Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency in the last year and (ii) the Medicines Control Agency for each year between 1997 and 2003 for (A) being in breach of the law on the scale of unlicensed medicines via the internet and (B) providing medicines without adequate patient consultations. [167807]

Mr. Hutton: During the period 1997 to 2003, the former Medicines Control Agency (MCA) achieved compliance through amendment to the website by the internet service providers in six cases involving the sale and supply of all medicines via the internet. A further seven websites were closed as a result of the operators voluntarily agreeing to do so. These cases involved both licensed and unlicensed medicines.

Specific enforcement activity is a matter between the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and the individual(s) concerned.

Mobile Telecommunication Masts

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to undertake further research into the health effects of G3 technology mobile telecommunication masts. [170128]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* A review of recent research entitled, "Health Effects from Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Fields", published by the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) advisory group on non-ionising radiation concluded:

> "Exposure levels from living near to mobile phone base stations are extremely low, and the overall evidence indicates that they are unlikely to pose a risk to health."

Nevertheless, following the precautionary approach advocated by the independent expert group on mobile phones (IEGMP) in May 2000 (www.iegmp.org.uk), the LINK mobile telecommunications and health research (MTHR) programme, was established under an independent programme management committee (PMC), following the publication of the IEGMP report. The PMC has expressed its wish to undertake research into the effects of 3G exposures and discussions are already taking place on how this can be added to the overall programme of research. Further information about this programme as a whole can be found on the MTHR website at www.mthr.org.uk.

The operators of mobile telephone equipment, including 3G technologies, ensure that public exposure does not exceed national and international guidelines. A substantial number of measurements of potential exposures of the public from base station emissions, have been made by a number of bodies, including the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) (www.nrpb.org) and Ofcom, formerly the Radiocommunications Agency (www.ofcom.org.uk). In all cases, exposures have been very much lower than guidelines.

National Service Frameworks

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on progress towards the National Framework milestone for primary care group and primary care trust schemes for older people to receive more help from pharmacists in using their medicines. [170617]

Ms Rosie Winterton: While we do not collect data centrally on the number of primary care trusts (PCTs) that have schemes in place so that older people can get more help from pharmacists in using their medicines, there is good evidence to indicate that the number of pharmacists providing support to patients, general practitioners and PCTs to improve medicine taking has increased significantly since 2001, when the older people's national service framework was published.

PCTs now employ over 1,000 pharmacists, some of whom provide hands on support to GP practices to set up medicines management schemes, which help patients take their medicines more effectively. Through the national medicines management collaborative at least 393 community pharmacies are actively involved in programmes such as prescription intervention schemes, medication reviews, return of unwanted medicines, and minor ailment schemes, thereby encouraging self-care and support to vulnerable groups, particularly older people. This includes enhanced prescription collection and delivery services, medicines management services to care homes and domiciliary visiting. The Department is also funding a trial of structured services based exclusively in community pharmacies for patients with coronary heart disease, led by the pharmaceutical services negotiating committee.

The proposed new community pharmacy contractual framework, which is currently being negotiated, will also be an important driver for change and will help to ensure that pharmacists are more involved in supporting patients in using their medicines. Repeat dispensing, which is expected to be an essential service provided by all pharmacies, will enable patients with stable conditions to obtain a prescription from their GP, which can then be dispensed in several instalments by their pharmacy over an agreed period of time.

The first pharmacist supplementary prescribers have qualified and will be writing their first prescriptions imminently. Supplementary prescribing within a clinical management plan agreed with the doctor will be particularly beneficial for patients with chronic diseases. The work of the medicines partnership taskforce, funded by the Department, has helped professionals and older people to become more involved in medication reviews.

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on progress towards the National Service Framework milestone for single integrated community services. [170619]

Dr. Ladyman: Of the 138 areas in England that have been identified to be covered by integrated health and social services community equipment services, 110, or 72 per cent., predicted in January 2004 that they would meet the four integration criteria, which are: to have a pooled budget, a sole manager, a manager's advisory board, and unified stock. The majority of the remaining services are expected to complete their integration during the course of the year.

Neurosurgical Consultants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many neurosurgical trainees who were awarded their Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training more than six months ago have not yet received a consultant appointment, excluding locum consultancies. [167059]

Mr. Hutton: This information is not collected centrally.

NHS Land Sales

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the sale of surplus NHS land within the Northumbria NHS Trust area. [170414]

Ms Rosie Winterton: An agreement in principle has been given to transfer surplus land in the ownership of Secretary of State for Health to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Details of the transaction and the price to be paid have still to be determined.

Some of the land under consideration for transfer falls within the area covered by Northumbria national health service trust.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what conditions attach to the receipt of the proceeds of sale of the surplus NHS land to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister; [168350]

(2) what arrangements have been entered into with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to ensure that the Department receives a share of any profits made on the subsequent sale of the surplus NHS sites by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. [168351]

Mr. Hutton: The announcement on 7 April was of an in-principle agreement to transfer the sites and the detailed terms of the transfer are still under discussion.

NHS Recruitment

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of whether NHS organisations adhere to the Code of Practice on Ethical Recruitment in the granting of work permits to foreign healthcare applicants. [170668]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* We monitor compliance to the code of practice through information supplied by strategic health authorities and also publish of a list of agencies who agree to comply with the code.

National health Service employers may only apply for a work permit following a professional registration assessment by the relevant statutory body.

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment his Department has made of the extent to which medical professionals from EU accession countries after 1 May will help to fill vacancies for *(a)* doctors, *(b)* nurses and *(c)* dentists in the NHS. [168069]

Mr. Hutton: No assessment has been made on how many national health service vacancies could be filled by healthcare professionals from European Union accession countries after 1 May.

However, international recruitment has a long established history with many healthcare staff from around the world having come to the United Kingdom at some point in their career. International recruitment has made a key contribution to the delivery of services in the NHS, and is a two way process. Welcoming healthcare professionals from abroad gives valuable opportunities for a transfer of experience and the sharing of ideas.

NHS Therapists

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS therapists for children with disabilities in mainstream schools have been recruited in the last three years; how many additional training places for such NHS therapists have been created in the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [170607]

Mr. Hutton: Information is not specifically available on the number of therapists for children with disabilities that have been recruited to the national health service. The tables show the number of physiotherapists, occupational therapists and speech and language therapists employed in the NHS and entering training each year.

Between September 2000 and 2003, the number of speech and language therapists employed in the NHS has increased by 15 per cent. Physiotherapists have increased by 15 per cent., and occupational therapists by 17 per cent.. The Government is also increasing the number of students entering training each year; since 1999–2000, training places in speech and language therapy have increased by 31 per cent., in occupational therapy by 44 per cent., and by 60 per cent., in physiotherapy.

NHS Hospital and Community Health Services (HCHS): Qualified speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists employed in the NHS as at 30 September each year

Headcount

	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*Increase Number*	*Percentage*
Speech and language	5,430	5,685	5,960	6,243	813	15.0
Therapists						
Occupational therapists	13,129	13,914	14,749	15,391	2,262	17.2
Physiotherapists	15,608	16,212	16,885	17,922	2,314	14.8

Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.

Training commissions

Headcount

	1999–2000	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*Increase Number*	*Percentage*
Speech and language	457	558	553	597	140	30.6
Therapists						
Occupational therapists	1,173	1,385	1,563	1,692	519	44.2
Physiotherapists	1,346	1,473	1,780	2,157	811	60.3

Source:
Department of Health Quarterly Monitoring

Parliamentary Questions

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the hon. Member for Richmond Park will receive an answer to her questions regarding the use of Thimerosal, tabled on 22 March. [168865]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I replied to the hon. Member on 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1474W and 5 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1626W.

Patient Forums

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of patient forums in representing the interests of patients following the abolition of community health councils; and if he will make a statement. [167291]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Community health councils had a general duty to represent the interests of the public in the health service. The new system of patient and public involvement is a much broader structure with a range of specific features.

The new system comprises on the spot support for patients through patient advice and liaison services (PALS), independent support for complainants through the independent complaints advocacy service (ICAS), the powers to scrutinise health services by overview and scrutiny committees of local authorities, and a duty on the national health service to involve and consult patients and the public in the planning and development of services.

On top of these arrangements there are also 572 independent patients' forums with a clear remit to monitor local NHS services, obtain the views of patients using those services and feed those views into local decision-making.

The Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health, the independent body responsible for supporting, advising on and monitoring the work of forums will also be responsible for reviewing how effectively forums have been in carrying out their responsibilities. It is also responsible for ensuring that appropriate and high quality support is provided to forums by the forum support organisations—it does this through rigorous contract and performance management arrangements.

Press Officers

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many press officers were employed in his Department in each year from 1990–91 to 2003–04; what the total cost was in each year; and if he will make a statement. [162845]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The cost for all staff employed in the media centre from 1997–98 to 2003–04 is shown in table 1.

Table 1

	Cost (£ million)
1997–98	1.062
1998–99	1.239
1999–2000	1.253
2000–01	1.233
2001–02	1.279
2002–03	1.077
2003–04	1.284

Information showing the number of press officers employed by the Department is shown in table 2.

Table 2

	Staff
1990–91	11
1991–92	12
1992–93	14
1993–94	14
1994–95	14
1995–96	17
1996–97	17
1997–98	15
1998–99	15
1999–2000	16
2000–01	19
2001–02	22
2002–03	24
2003–04	26

The cost of employing press officers from 1990–91 to 1996–97 could be supplied only at disproportionate cost.

QA Business Services

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what action he is taking to complete the compensation calculations in respect of former employees of QA Business Services to achieve final conclusion of their claims; [170476]

(2) when he expects all the agreed compensation claims in respect of former employees of QA Business Services to be settled and paid. [170532]

Dr. Ladyman: Almost all the former employees of QA Business Services, who have taken legal action over compensation, have now received offers in settlement. The professional advisers for the litigants have responded to the offers. We are currently considering the issues raised and will respond to the litigants shortly. It will then be a matter for the litigants to decide if the revised offers are acceptable or not.

All those non-litigants who have been shown to have suffered losses on the same basis as the litigants have already received compensation payments.

Rheumatological/Musculoskeletal Conditions

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what proportion of hospital trusts provide access to a multidisciplinary team for patients with rheumatological conditions; [171931]

(2) what steps are being taken to increase patient access to direct advice, information and support to assist them in coping with their conditions. [171933]

Dr. Ladyman: Information is not collected centrally on the proportion of hospital trusts with access to a multidisciplinary team for patients with rheumatological conditions.

The Department is driving forward a major programme of work to improve equality of access to all national health service treatment and care services. Priorities for health and social care are set out in "Improvement, Expansion and Reform", the priorities and planning framework for 2003–06. Although rheumatological conditions are not identified specifically, people with these conditions stand to benefit from the improvement in access to specialist care for patients with any form of orthopaedic condition.

Maximum waiting times have fallen over the past few years and will continue to do so. By the end of 2005, the maximum waiting time for a first out-patient appointment with a consultant will fall to three months and the maximum wait for inpatient treatment will fall to six months. Also, the older peoples' national service framework set standards that will improve treatment and care for a range of older people, including those with rheumatological conditions.

Royal Colleges

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many of those classified as *(a)* senior managers, *(b)* managers, *(c)* clerical staff and *(d)* administrative staff within the NHS are eligible to join a royal college; and how many are not. [171361]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Scanners

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the cost of a *(a)* MRI scanner and *(b)* CT scanner. [169709]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The costs of computed tomography (CT) and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scanners are dependent on the precise specification of equipment required at each individual institution. Costs may also be influenced by the method used to purchase equipment.

In England, costs range from £300,000 to £700,000 for CT scanners and £650,000 to £1,500,000 for MRI scanners. These costs are not inclusive of value added tax or any necessary build and installation costs.

Solvent Abuse

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many children were treated for solvent abuse in each of the last seven years; [169031]

(2) what the average waiting time is for children requiring consultations for solvent abuse. [169032]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not available centrally.

Tuberculosis

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of tuberculosis there were in Greater London, broken down by national health service trust, in each year since 1997. [170501]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of tuberculosis cases is not available broken down by national health service trust. As the nearest alternative, information on tuberculosis notification is shown in the table at local authority level.

Local authority	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*[1]
Barking and Dagenham	22	37	32	40	28	46	46
Barnet	63	77	50	71	77	93	88
Bexley	18	17	22	17	21	22	35
Brent	195	163	211	287	293	226	175
Bromley	21	13	26	28	26	9	20
Camden	105	103	78	81	100	125	119
City of London	—	—	2	1	1	2	5
Croydon	64	83	87	92	85	108	108
Ealing	162	212	197	238	240	261	153
Enfield	45	68	63	83	79	111	72
Greenwich	54	70	59	59	91	98	88
Hackney	117	121	96	180	176	138	217
Hammersmith and Fulham	54	59	49	75	34	10	19
Haringey	145	99	135	158	158	79	106
Harrow	64	73	75	89	99	124	110
Havering	19	6	12	27	21	15	19
Hillingdon	75	98	79	86	93	98	123
Hounslow	74	79	105	104	45	24	42
Islington	77	84	93	93	106	112	113
Kensington and Chelsea	51	43	64	45	47	36	47
Kingston upon Thames	10	17	15	12	17	18	8
Lambeth	94	102	100	126	137	98	122
Lewisham	57	78	68	68	64	82	34
Merton	39	21	30	40	43	65	30
Newham	174	213	237	290	238	228	247
Redbridge	100	70	71	58	73	91	97
Richmond upon Thames	9	14	16	9	14	16	6
Southwark	75	61	74	102	98	69	76
Sutton	23	18	15	14	23	31	34
Tower Hamlets	136	104	107	120	128	151	135
Waltham Forest	94	93	93	102	87	93	99
Wandsworth	70	67	59	51	55	87	95
Westminster, City of	105	81	89	92	89	73	98
London total	2,411	2,444	2,503	2,938	2,886	2,839	2,786

[1] 2003 is provisional data and may be subject to small adjustments in the future.

Sources:

Statutory Notifications to the Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre.
All forms of Tuberculosis. Corrected Notifications.
Data excludes chemoprophylaxis.
Data excludes Port Health Authorities.
Population denominators ONS.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of people eligible for the BCG inoculation in Greater London, broken down by national health service trust, received it in each year since 1997. [170507]

Mr. Hutton: Information is not available in the format requested. The number of BCG vaccinations to children aged under one and those aged 10–15 given by trusts in London is shown in table 9 of the annual statistical bulletin "NHS Immunisation Statistics,

England: 2002–03" and in similar tables in earlier bulletins, copies of which are available in the Library. Copies of bulletins from 1998–99 onwards are also available electronically on the Department's website at:

www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sb0316.htm,
www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sb0218.htm,
www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sb0121.htm,
www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sb0026.htm and
www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sb9928.htm.

Waiting Lists/Times

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of patients with suspected cancer in Burnley saw an NHS consultant within two weeks in each of the last seven years. [167943]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected on a constituency basis. Information from 2000–01, the earliest available, is shown in the table and relates to the national health service organisations serving the Burnley area.

Waiting times for first consultant out-patient appointment for suspected cancer following urgent GP referral

	NHS Trust	*Seen within 2 weeks*	
		Percentage	*Number*
2000–01	Blackburn Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	100.0	175
2000–01	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	173
2001–02	Blackburn Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	100.0	229
2001–02	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	262
2002–03	Blackburn Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	99.6	246
2002–03	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	317
2003–04	East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	688

Note:
East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust was formed from the merger of Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust and Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust on 1 April 2003
Source:
DH form QMCW

Vaccinations

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether there is a shortage of serum for *(a)* measles, *(b)* mumps and *(c)* rubella for children whose parents opt for individual inoculations; and if he will make a statement. [171738]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department holds no information about the supply of single vaccines.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what analysis he has made of the potential link between the use of mercury-based whooping cough vaccines and the incidence of autism; and if he will make a statement. [167767]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As with all medicinal products, vaccine safety is continually monitored by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and its independent expert advisory body, the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM). The MHRA and CSM have thoroughly reviewed the safety of mercury-containing vaccines, including alleged links with autism, on a number of occasions.

In 2001, CSM conducted a major review of the available evidence and has since then considered new data as it has emerged. In 2003, following a review of further studies, including two United Kingdom studies involving more than 100,000 children, CSM advice was placed on the MHRA website at http://medicines.mhra.gov.uk.

Further studies from Denmark involving almost half a million children have also specifically investigated the suggested link between mercury-containing vaccines and autism. None of these studies found any evidence of a causal association.

On the basis of the available data, the advice of CSM remains that there is no evidence of harm from the form of mercury contained in vaccines, with the exception of possible hypersensitivity reactions, typically skin rashes or local swelling at the site of injection. The CSM advises that the benefits of immunisation with such vaccines outweigh any potential risks of vaccination. This view concurs with that of the World Health Organisation.

Despite the strong evidence supporting the safety of mercury-containing vaccines, the European medicines regulatory body, the European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products (EMEA) continues to promote the development of vaccines without, or with the lowest possible levels of, mercury compounds. The CSM supports the EMEA position. In response to this, several UK licensed vaccines have had levels of such compounds reduced or removed completely from the manufacture of the component antigens or from the final vaccine.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 13 May 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Fraudulent Compensation Claims

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what procedures exist to prosecute fraudulent farmers who make claims for compensation from the European Union for sheep destroyed during the foot and mouth crisis. [172488]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* Ordinarily the Investigation Branch of DEFRA would investigate such an allegation and pass the evidence gathered to the Criminal Advisory and Prosecution Division of DEFRA. Prosecution lawyers in that Division would review the evidence and if there were a realistic prospect of conviction and it were also in the public interest to prosecute DEFRA would commence criminal proceedings in the criminal courts.

In the event of a conviction the prosecution would seek a compensation and/or confiscation order to compensate the loser for the financial loss and deprive the convicted person of the benefit from the offences proved.

Hazardous Waste

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what studies she has undertaken to evaluate the risk of additional transportation of hazardous waste as a result of the closure of hazardous waste treatment centres. [168373]

Mr. Morley: The Government recognise that with the expected reduction in the number of landfill sites taking hazardous waste from July 2004, hazardous waste could travel further in the short term. Nevertheless, it is recognised that even under the present system significant amounts of special waste travel across the country. In 2002, 42 per cent. of hazardous waste crossed a regional boundary. Government have not commissioned any specific studies to evaluate the forthcoming changes on this specific issue. Clearly in the longer term, the implementation of the Landfill Directive requirements will see an increase in treatment costs, which in turn will provide a greater incentive for hazardous waste minimisation and the use of more sustainable treatment technologies.

British Wildlife

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the health of Britain's wild animals. [169863]

Mr. Bradshaw: The broad stewardship of wildlife and specific policies on conservation and biodiversity are managed as part of Government's broader remit for the environment. In addition, through the UK Veterinary Surveillance Strategy launched last year, we will develop a better overview and understanding of the health of the health of Britain's wildlife in relation to its impact on public health and other animals.

Government, through its developing Animal Health and Welfare Strategy, recognises that there are a number of diseases of livestock where wildlife may act as a reservoir or a source of infection. Government has a role in science, research, intervention in some specific cases, and ensuring advice is available.

The Veterinary Surveillance Strategy provides a framework for ensuring the potential risks posed by wildlife to public health (through zoonotic disease) or to farmed livestock (for example from migrating birds) are effectively identified and managed. The Strategy will also cover the impact of disease control policies for farmed livestock on wildlife and certain welfare issues involving the protection from cruelty.

Where naturally occurring disease affecting animals in the wild occurs, Government have a role to ensure appropriate action is taken to monitor and manage the situation in accordance with the principles of the animal health and welfare strategy.

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) when she intends to reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 25 March with regard to Jenny Edwards; [172263]

(2) when she will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 25 March, with regard to Jenny Edwards. [170703]

Alun Michael: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State replied on 10 May.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she intends to reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 5 April with regard to Mr. Ian Boddison. [172264]

Alun Michael: I replied to the right hon. Member on 8 May.

Departmental Annual Report

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much the production of her Department's latest annual report cost; how many copies were printed; how many copies of it were sold at its cover price; to whom copies of the report have been provided free of charge; and how many copies were provided free of charge. [171140]

Alun Michael: The DEFRA Departmental Report 2004 cost Defra £66,070. This cost was for designing, typesetting and proofing of the report.

The Stationary Office Limited handled the printing of the document. They bore the full cost of printing and publishing of the document.

DEFRA does not have information on how many copies were printed and sold. The Stationary Office is not obliged to give us this information, and so soon after the Reports publication it does not yet have details of the number of reports sold. However they have been able to provide us with the numbers for the 2003 report, where they issued 514 copies.

DEFRA has purchased and distributed 600 copies of the 2004 Report for its own use. The bulk of these have been made available to the Senior Civil Service and other staff on request. In addition copies were sent to Parliament and the Forestry Commission.

The report is also freely available on the Department's intranet, which all staff can access. It is also available on DEFRA's website at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/deprep/default.htm.

Fisheries

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 27 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 861W, on fisheries, which member states have *(a)* an historic entitlement and *(b)* an entitlement without an historic track record to fish within the UK six to 12 miles zone; and whether those entitlements are transferable to any fishing vessel from that nation state. [172459]

Mr. Bradshaw: France, Belgium, Germany, Ireland and the Netherlands have a historical entitlement to fish in the UK six to 12 mile zone. No other member states have access to this zone.

Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-regional Strategy

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans *(a)* her Department and *(b)* the Environment Agency have for new water and sewerage infrastructure to serve the Aylesbury area in the context of the draft Milton Keynes and South Midlands sub-regional strategy; and what the (i) time scale for and (ii) cost of such works will be. [172162]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The Government are committed to ensuring that all the growth areas are equipped with the water and sewerage services and infrastructure necessary to guarantee the long-term health of these communities. To achieve this, we recognise the importance of involving the respective water undertakers and environmental regulators at an early stage in the development of proposals.

The Environment Agency has previously (June 2003) provided companies with draft breakdowns of the indicative housing numbers by sub-region and company area, to assist in draft Water Resource Plans work. But given the varying and quickly evolving extent of information available, the Water Resources Planning Guideline (issued by the Environment Agency to companies on how they should produce their water resources plans) is not prescriptive about how companies should take account of the sustainable communities plan. However, the Environment Agency report "Securing water supply" (November 2003) states that it will work with companies to understand the implications and that:

> 'Where appropriate companies should ensure that they have included the latest proposals in the sustainable communities initiative in their plans'.

The Environment Agency expects the water companies supplying the Milton Keynes/South Midlands area to provide their best available estimates of the impacts of the sustainable communities programme on their supply demand balance contained in their water resources plans. However, it is recognised that the next periodic review will have access to more definitive numbers.

Woodcraft Folk

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether any of the Department's *(a)* present and *(b)* previous staff are members of the Friends of the Woodcraft Folk. [170753]

Alun Michael: There are no records of staff being members of the Friends of the Woodcraft Folk. Staff are not required to register their private interests, such as membership of clubs or societies, unless these bring them into direct conflict with their official duties. In these cases, staff must declare their interest to senior managers, who will determine how best to proceed on a case-by-case basis.

DEFRA's staff are subject to the provisions of the Civil Service Code. This requires them to act with integrity, honesty, impartiality and objectivity in carrying out their duties and to conduct themselves in such a way as to deserve and retain the confidence of Ministers.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions have been held between her officials and Chichester district council about the Woodcraft Folk. [170755]

Alun Michael: The only discussions I am aware of relate to a campsite operated by the Woodcraft Folk in Lurgashall for which an approach was made for a camping exemption certificate. DEFRA has responsibility for camping exemption certificates under section 296 of the Public Health Act 1936. There were objections to the application and correspondence was received from the constituency MP and from MPs representing users of the campsite.

My officials held a meeting with members of the Woodcraft Folk, Chichester district council and Lurgashall parish council on 9 June 2003 to discuss the Woodcraft Folk's application for a camping exemption certificate.

The discussions demonstrated that there were differences of view regarding past usage of the site so I agreed to DEFRA's commissioning an independent mediator to facilitate a further discussion between the Woodcraft Folk and the two councils on 3 and 4 February 2004. In the light of the mediator's report, I agreed to issue a camping exemption certificate to the Woodcraft Folk for one year, subject to further discussion between the parties to resolve outstanding issues.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Early Retirement

Bob Spink: To ask the Leader of the House how many employees in his Office took early retirement, and at what total cost, in the last financial year. [172186]

Mr. Hain: In the last financial year no staff in my office have taken early retirement.

PRIME MINISTER

Iraq

Tom Cox: To ask the Prime Minister what discussions he has had with the United States Administration, and with whom, on the cases of abuse that have taken place against Iraqi prisoners at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [173075]

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Prime Minister what changes to the *(a)* political and *(b)* military strategy in Iraq are being considered by the (i) UK Government and (ii) US Administration as a consequence of the International Committee for the Red Cross report in February 2004. [173219]

The Prime Minister: Both President Bush and I have made clear that any abuse of human rights, torture or maltreatment of civilians in Iraq is wholly unacceptable and all cases will be dealt with.

TREASURY

Children's Fund

13. **Tim Loughton:** To ask The Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make a statement on his intentions for future funding for the children's fund. [172723]

Mr. Boateng: My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer said in his Budget statement that the children's fund will be continued to 2008 to allow a smooth transition to new children's trusts, which will be focused on preventative work and developed and delivered with the full engagement of the voluntary sector.

Tax Burden

14. **Mr. Jack:** To ask The Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make a statement on the distributional impact of the tax burden projections contained in the Financial Statement and Budget Report. [172724]

Ruth Kelly: The tax projections are based on macroeconomic assumptions set out in the Budget 2004 report. Estimating the distributional impact would require many more assumptions, which are unnecessary for our projections.

World Debt

15. **Mr. Ben Chapman:** To ask The Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions he held with international Finance Ministers on tackling world debt at the spring meetings of the IMF and World Bank. [172725]

John Healey: At the spring meetings of the IMF and World Bank, the Chancellor had various discussions with Finance Ministers. In addition to continuing to support countries in making progress through the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, it was recognised that there was an urgent need to support countries as they emerge from conflict and progress towards participation in the initiative.

It was also recognised that it was important to take forward work on the debt sustainability framework that the IMF and World Bank have proposed, in order to support long-term debt sustainability for poor countries.

However, debt relief alone is not sufficient. All HIPC countries will need additional aid to meet the millennium development goals (MDGS). That is why the UK's proposal for an international finance facility is so important. It can provide the much-needed substantial increase in resources—in the form of grants, concessional loans, or further debt relief—needed to attain the MDGS.

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what preparations he is making for discussions at the forthcoming meeting of the G7 Finance Ministers on tackling world debt. [172732]

John Healey: At the meeting of the G7 Finance Ministers, the Chancellor will be calling for the full implementation of the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) initiative, including additional relief to be provided to countries that have suffered economic shocks, in a full and timely manner. The Chancellor will also be calling for the HIPC initiative to be extended to ensure that eligible countries—many of which are in the process of exiting from conflict—are able to benefit from debt relief.

However, debt relief alone is not sufficient. All HIPC countries will need additional aid to meet the millennium development goals (MDGS.) The Chancellor will press the UK's proposal for an international finance facility, demonstrating that it can provide the much-needed substantial increase in aid—in the form of grants, concessional loans, or further debt relief—needed to attain the MDGS.

International Finance Facility

16. **Helen Jackson:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what consultations he has had with EU partners since 1 April regarding the international finance facility. [172726]

John Healey: The IFF proposal was discussed at the 8 April conference on Financing for Development which the Chancellor co-hosted with French Finance Minister Sarkozy, attended by representatives from over 55 countries including many of our EU partners. At the conference France reiterated its strong support for the initiative. We continue to build on this support with other EU countries in other fora.

17. **Ross Cranston:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress has been made on the international finance facility as a result of spring meetings with the IMF and World Bank. [172727]

John Healey: Good progress has been made in taking forward the IFF proposal at the Spring Meetings with a number of countries expressing their support. Following the developing country statement at the 8 April conference, both the G24 and African Governors endorsed the IFF and called on donors to implement the proposal. The World Bank's interim paper on Financing Modalities found that the IFF is technically feasible and concluded that frontloading of aid holds considerable attractions. Communiqués looked forward to reviewing the on-going joint World Bank and IMF work on aid effectiveness, absorptive capacity and, results-based measurement mechanisms, such as an IFF, at the Annual Meetings in September 2004.

House Prices

19. **Mr. Gordon Prentice:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what economic instruments are available to him to moderate the rise in house prices. [172730]

Ruth Kelly: In Budget 2003, the Chancellor noted that a reduction in housing market volatility would enhance macro-economic stability. He asked Kate Barker to review housing supply in the UK, and David Miles to review the UK mortgage market.

At the time of Budget 2004, both reviews presented their final reports. The Government have welcomed their analysis and recommendations for action.

As recommended in the Barker Review, the Government are implementing a programme of change to the planning system and to the delivery of development, consulting with stakeholders as necessary. The Government accept the case for releasing more resources to boost housing supply, improve affordability and lock in macro-economic stability, and will make a start in the forthcoming Spending Review.

The Government endorse David Miles' conclusion that urgent reform is desirable to make the UK mortgage market work better for consumers in a number of areas. The FSA has in train reforms in the mortgage market, which will move to statutory regulation on 31 October. The Chancellor has asked the FSA to consider and report on the further reforms proposed by David Miles.

Fuel Duty

20. **Mr. Chaytor:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has received concerning his proposed increase in fuel duty. [172731]

John Healey: Treasury Ministers receive a wide range of representations about all areas of taxation policy, both in the run-up to and after the Chancellor's annual Budget statement.

Financial Services Authority

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the *(a)* consultation papers and *(b)* other documents issued by the Financial Services Authority in each of the last five years, broken down by number of pages. [172901]

Ruth Kelly: The matters raised in this question are the responsibility of the Financial Services Authority (FSA), whose day-to-day operations are independent from Government control and influence. The Chairman of the FSA has offered to write to the hon. Member shortly, addressing the matters raised. Every FSA consultation paper can be found by year of publication on the FSA's website, together with other FSA documents.

Insurance Mediation Directive

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will make a statement on implementation of the EU Insurance Mediation Directive *(a)* in this country and *(b)* elsewhere in the EU; [172839]

(2) what new regulations will be required on insurance brokers in order for them to meet Financial Services Authority guidelines for the introduction of the Insurance Mediation Directive; [172938]

(3) if he will reduce the fee structure for the Insurance Mediation Directive; [172840]

(4) on what date the Financial Services Authority required authorisation of brokers under the Insurance Mediation Directive; and whether this is common to all EU countries; [172937]

(5) what assessment he has made of the impact on the number of insurance brokers of the introduction of the Insurance Mediation Directive. [172939]

Ruth Kelly: The UK has the largest insurance industry in Europe. Implementing the IMD is a key step in completing the single market in financial services, and will enhance consumer protection in an important sector of financial business. The UK market for selling insurance is competitive with many players giving customers wide choice, and this will continue in the new regime. Already thousands of firms have applied to the FSA for authorisation for the new regime.

The Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 requires the FSA to publish a cost-benefit analysis of its proposed rules and guidance. The FSA has published cost benefit analysis in each of its consultation papers, which includes analysis of the market impact on firms. These state that regulation might result in some reduction in the number of firms selling insurance. In particular they stated that some businesses for whom selling insurance was a marginal activity may withdraw from the market once subject to statutory regulation. However there will be thousands of firms in the market providing consumers with a wide choice. The FSA have estimated that around 20,000 new firms will come into regulation as a result of mortgage and general insurance regulation and the vast majority of these will be involved in general insurance business.

The Government have consulted widely on the regulatory regime, publishing a public consultation document including draft regulations and a draft regulatory impact assessment in October 2002. Following analysis of the responses to the consultation, Parliament approved legislation on 24 June 2003. The activities to be regulated are: introducing, proposing or carrying out other work preparatory to the conclusion of contracts of insurance; assisting in the administration

and performance of such contracts, in particular in the event of a claim; and concluding contracts of insurance. In drawing up its rules for insurance mediation, the FSA has carried out extensive public consultation on its rules. Further information is available from the FSA's website, www.fsa.gov.uk.

FSA regulation of insurance brokers will commence from 14 January 2005. This date is two years from the publication of the directive in the *Official Journal* of the European Communities. All member states have to implement the directive by this date.

In implementing the directive the Government and the FSA have worked closely with the industry to design a regulatory regime that takes account of market practice, and does not load the industry and ultimately the consumer with unnecessary costs. Both the Government and the FSA have been concerned to minimise the impact on smaller firms and sole traders.

The fees charged are a matter for the FSA. Application fees for insurance intermediaries have been set following consultation with the industry and are based on the volume of business undertaken. Up to 50 per cent. discount is offered for an early application together with further discount if the application is made electronically. Smaller intermediaries seeking authorisation could pay a fee of only £500. If a firm is already authorised by the FSA for other regulated activities, the application fee it would pay for IMD activities is halved. The periodic annual fee which will be charged by the FSA for on-going supervision of authorised intermediaries following the commencement of regulation has not yet been set and will be the subject of a forthcoming consultation this summer.

Monitoring the implementation of the IMD across the EU is a matter for the Commission. The UK has focused its efforts on the implementation of the IMD in the UK market. We do however have informal working level contacts with other member states.

Labour Statistics (Bootle)

Mr. Benton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people were employed in tourism-related jobs in Bootle on the latest date for which figures are available. [173145]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Joe Benton, dated 13 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about tourism-related jobs in Bootle. I am replying in his absence. (173145)

The latest available data, from the 2002 Annual Business Inquiry, shows that the total number of jobs in tourism related industries in Bootle Parliamentary Constituency was 1,700. This total is obtained by combining figures for those working in the following industries, as identified by Standard Industrial Classification 2003:

hotels

restaurants

bars

activities of travel agencies

libraries, archives, museums etc.

sporting activities

other recreational activities.

Military Expenditure

Mr. Best: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many taxpayers have sought to divert or withhold the proportion of their contribution going to military expenditure in the last three years. [167871]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available.

Mr. Best: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many representations entitled 'peace tax returns' have been received by the Treasury. [167872]

Dawn Primarolo: We have no central record of the number of representations received entitled 'peace tax returns'.

National Insurance

Paul Flynn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the current unneeded surplus is in the national insurance fund. [172728]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to table two on page six of the report by the Government Actuary on the drafts of the Social Security Benefits Up-rating Order 2004 and the Social Security (Contributions) (Re-rating and National Insurance Funds Payments) Order 2004 (CM6117).

Any surplus contributions are used to buy gilts on behalf of the fund.

Norwich Union

Jim Dowd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions he has had with the Association of British Insurers in the last 12 months in relation to the service provided by Norwich Union to its policy holders. [173223]

Ruth Kelly: Treasury Ministers and officials have meetings with a wide range of organisations and individuals as part of the process of policy development and analysis. As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings, as provided for under Exemption 7*(b)* of the "Code of Practice on Access to Government Information". Treasury meetings are conducted in accordance with the Ministerial Code and the Civil Service Code, as appropriate.

Pensions

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what he estimates the cost would be to the Exchequer under its proposed reform of pension taxation of imposing no annual limit on pension savings in the year 2006–07 and each of the subsequent three years. [172126]

Ruth Kelly: The annual allowance protects against large payments being made into a tax privileged pension scheme that might then be removed from the scheme without the imposition of tax. So there would therefore

be a cost attached to having no annual allowance under the proposed simplified pension regime—even if the lifetime allowance were retained.

The size of this cost depends upon behavioural effects and any estimate of cost would inevitably be very broad-brush. However, given the potential additional pension savings from those in the top 1 per cent. of the earnings distribution, plus the possibility of the additional scope for tax avoidance or evasion, the cost to the Exchequer could be up to several hundred million pounds over this period.

Stability and Growth Pact

Mr. David: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress is being made in discussions at a European level about the stability and growth pact. [172729]

Ruth Kelly: The Government continue to emphasise the need for a prudent interpretation of the stability and growth pact, taking into account the economic cycle, sustainability and the important role of public investment.

The Government published alongside Budget 2004 a discussion paper comparing our British fiscal framework with the rules of the European Union's stability and growth pact, examining the principles, based on our experience, which should guide the evolution of fiscal policy.

Statistics (Stockton, South)

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many businesses in Stockton South have benefited from the 100 per cent. tax exemption for the purchase of computer and internet equipment. [171467]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer which was given to the hon. Member for Huntingdon (Mr. Djanogly) on 5 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1505W.

VAT

Claire Ward: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to reduce VAT on devices which improve safety in the home. [171886]

John Healey: Member states are permitted only to introduce reduced rates of VAT from the prescribed list of goods and services as set out in Annex H of the EC Sixth VAT Directive. There is no general provision in Annex H for devices which improve safety in the home.

But Annex H does allow a reduced rate for certain works to housing and the Government have used this to introduce a reduced rate of VAT for the grant-funded installation of certain security measures (for example window and door-locks and smoke alarms), when installed at the same time as energy saving materials or central heating systems also paid for by a qualifying grant. Qualifying grants are targeted at people aged 60 or over and those receiving specified benefits, so the related reduced rate is similarly well targeted at those who need help most.

The UK's existing zero rates also cover a number of measures that contribute to safety in the home, such as burglar alarms and security lights, but only if they are installed in new homes at the time of construction.

A review of the reduced rate provisions is currently under way in Europe and the Government have made clear in these negotiations that we will not agree to the removal of any of our zero and reduced rate VAT derogations.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Historical Papers

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether all the documents relating to the murder of Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson MP in 1922 are now in the public domain; and if he will make a statement. [170548]

Mr. Leslie: Records kept by several Government Departments relating to the murder of Field Marshall Sir Henry Wilson in London in June 1922 are available for public inspection in the National Archives. A search of the National Archives' electronic catalogue did not reveal any documents unavailable for public inspection.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether all official documents relating to Rudolf Hess are now in the public domain; and if he will make a statement. [170549]

Mr. Leslie: A search of the National Archives' electronic catalogue provides details of records relating to the career of Rudolf Hess originating from several Government Departments and now kept at Kew. All of this material appears to be available for public consultation. Since Mr. Hess did not die until 1987, it is quite possible that more material relating to him is still held in Government Departments, in accordance with the 30-year rule and other provisions of the Public Records Acts.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs which documents relating to the late Duke of Windsor are withheld from public inspection in the Public Records Office, broken down by category; and if he will make a statement. [170541]

Mr. Leslie: Many public records relating to the Duke of Windsor, including some concerning his career after the Abdication in December 1936, were made available to the public for the first time on 30 January 2003. Further information about these and other records relating to the Duke kept at the National Archives can be obtained from its electronic catalogue on the internet at http://catalogue.pro.gov.uk. A search of the catalogue has not revealed any reference to the Duke's career which is not available for public consultation.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether all the documents relating to the death of the late Duke of Kent in 1942, with particular reference to

the itinerary of his final projected journey, are now in the public domain and available for inspection; and if he will make a statement. [170544]

Mr. Leslie: The National Archives holds some correspondence and papers relating to the Duke of Kent's fatal air crash in Caithness in August 1942, mainly among the Air Ministry records. It is not aware of any significant body of material concerning this matter in other public archives.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs which documents referring to personalities and events relating to the conflict in Ireland between 1919 and 1923 are withheld from inspection at the Public Records Office; and if he will make a statement. [170545]

Mr. Leslie: There is a considerable amount of material relating to the conflict in Ireland during this period, mainly but not exclusively among the historical records of the Cabinet Office, the War Office, the Colonial Office and the Home Office, now kept at the National Archives. It is not possible to supply a definitive answer concerning the availability of all this material without incurring disproportionate cost, but initial searches in the National Archives' electronic catalogue indicate that only a very few of the relevant files are not now open to public inspection.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs which documents relating to the Irish plenipotentiaries who negotiated the Treaty of 1921 with the United Kingdom Government are withheld from pubic inspection in the Public Records Office; and if he will make a statement. [170546]

Mr. Leslie: There is a full official record of the negotiations between the British Government and the Irish plenipotentiaries, which resulted in the Treaty of 6 December 1921, among the Cabinet Office records now kept at the National Archives, in particular series CAB 21, CAB 24, CAB 27 and CAB 43. These records are open for public consultation.

The Royal Irish Constabulary's file on Michael Collins, one of the leading plenipotentiaries, covering the period 1916–1920, is also publicly available (reference: CO 904/196).

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs which documents that relate to Anthony Blunt are withheld from public inspection in the Public Record Office, broken down by category; and if he will make a statement. [170547]

Mr. Leslie: An initial search of the electronic catalogue relating to public records kept by the National Archives does not reveal any records relating to Anthony Blunt which are not open to public inspection. However, since he remained a prominent public figure until his death in 1983, it is quite possible that some material relating to him held by Government Departments has yet to be transferred to the National Archives, in accordance with the 30-year rule and other provisions of the Public Records Acts.

British-Irish Council

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the role of the British-Irish Council is in monitoring and co-ordinating the implementation of the provisions of the Charter for Regional and Minority Languages. [168815]

Mr. Lammy: The British-Irish Council does not have a role in monitoring and co-ordinating the implementation of the provision of the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages. This is a matter for the Council of Europe and each of the Charter's ratified signatories. (Out of the BIC Members, only the UK and Ireland are members of the Council of Europe, and the UK is the only ratified signatory to the Charter.)

The British-Irish Council however has a sectoral working group looking at Indigenous, Minority and Lesser-Used Languages, led by the Welsh Assembly Government. The work of the BIC in this area will complement current UK initiatives in respect of the Charter.

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs when he intends to reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 25 March with regard to Mr. Martin Rathfelder. [172259]

Mr. Lammy: The Secretary of State and Lord Chancellor wrote to the right hon. Member on 4 May in response to his letter of 25 March.

Legal Aid

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on the dispute with the Bar over legal aid in criminal trials. [169800]

Mr. Lammy: Very high cost criminal cases (VHCCCs) represent around 1 per cent. of all Crown court cases but take up (currently) around 51 per cent. of Crown court expenditure (£250–300 million). Over the last three years the percentage increase in the cost of the most expensive 1,000 criminal cases in each year has been 14 per cent. The new contracting scheme, which now applies to all these cases, introduces greater control and works on the basis of fixed rates for both barristers and solicitors. Cases are paid for as each stage is completed. That is an advantage from the lawyer's point of view over the former system where cases are on average paid two years after their start.

The Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs and I are concerned about the refusal by barristers to take on some very high cost criminal cases (VHCCCs) under the contracting regime which now applies to all cases. We have therefore set up a Review Committee with the Bar and Law Society to examine the VHCCC regime and report by 28 May 2004. The committee also includes the Legal Services Commission, the Treasury and the Crown Prosecution Service. I am pleased to note that

the Chairman of the Bar has written to his members to help ensure that the essential public interest priorities are met pending the outcome of the review.

The VHCCC Review Committee met for the first time on 26 April, under the chairmanship of Ian Magee CB (Second Permanent Secretary at the Department of Constitutional Affairs, and Chief Executive, Operations with responsibility for legal aid). There was a useful exchange of views between the Bar, the Law Society, my Department and the Crown Prosecution Service and a programme of rapid work has been agreed, which should enable a full report to be prepared by 28 May.

The Review Committee's terms of reference are:

"To examine the workings so far of the very high cost criminal case regime and to make recommendations on how its procedures and structures might be improved to provide a better service to clients and a better system for those working within it.

The Review should consider:

the management and bureaucracy of the Scheme, including the balance between cost management and professional judgment;

whether there are opportunities to rebalance payments in the scheme to address anomalies;

the validity of the categories;

whether there would be advantage in extending the upper threshold of the graduated fee scheme (i.e. whether the graduated

The Review is to report on 28 May, unless parties agree to extend.

There is no commitment on the part of the Government to fund any measures, which would have the effect of increasing overall legal aid expenditure. But if the length of cases reduces overall, this may be reflected in increased rates."

Legal Aid (NHS Cases)

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many *(a)* patients and *(b)* patients' families have received legal aid support for disputes with NHS trusts in the last five years. [166692]

Mr. Lammy: The information requested is not directly available. The Legal Services Commission's computer systems do not record the status of the person receiving legal aid nor do they indicate who the dispute is against. However, the Commission is able to provide figures for the number of funding certificates where the Commission has granted Legal Representation for actual or potential clinical negligence proceedings. The figures are not necessarily reflective of the number of individuals involved:

	Number
1998–99	7,867
1999–2000	7,375
2000–01	7,329
2001–02	7,309
2002–03	6,307

The Commission has figures for the pre-representation legal advice and assistance stage only from April 2001. These are as follows—again the figures are not necessarily reflective of the number of individuals involved:

	Number
2000–01	4,550
2001–02	4,903
2002–03	4,554

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Anti-social Behaviour

Chris Ruane: To ask the Solicitor-General which areas will be covered by the new anti-social behaviour prosecutors; and what mechanisms are in place for spreading best practice in combating antisocial behaviour. [172930]

The Solicitor-General: The twelve Areas covered by the new anti-social behaviour prosecutors are: Northumbria, Lancashire, South Yorkshire, Merseyside, Manchester, West Mercia, Birmingham, South Wales, Avon and Somerset, Sussex, Kent and London (North Sector).

The specialist prosecutors will be responsible for prosecuting anti-social behaviour cases and seeking orders on conviction.

Best practice is shared on a regular basis via a central project team and a dedicated Crown Prosecution Service intranet bulletin board. The expert prosecutors will be holding regular meetings with the Attorney General where they will circulate local good practice and feed back practitioner impact.

Those CPS Areas not included in the scope of the current project have now appointed lead anti-social behaviour prosecutors.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Regional Tourism

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much funding for tourism has been made available to each regional development agency (RDA) in the current year; and how much of this funding each RDA passed on *(a)* to its regional tourist board, *(b)* to local authorities, *(c)* to local and regional businesses and *(d)* for use for marketing. [172389]

Mr. Caborn: In 2004–05, the RDAs will receive £3.6 million specifically for tourism as follows:

	Amount (£)
Advantage West Midlands	252,000
East of England Development Agency	543,000
East Midlands Development Agency	252,000
North West Development Agency	713,000
One North East	333,000
South East Development Agency	744,000
South West Regional Development Agency	403,000
Yorkshire Forward	360,000

This money is ring-fenced for the Regional Tourist Boards until the end of 2005–06. Those regions which no longer work with an RTB have sought the Department's approval to pass the money to other designated tourism

delivery bodies. The RDAs will determine what objectives and targets the RTBs or other organisations should meet in return for the funds, working as appropriate with local authorities and businesses.

In the North East, ONE has taken over the core functions of the former Northumbria Tourist Board, and will retain the funding on the basis that it is ring-fenced for this purpose. In the North West, the NWDA has established four destination management organisations to take over the role of the former NW Tourist Board.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Disabled Facilities Grant

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment has been carried out of the effectiveness of abolishing the Disabled Facilities Grant means test for children in Northern Ireland. [172874]

Mr. Spellar: The abolition of the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) means-test for parents of children with disabilities came into effect from 16 February 2004. It is therefore too early for any assessment of effectiveness to be carried out. The working group which was set up to look at the matter considered the potential impact of the abolition in terms of cost to the Government and numbers who could be helped by the abolition. It was estimated that 25–30 applications for DFG are withdrawn each year due to the high contribution.

Homelessness

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* homeless and *(b)* other people living rough there are in Northern Ireland. [171798]

Mr. Spellar: The exact number of people "living rough" is unknown. However, a survey early this year estimated that between 20 and 30 people who frequently use Housing Executive funded Outreach services could be regarded as "living rough". The survey did not, however, attempt to determine whether they were statutorily homeless or not. This is a very small percentage compared the number of households on the Housing Executive's waiting list registered as homeless which at 31 March 2004 stood at 5,287.

Sports Grounds

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the status of the Safe Sports Grounds funding made available for essential health and safety work to stadia in Northern Ireland; and how much funding has been made available *(a)* in each of the past three years and *(b)* since January for this purpose. [170249]

Angela Smith: The Interim Safe Sports Grounds Scheme ended in March 2003 and the Sports Council for Northern Ireland is currently planning development of a new Sports Grounds Development Programme, the main purpose of which is to address the long-term health and safety deficiencies of major sports grounds in Northern Ireland. Government funding made available for the health and safety work to Northern Ireland stadia in each of the last three financial years.

£ million

Financial year	*Amount made available*
2001–02	0.5
2002–03	1
2003–04	Nil

SCOTLAND

Chernobyl

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many farms in Scotland, comprising what land areas and in what locations, have restrictions applied to them in respect of land use as a result of the residual radioactivity from the Chernobyl nuclear accident. [169878]

Mrs. McGuire: This is a devolved matter within the responsibility of the Scottish Executive, who are advised by the Food Standards Agency. However, the following table from the Food Standards Agency shows the number of farms in Scotland, their location and area of land covered by restrictions on the movement of sheep as a result of the residual radioactivity from the Chernobyl nuclear accident. There have been no restrictions on land use as a result of the Chernobyl accident.

Restrictions in Scotland at 30 April 2004

	Number
Number of Farms	14
Land Area (hectares)	16,300
Location	[1]

[1] South West and Central Scotland.

Departmental Expenditure (Entertainment)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what his latest estimate is of the amount spent by his Department on official entertainment in each year from 1996–97 to 2004–05. [169103]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office was established on 1 July 1999.

Since that date the Office has spent the following on hospitality and entertainment:

	£000
1999–2000	[1]10,638
2000–01	41,638
2001–02	25,789
2002–03	41,782
2003–04[2]	25,969

[1] Part-year cost.

[2] Estimate.

Note:

Expenditure for 2004–05 is expected to be of a similar order to 2003–04.

Nuclear Power Plants (Air Security)

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Transport in respect of the breach of the air exclusion zone around the Chapel Cross nuclear plant this year; and what steps have been taken to improve air security around the plant. [171650]

Mr. Timms: I have been asked to reply.

My officials have discussed this matter with the Ministry of Defence, who have confirmed that no breach of the air exclusion zone at the Chapel Cross nuclear power station has taken place.

Telephone Costs

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what his Department's expenditure on *(a)* fixed and *(b)* mobile telephones was in each of the last five years. [165967]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office was established on 1 July 1999.

Since that date the Office has spend the following on telephone costs.

£000

	Fixed lines	*Mobile telephones*
1999–2000	[1]36,622	[1]6,760
2000–01	85,483	14,275
2001–02	86,697	11,850
2002–03	81,756	7,216
2003–04[2]	82,131	6,646

[1] Part-year costs.

[2] Estimate.

Note:

The costs in 2000–01, 2001–02 reflect the additional expense of purchase mobile telephone equipment.

Timber

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland whether his Department plans to contribute financially to the establishment of the second phase of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [167617]

Mrs. McGuire: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Minister for Environment, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 31W.

TRANSPORT

British Transport Police

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many British Transport Police officers have been assaulted while on duty in each year since 1997. [171902]

Mr. McNulty: The British Transport Police (BTP) have provided the following information on officers assaulted while on duty in each year since 1997:

	Number of Officers assaulted
1997–98	187
1998–99	184
1999–2000	194
2000–01	227
2001–02	227
2002–03	213
2003–04	267

Car Sharing

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what research his Department has conducted into car-sharing schemes; and if he will place copies of such research findings in the Library; [172290]

(2) what plans his Department has to provide guidance for local transport plans relating to car-sharing schemes. [172291]

Mr. McNulty: Research into the effectiveness of car sharing and other travel plan measures was published in 2002 in "Making Travel Plans Work: Research Report", copies of which were placed in the Library.

Last year, the Department commissioned research into the influence of soft factors on travel demand. The final report, which will include a chapter on car sharing, is expected to be completed shortly and copies will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Following a commitment made in the Government's Response to the Motorist's Forum Report on car sharing and car clubs on 3 December 2002, *Official Report*, column 72WS, the Department has commissioned research into best practice in setting up formal car sharing and car club schemes in closed communities. From the research, we will provide new guidance for local authorities, schools and employers on the effective implementation of car share schemes. The research and guidance is expected to be completed in October and copies will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the locations of high occupancy vehicle lanes are; and how long each lane is. [172293]

Mr. McNulty: There are high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes operating in two local authorities in England: two lengths of HOV lane in Leeds totalling 1.5 km and four lengths totalling 1.9 km in South Gloucester.

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department has collated on the effectiveness of high occupancy vehicle lanes. [172294]

Mr. McNulty: The HOV lanes on Stanningley Road in Leeds are included as one of the case studies in the Bus Partnership Forum's Resource Pack "Bus Priority—The Way Ahead" published by the Department in September 2003. This reports the results of an evaluation of the HOV lanes carried out by Leeds City Council.

Dual Carriageways (Nottinghamshire)

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the construction of the A46 dual carriageway improvement between Newark and Widmerpool in Nottinghamshire to begin. [171518]

Dr. Howells: The future programme depends on funding and how quickly the various statutory processes can be completed but we currently expect that start of works will be in 2007 with the road opening to traffic in 2009.

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the construction of the A453 dual carriageway improvement between Clifton in Nottinghamshire and Kegworth to begin. [171519]

Dr. Howells: The future programme depends on funding and how quickly the various statutory processes can be completed but we currently expect that start of works will be in 2008–09 with the road opening to traffic in 2011.

East-West Rail Route

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the Government's policy on the proposed Western Section (Oxford to Bedford) of the East-West Rail route. [172170]

Mr. McNulty: The East-West Rail Consortium (a group of local authorities along the route, working in partnership with the regional assembly and the regional development agencies) has now put forward an updated business case for the Bedford to Bletchley section of the East West Rail Link. This proposal involves upgrading and re-opening the line between Oxford and Bedford. Officials at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are considering the updated business case, particularly in light of the potential impact of the scheme on the delivery of the Sustainable Communities Plan. The Strategic Rail Authority is also considering the Bedford to Bletchley business case. Any appraisal will need to be considered against other priorities—and in the context of the financial constraints on the industry at the present time.

Light Rapid Transit

Mr. Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will make an announcement of his decision on the Light Rapid Transit project between Fareham, Gosport and Portsmouth. [172376]

Mr. McNulty: A decision will be announced in due course.

London Underground PPP

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which management consultants undertook work for *(a)* his Department and its predecessor and *(b)* London Underground in respect of the London Underground Public Private Partnership; and if he will list the total payments in each management consultancy company. [171222]

Mr. McNulty: During procurement of the Public Private Partnership (PPP) the Department and London Underground made joint use of external advisers wherever possible to keep costs to a minimum. Management consultants used on the PPP were PricewaterhouseCoopers, Arthur Andersen, PA Consulting, KPMG, Hornagold & Hills and Ernst & Young. The value of work done by individual consultants and advisers is commercially confidential. London Underground's total expenditure for all external advice on the PPP—including management consultancy, legal, financial, engineering and operational advice—was £103.5 million. The Department had separately spent £1.5 million on external advice.

MOT Computerisation

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress has been made in the testing of the MOT computerisation system by VOSA and Siemens Business Systems. [172132]

Mr. Jamieson: Siemens Business Services have fully completed four cycles of Main System Test and are in the process of completing a fifth. Trial stage 1 (VOSA Acceptance Testing) is due to begin on 21 June 2004.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress has been made with the planned two-month volunteer MOT trial at 50 garages. [172133]

Mr. Jamieson: Trials at 45 stations are due to begin on 2 August 2004.

Volunteers have been sought and applicants are being sifted. Those who have been selected to conduct these initial trials will be notified shortly

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the MOT computerisation programme will be installed in 1,000 MOT garages as planned; when the service is due to go live; and when it will be rolled out to other MOT garages. [172134]

Mr. Jamieson: The service is due to be rolled out and trialled in 1,000 MOT stations from, 27 September 2004 onwards. These stations will trial the service in parallel with, operating the current test administration protocols.

The service is due to be rolled out to all MOT stations, and go live, from 29 November 2004.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the planned series of MOT computerisation seminars will take place; and what these seminars are planned to do. [172135]

Mr. Jamieson: VOSA runs a series of national MOT seminars each year. The subject of the 2004 round of seminars was MOT Computerisation; they took place between January and April. The seminars facilitate two-way communications between VOSA and the trade on issues relating to MOT testing. No further seminars are planned before roll-out starts to all stations.

Productivity and Costs

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his policy is for *(a)* increasing the productivity and *(b)* cutting the costs of (i) his Department and (ii) its agencies and non-departmental public bodies. [172182]

Mr. McNulty: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 148–49W. The Department for Transport has been working on proposals to meet the Chancellor's efficiency target. These proposals will be finalised as part of the 2004 Spending Review.

Public Transport (Wirral, South)

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the effect of investment in railway improvements over the next 10 years upon residents of Wirral South. [172693]

Mr. McNulty: Merseyrail which operates local services in Wirral, South is a consistently high performer. Residents of Wirral, South will also benefit from the West Coast Main Line upgrade and the new TransPennine Express franchise to make fast inter-city journeys out of Liverpool. The TransPennine Express franchise, which commenced in February secures investment of around £260 million, which will include the introduction of a new fleet of 100 mph diesel trains leading to increased capacity, improved service quality and performance across the region.

Railway Crimes

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many crimes of a sexual nature were committed on the railways in each year since 1997. [171910]

Mr. McNulty: The British Transport Police (BTP) have provided the following information on how many crimes of a sexual nature were committed on the railways in each year since 1997:

Total number of offences recorded

	England and Wales	*Scotland*
1997–98	719	37
1998–99	1,185	29
1999–2000	1,079	34
2000–01	1,009	31
2001–02	1,020	34
2002–03	1,003	29
2003–04	1,120	36

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many arrests have been made by the British Transport Police on railway property in each year since 1997. [171911]

Mr. McNulty: The British Transport Police (BTP) have provided the following information on arrests made on railway property in each year since 1999; information is not readily available for earlier than 1999.

	Total number of arrests
1999–2000	6,393
2000–01	6,788
2001–02	7,049
2002–03	7,434
2003–04	8,151

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many arrests have been made by the British Transport Police in each year since 1997 for suspected crimes committed on property other than the railways. [171912]

Mr. McNulty: The British Transport Police (BTP) have provided the following information on arrests made for crimes committed on property other than the railways since 1997.

Arrests made for other forces including Scottish forces

	Total number of arrests
1997–98	1,119
1998–99	1,513
1999–2000	1,174
2000–01	1,175
2001–02	1,000
2002–03	760
2003–04	1,224

Railway Stations

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how many stations are not served by at least one train in each direction on one or more weekdays each week; [171941]

(2) which stations are not served by trains on *(a)* Saturdays and *(b)* Sundays; [171942]

(3) which stations are served by one train a week in each direction; [171943]

(4) which stations are served by fewer than 14 trains a week. [171944]

Mr. McNulty: The information is not readily available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost because it would involve very detailed analysis of the National Rail Timetable, table by table.

Railway Travel Bans

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many individuals have been banned from travelling on the railways in each year since 1997. [171905]

Mr. McNulty: The British Transport Police (BTP) has only had the power to apply for ASBOs (antisocial behaviour orders) since December 2003. Since then the BTP have successfully applied for 52 orders. There are also presently 30 suspects who have football banning orders that stop people from travelling on the railway on certain match days.

Rural Bus Services

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the numbers of (i) rural bus services and (ii) rural bus passengers during the last five years. [172518]

Mr. McNulty: We monitor annually the number of services supported by local authorities with funds provided under the Rural Bus Subsidy Grant (RBSG) scheme and the number of passenger journeys made on these services. In 1998, the year the grant was introduced, it provided 850 new and enhanced services, rising to over 2,100 services in 2002–03. In 2002–03 26 million passenger journeys were supported in England through RBSG.

We have commissioned research into the impact of the Department's two funding streams for rural bus services, RBSG and the Rural Bus Challenge. A report is on the Department's website.

We also monitor the accessibility of rural communities to bus services through the National Travel Survey. The latest Survey published in December 2003 shows 48 per cent. of rural households to be within a 10 minutes walk of an hourly or better bus service compared to 39 per cent. in the 1997–1999 Survey. This shows the position for all bus services, including those supported by RBSG.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much Government funding has been provided for rural bus services in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [172519]

Mr. McNulty: The following table shows specific rural bus funding provided by Government since 1998 the year each of the funding schemes concerned were introduced:

£ million

	Countryside Agency grants[1]	*Rural Bus Challenge*[2]	*Rural Bus Subsidy Grant*	*Total*
1998–99	2.3	11.4	24.1	37.8
1999–2000	3.3	16.8	32.0	52.1
2000–01	4.8	21.2	32.3	58.2
2001–02	7.5	20.5	41.2	69.2
2002–03	13.5	20.0	47.3	80.8
2003–04	35	20.3	48.4	103.7

[1] Countryside Agency Grants 1998–2000 Rural Transport Partnership (RTF) and Rural Transport Development Fund, since 2001 RTF and Parish Transport Grant.
[2] Rural Bus Challenge funding awarded for projects typically lasting 2–3 years.

In addition local transport authorities use some of their general funding to subsidise socially necessary local bus services in rural areas, and Bus Service Operators Grant is paid to bus operators and community transport providers.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the expected level of subsidy for rural bus services for future years. [172520]

Mr. McNulty: As announced in the 2003 Budget, Rural Bus Subsidy Grant will continue until April 2006. Allocations to local authorities for 2005–06 will be announced in due course. Decisions on the grant beyond that year, and on the future of the Rural Bus Challenge scheme, will be announced following completion of the current review of bus subsidies and the Government's Spending Review.

Shell Haven

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the risk relating to explosives remaining on the SS Richard Montgomery in the Thames from the possible operation of Shell Haven Port; and if he will make a statement. [172560]

Mr. Jamieson: The main Yantlet shipping channel is over 2 km from the wreck of the SS Richard Montgomery, and is separated by the extensive Nore Sands sandbank. This whole area lies within Port of London Authority jurisdiction, and they have undertaken a risk assessment of the whole London Gateway Project. This suggests that there would be no additional risk from vessel movements which could not be handled by the Vessel Traffic Services.

Special Advisers

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many special advisers and political advisers were employed by his Department and its predecessors in each year since 1997. [171962]

Mr. McNulty: The following table states the numbers of special advisers employed in the Department for Transport and its predecessors since 1997.

	Title of Department	*Number of special advisers in post*
2004	Department for Transport	1
2003	Department for Transport	2
2002	Department for Transport	2
2001	Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions	2
2000	Department for Environment, Transport and the Regions	1
1999	Department for Environment, Transport and the Regions	1
1998	Department for Environment, Transport and the Regions	2
1997	Department for Environment, Transport and the Regions	2

Speed Cameras

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many cameras at legacy sites meet the Government's criteria for the siting of speed cameras; and if he will make a statement. [171892]

Mr. Jamieson: These safety camera sites were established before the current criteria for location of new safety cameras, under the guidance contained in the 1992 Circular 'Use of technology for traffic enforcement: Guidance on deployment', which asked highway authorities to base sites on systematic analysis of accident statistics, but did not set quantified criteria.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much money raised through speed cameras has been returned to the Treasury in each year since 2001; and if he will make a statement. [171893]

Mr. Jamieson: Safety Camera Partnerships operating within the cost recovery scheme returned £6,281,051 of their receipts resulting from fixed penalty fines to the Treasury in 2001–02. The figures for 2002–03 will be available shortly. All fine receipts resulting from safety cameras operated outside the cost recovery scheme accrue to the Treasury. I am advised by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary that information on the amount of these receipts relating to convictions from safety cameras is not separately identifiable.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many legacy camera sites maintained cameras with film in them on 31 March. [171921]

Mr. Jamieson: Any safety camera housing may have a camera operating in it at any time, deployment of cameras around safety camera sites is a police operational matter.

Timber

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether his Department plans to contribute financially to the establishment of the second phase of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [167619]

Mr. McNulty: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Minister for the Environment and Agri-Environment on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 31W.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bangladesh

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what action the Department is taking to implement the aid and assistance work it is undertaking with regard to the Second Primary Education Development Programme in Bangladesh in other countries *(a)* within South East Asia and *(b)* in the rest of the developing world. [172501]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Second Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP2) in Bangladesh is distinctive in that it is part of a sector wide programme supported by all donors. It thus replaces all previous separate education projects funded by donors. It is Government led, with donor inputs coordinated by a joint donor office headed by the lead donor, the Asian development bank. DFID is one of the largest donors having approved £100 million over six years. The programme is focused on improving access and quality in primary education.

PEDP2 is in the early stages of implementation. As the programme progresses we will disseminate lessons learnt to other parts of South East Asia and other developing countries where primary education is a priority sector. Harmonised support for sector wide programmes in education is DFID's preferred way of working and similar programmes are currently running, or being developed in, many of the over 30 developing countries, mostly in South Asia and in sub-Saharan Africa, where DFID supports primary education for all children.

Burma (EU Sanctions)

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the impact of EU sanctions on Burma. [171692]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The EU Common Position was strengthened last year, in response to the violent attack on and subsequent detention of Aung San Suu Kyi and other members of the National League for Democracy (NLD). DFID considers that the effect of EU measures do have a real impact on the military regime. They signal how seriously the EU takes the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) breaches of international standards of behaviour and helps to provide support for the pro-democracy forces.

The EU Common Position aims to apply targeted sanctions against the regime to persuade the SPDC of the need for political progress, but as far as is possible, to avoid measures which hurt the ordinary Burmese people.

In keeping with the EU Common Position, DFID spent £3.4 million during 2003–04 on initiatives largely focussed on HIV/Aids and health services for the poor and on refugees. DFID's future focus will be on these areas, as well as on food security, and quality basic education for poor people. DFID has consulted with the NLD about our approach and focus.

Child Mortality (Pakistan and India)

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the latest under five mortality rate is in *(a)* Pakistan and *(b)* India. [172455]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The World Bank 2003 Development Indicators records the following for under five mortality:

(a) 109 per 1,000 live births in Pakistan in 2001, and

(b) 93 per 1,000 live births in India in 2001.

Commission for Africa

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the budget is for the Commission for Africa, broken down by *(a)* staffing costs, *(b)* consultancy costs, *(c)* communication costs, *(d)* expenses and *(e)* other available budget headings. [172562]

Hilary Benn: The budget for the Commission for Africa will not be finally agreed until Commissioners have drawn up their work plans in consultation with the Commission for Africa Secretariat. This will take place over the coming month. Following these discussions the overall budget may increase and the allocation between budget headings change. The current breakdown over 14 months is:

(a) staffing costs (including salaries, staff travel, training and office costs): £1,115,000;

(b) consultancy costs: currently there is no budget heading covering consultancies, but we plan to use the £700,000 originally earmarked for Commissioners' staff for this purpose;

(c) communication costs: currently there is no budget heading covering communication costs, though we have allocated £20,000 for the production of the final report;

(d) expenses: staff travel is included within the staffing costs budget heading. The allocation for Commissioners' travelling expenses is £144,000;

(e) Consultation meetings across Africa and elsewhere on the work of the Commission: £1,200,000;

(f) Commission meeting costs (venue hire, meal booking, press conference costs, transcription, vehicle hire, security): £240,000.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) how many people the Commission for Africa will employ when it is fully staffed; [172563]

(2) how many people the Commission for Africa employs. [172561]

Hilary Benn: The Secretariat to the Commission for Africa currently consists of 14 full-time members of staff and is looking to recruit up to six more people over the next month, which will bring the staff total to 20. More staff may be recruited over the coming year to undertake expert analysis.

Democratic Republic of Congo

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the outcomes were of the discussions that the Minister had with President Kabila, Vice President Ruberwa, Vice President Bemba and Foreign Minister Ghonda on his recent trip to the Democratic Republic of Congo. [172503]

Hilary Benn: I visited the DRC recently to discuss the transition process with the President and Vice-Presidents. We agreed that the TNG and the international community needed to focus on making the transition work by addressing the critical security issues and establishing the necessary stable environment for the elections planned for next year.

Departmental Procurement

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what percentage of the *(a)* crockery, *(b)* cutlery and *(c)* glassware procured by his Department over the last five years is of British manufacture. [170803]

Hilary Benn: All procurement decisions are taken on grounds of value for money. Crockery, cutlery and glassware for our staff restaurants are purchased by our catering contractors, who have operated our current London staff restaurant for 2½ years. All of the crockery and cutlery purchased was manufactured in Great Britain. Glassware is of French origin. Information regarding procurement by our previous contractors is not readily available and could be obtained only by incurring a disproportionate cost.

Early Retirement

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many employees in his Department took early retirement, and at what total cost, in the last financial year. [172176]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: In the last financial year there were 19 early retirements from DFID. One retirement was on medical grounds with the remainder on compulsory terms.

The total cost of these early retirements will be £1,609,274.97 of which £935,024.79 was paid during 2003–04.

Education Workers (Overseas Recruitment)

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance his Department's overseas offices offer to UK-based recruitment agencies in the recruitment of education workers from overseas; and how many staff in his Department were involved in offering such assistance on the latest date for which figures are available. [171500]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID overseas offices have not offered such assistance.

Iraq

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what reports he has received concerning the adequacy of firefighting outfits used by Iraqi firefighters; what assessment he has made of the asbestos-lined suit they use; what plans he has to provide urgent and direct aid to upgrade the quality of the firefighters' outfit; and if he will make a statement. [172278]

Hilary Benn: DFID has received no information on, nor undertaken any assessment of, the adequacy of Iraqi fire fighters' suits. Our plans for assistance to Iraq do not include the upgrading of fire fighters' suits.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what arrangements are in place for accountability of the Coalition Development Fund for Iraq; what demands for accountability have been made by the Independent Monitoring Board; what the policy is of *(a)* the UK Government and *(b)* the Coalition Provisional Authority on each demand; what has happened to the £7.6 billion surplus from the oil-for-food programme which was transferred to the Coalition Development Fund; and if he will make a statement. [172280]

Hilary Benn: All funds in the Development Fund for Iraq are subject to audit by the International Advisory and Monitoring Board (IAMB), created under UN Security Council Resolution 1483. The role of the Board is to ensure that the Development Fund for Iraq is used in a transparent manner for the benefit of the people of Iraq, and that export sales of petroleum, petroleum products, and natural gas from Iraq are made consistent with prevailing international market best practices. The Board consists of representatives of the UN, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

DFID is unaware of any specific demands for accountability from the IAMB. As recorded in the statement following their 23 April meeting (www.iamb.info) the IAMB continue to work closely with the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) and others in the achievement of their objectives.

Surplus funds received from the oil-for-food programme, above those required to complete existing contracts, are paid into the Development Fund for Iraq. Like other funds, including oil revenues, seized and vested assets, their allocation is decided by the CPA Programme Review Board. These allocations are then subject to IAMB oversight.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the humanitarian situation in Iraq. [172295]

Hilary Benn: In spite of continuing security problems, there is no widespread humanitarian crisis in Iraq. Iraqi Ministries, United Nations agencies, the Red Cross and Red Crescent, NGOs and Iraqi citizens have been working together to assist people affected by the recent fighting in Falluja, and have made preparations for the provision of emergency humanitarian assistance, if required, in other parts of Iraq. An Emergency Co-ordination Group has been established to ensure the effective coordination of emergency assistance in Iraq. Its membership includes UN agencies, the Red Cross and Red Crescent, and NGOs.

US$32 billion in grants and soft loans was pledged for the reconstruction of Iraq at the Madrid Donors' Conference in October last year. DFID has committed

£278 million to humanitarian and reconstruction work in Iraq since the beginning of 2003. Over the last year, Iraqi Ministries, together with the Coalition Provisional Authority and aid agencies, have made significant progress in restoring essential services, maintaining the Public Distribution System for food rations, reopening hospitals and schools and beginning the process of longer-term reconstruction.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent representations he has received about the current humanitarian situation in Iraq. [172465]

Hilary Benn: I receive representations from many sources about assistance to Iraq. Since the 2003 conflict, most of Iraq's requirements have been for reconstruction rather than for immediate humanitarian assistance. At the Madrid Donors' Conference in October last year, the Government pledged a total of £544 million in assistance to Iraq for the three years from April 2003. DFID has so far committed £278 million in humanitarian and reconstruction assistance in Iraq since March 2003.

Primary Schools (Pakistan and India)

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the ratio is of girls to boys enrolled in primary school in *(a)* Pakistan and *(b)* India. [172456]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The World Bank 2003 Development Indicators record the following for the ratio of girls to boys enrolled in primary school:

(a) 58 per cent. for Pakistan in 2000

(b) 83 per cent. for India in 2000.

Tuberculosis

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development for what reasons there has been slippage on his Department's public service agreement target to increase the tuberculosis case detection rate above 70 per cent. [172452]

Hilary Benn: The target to detect 70 per cent. of (smear positive) Tuberculosis (TB) cases globally by 2005 was set by the World Health Assembly and forms the basis for DFID's public service agreement target. Much progress has been made. In 2002 an estimated 37 per cent. of estimated new smear positive cases were notified under the internationally recommended control strategy for TB (DOTS), an increase from 27 per cent. in 2001 and halfway towards the 2005 target.

However, even with these encouraging recent trends at current progress the case detection rate will only be 50 per cent. by 2005. Concerted international action is needed to overcome challenges to scale up effective TB programmes in high burden countries, including strengthening political commitment, health systems, human resource capacity, primary health care provision, private sector and corporate sector contributions and working with poverty reduction strategies. DFID is committed to playing its role in accelerating progress towards the 2005 target as an active member of the Stop TB partnership.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the latest tuberculosis cure treatment rate is in each of the countries covered by his Public Service Agreement target. [172454]

Hilary Benn: The cure rates for tuberculosis in 2001, measured by Directly Observed Treatment Short-course (DOTS) treatment success rate in countries where DFID has a Public Service Agreement are listed in the 2004 World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Tuberculosis Control report. Figures for 2002 are not yet available.

Country	*Internationally recommended control strategy for TB (DOTS) treatment success rate (Percentage)*
Africa	
Ethiopia	76
Democratic Republic of Congo	77
Ghana	42
Kenya	80
Malawi	70
Mozambique	77
Nigeria	79
Rwanda	[1] 61
Sierra Leone	80
South Africa	65
Lesotho	71
Sudan	80
Tanzania	81
Uganda	56
Zambia	75
Zimbabwe	71
Asia	
Bangladesh	84
China	96
Pakistan	77
India	85

[1] in 2000–01 figure not yet known

Turkey/Armenia Border

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the Department's assessment is of the economic development effects of the opening of the border between Turkey and Armenia for *(a)* Turkey and *(b)* the Caucasus states. [172505]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID has not made a detailed assessment of possible economic benefits of the opening of the border between Turkey and Armenia. In general, the opening of borders between states tends to lead to improved trade and economic growth. DFID's bilateral programme for the region promotes good-governance, conflict reduction and pro-poor economic growth. Successful implementation of these programmes will have a positive impact on the wider issues of cross border co-operation and trade.

Zimbabwe

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the Department's most recent assessment is of the humanitarian situation in Zimbabwe. [172499]

Hilary Benn: There have been significant humanitarian needs in Zimbabwe for nearly three years as a result of the Government of Zimbabwe's misguided economic policies, including the poorly implemented

fast track land programme. These needs are exacerbated by the effect of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and erratic rainfall.

The current Emergency Operation of the World Food Programme and the general distributions by NGOs whom we fund directly are beginning to wind down as this year's crop is now being harvested. The harvest should temporarily make food available to the majority of the population.

The Government of Zimbabwe have cancelled the joint crop assessment with WFP and FAO, claimed that they will produce 2.4 million MT of maize, and declared that international food aid will not be needed this year. The UK and other donors do not believe that the Zimbabwean Government's crop forecast is credible and regret the cancellation of the joint crop assessment which would have provided an internationally accepted basis on which to plan for humanitarian operations later this year. The UN and the rest of the international community have consistently made clear to the Zimbabwean authorities that their lack of transparency in dealing with humanitarian issues, including their plans to import food, makes it more difficult for us to respond effectively. We and other donors will nevertheless continue to work with the UN and other agencies to monitor the humanitarian position in Zimbabwe. Households most likely to be in need of assistance will be those with no access to land or income that are also affected by HIV/AIDS or include orphans, disabled children and the elderly.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Business Regulation

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to her answer of 28 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1151W, on business regulation, how many regulatory impact statements have been issued by her Department in the last 12 months; and if she will make a statement. [171595]

Nigel Griffiths: This information could only be obtained by a manual sift.

The Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) is a paragraph that can be included in the Cabinet paper or ministerial letter to colleagues seeking collective agreement to a proposals that impacts on business.

Call Centre Industry

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of future employment prospects in the UK call centre industry. [170284]

Ms Hewitt: My Department published on 6 May a report of the study we commissioned to look at the competitiveness of the UK call and contact centre industry. The study which covers a wide range of call centre issues forecasts that the UK industry is to gain around 200,000 jobs in the next three years, directly employing over a million people by 2007.

Energy Supply

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent discussions she has had with the governments of *(a)* Russia, *(b)* Algeria, *(c)* Qatar and *(d)* other countries, in connection with securing supplies of gas for importing to the UK; and if she will make a statement. [172545]

Mr. Timms: Chapter six of the Energy White Paper clearly lays out our policy with regard to the security of gas supplies for the UK. Para 6.5 states:

> "Our role is to continually monitor developments, and to create a competitive market place, including through good international relations, within which liberalised markets will deliver energy reliability."

To this end my Ministers and officials have over the past year held a number of meetings with representatives of foreign governments.

On June 26 2003 during the State Visit of President Putin of Russia we held the "Russia UK Energy Conference: Long Term Partners" bringing together politicians, officials and the private sectors from both countries to discuss possible areas for energy cooperation. The event culminated in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in which the UK and Russia agreed to work closely together on the North European Gas Pipeline. During the visit I met with Deputy Prime Minister Kudrin and discussed a wide range of matters.

This event was followed up by a UK Russia Energy Roundtable held in London on 3 March 2004 at which the public and private sectors of both the UK and Russia came together to share perspectives on the development of Russia's hydrocarbon reserves.

On 2 October 2003, I announced the agreement of the key principles of a Framework Agreement with Norway which will among other things govern the building of a pipeline to supply Norwegian gas from the Ormen Lange field to the UK. It is anticipated that the agreement itself will be complete by the end of 2004 and the pipeline will become operational by 2007.

On Thursday 26 February 2004 I met with Mr. Khelil, the Energy Minister of Algeria. The BP/Sonatrach joint venture aimed at bringing new supplies of LNG to the UK was among other matters discussed

On Wednesday 10 March 2004 I met with the Qatari Minister of Energy H.E. Abdullah Hamad Al Attiyah. The possibility of Exxon Mobil supplying Qatari LNG to the UK on a long-term contract was amongst other matters discussed.

I will lead a British Government delegation to the International Energy Forum to be held in Amsterdam from May 22 to 24 2004. This is a major opportunity for discussion on oil and gas security issues both on a bilateral and multilateral basis with representatives of key producing states.

Export Credits Guarantee Department

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what progress has been made in agreeing the future financial governance of the Export Credits Guarantee Department. [172733]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: ECGD's governance arrangements have recently been strengthened with the creation of the new position of Chair of its Management Board, to work alongside the Chief Executive. Both these positions have recently been filled by appointees from the private sector, who will bring valuable commercial experience to ECGD. Further changes to financial governance will be put in place with the establishment of a Trading Fund; Ministers are presently considering the arrangements for this and an announcement will be made in due course.

Invest-UK

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the resource budget of Invest-UK was in each year between 1999 and 2002. [171593]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The resource budgets of Invest UK (and its forerunner the Invest In Britain Bureau) for financial years 1999–2000 to 2001–02 were as follows:

1999–2000

£17.8 million, of which £11.1 million was allocated to grant in aid for Regional Development Agencies; £4.1million to Invest UK promotional expenditure, and £2.6 million to local running costs.

2000–01

£20.9 million, of which £12.2 million was allocated to grant in aid for Regional Development Agencies; £6.1 million to Invest UK promotional expenditure, and £2.6 million to local running costs.

2001[1]–02

£21.0 million, of which £12.4 million was allocated to grant in aid for Regional Development Agencies; £5.7 million to Invest UK promotional expenditure, and £2.9 million to local running costs.

[1] 2001–02 was the first year that departmental Resource Accounts were prepared on an accruals basis.

Miners' Compensation Scheme

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the average number of coal health compensation claims settled each month was in *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* Wales since the scheme began; how many claims are awaiting settlement; and what the timetable is for settling outstanding claims. [170873]

Nigel Griffiths: As of 6 May 2004 the figures for Respiratory Disease are as follows:

	Month settled	England	Scotland	Wales	Total
1996	January	2	—	3	5
1996	February	10	1	14	25
1996	April	—	—	1	1
1996	May	1	—	1	2
1996	June	3	—	—	3
1997	September	2	—	—	2
1997	October	—	1	—	1
1997	December	2	2	—	4
1998	January	1	1	—	2
1998	February	2	1	2	5
1998	March	12	1	2	15
1998	April	10	—	2	12
1998	May	18	1	1	20
1998	June	21	—	2	23
1998	July	36	—	4	40
1998	August	10	—	1	11
1998	September	5	—	37	42
1998	October	14	1	1	16
1998	November	12	—	—	12
1998	December	12	—	2	14
1999	January	10	1	3	14
1999	February	2	—	1	3
1999	March	28	—	3	31
1999	April	16	—	7	23
1999	May	22	2	18	42
1999	June	20	—	4	24
1999	July	46	—	13	59
1999	August	41	—	11	52
1999	September	91	5	93	189
1999	October	120	21	76	217
1999	November	157	78	63	298
1999	December	120	36	38	194
2000	January	344	50	63	457
2000	February	345	13	110	468
2000	March	346	13	104	463
2000	April	252	23	54	329
2000	May	161	48	48	257
2000	June	274	50	47	371
2000	July	253	11	61	325
2000	August	217	17	30	264
2000	September	190	14	31	235
2000	October	140	2	19	161
2000	November	352	19	56	427
2000	December	794	6	100	900
2001	January	830	16	109	955
2001	February	779	234	79	1,092
2001	March	1,199	164	80	1,443
2001	April	623	41	58	722
2001	May	619	46	88	753
2001	June	441	31	90	562
2001	July	808	47	145	1,000
2001	August	717	53	125	895
2001	September	936	41	107	1,084
2001	October	1,091	79	128	1,298
2001	November	826	86	384	1,296
2001	December	645	58	208	911
2002	January	1,009	70	303	1,382
2002	February	1,179	74	452	1,705
2002	March	1,148	66	529	1,743
2002	April	1,272	80	520	1,872
2002	May	1,447	85	711	2,243
2002	June	1,033	90	981	2,104
2002	July	1,836	138	695	2,669
2002	August	1,386	92	653	2,131
2002	September	2,302	143	1,303	3,748
2002	October	3,066	277	1,836	5,179
2002	November	3,497	383	1,365	5,245
2002	December	2,167	340	1,211	3,718
2003	January	3,768	277	1,229	5,274
2003	February	3,472	236	1,172	4,880
2003	March	3,594	273	1,000	4,867
2003	April	3,091	283	910	4,284
2003	May	2,943	302	741	3,986
2003	June	3,159	366	1,007	4,532
2003	July	3,580	256	818	4,654
2003	August	3,164	191	992	4,347
2003	September	3,571	347	888	4,806
2003	October	4,254	402	906	5,562
2003	November	3,025	366	920	4,311
2003	December	3,006	283	670	3,959
2004	January	3,801	238	693	4,732
2004	February	3,525	342	585	4,452
2004	March	4,662	397	785	5,844
2004	April	4,074	448	701	5,223
Total Settlements		92,059	8,159	27,303	127,521
Total Receipts		426,470	41,133	90,480	558,083
Total Outstanding		334,411	32,974	63,177	430,562

Notes:

1. Total settlements include claims settled by denial/withdrawal.

2. Claim receipts are those claims that are fully registered. These figures exclude claims registered partially on the website (yet to be fully registered within ICMS due to a submission error during input) and claims held within the holding policy (pool of claims

accepted with minimum data, awaiting further information to permit cross referencing and duplicate checks prior to full registration).

With regard to the timetable for settling outstanding claims, I refer my hon. Friend to House of Lords, *Official Report*, of 21 April 2004, column WA49.

As of 6 May 2004 the figures for Vibration White Finger are as follows:

	Month settled	*England*	*Scotland*	*Wales*	*Total*
1996	January	139	2	1	142
1996	February	2	2	—	4
1996	April	1	—	—	1
1996	May	3	—	—	3
1996	June	3	—	2	5
1996	July	2	—	—	2
1996	August	1	—	—	1
1996	November	1	—	—	1
1997	February	1	—	—	1
1997	April	15	—	14	29
1997	May	28	9	32	69
1997	June	89	35	23	147
1997	July	55	56	49	160
1997	August	54	55	27	136
1997	September	93	41	72	206
1997	October	33	20	13	66
1997	November	31	13	32	76
1997	December	23	38	11	72
1998	January	44	18	28	90
1998	February	50	75	107	232
1998	March	87	29	50	166
1998	April	58	18	40	116
1998	May	91	18	21	130
1998	June	75	45	32	152
1998	July	102	68	41	211
1998	August	47	21	23	91
1998	September	38	40	19	97
1998	October	100	30	8	138
1998	November	164	27	36	227
1998	December	179	18	12	209
1999	January	67	6	17	90
1999	February	38	3	3	44
1999	March	93	1	26	120
1999	April	180	7	15	202
1999	May	236	22	15	273
1999	June	185	32	24	241
1999	July	212	16	211	439
1999	August	288	12	76	376
1999	September	313	16	60	389
1999	October	360	14	130	504
1999	November	412	19	196	627
1999	December	382	13	173	568
2000	January	286	49	95	430
2000	February	280	22	36	338
2000	March	405	32	90	527
2000	April	245	30	61	336
2000	May	328	53	132	513
2000	June	431	84	153	668
2000	July	316	104	113	533
2000	August	350	32	76	458
2000	September	245	43	70	358
2000	October	374	59	122	555
2000	November	359	22	68	449
2000	December	217	15	48	280
2001	January	296	226	78	600
2001	February	414	61	98	573
2001	March	584	38	116	738
2001	April	455	153	99	707
2001	May	583	80	104	767
2001	June	525	37	94	656
2001	July	740	68	211	1,019
2001	August	771	43	179	993
2001	September	745	51	133	929
2001	October	1,994	109	413	2,516
2001	November	492	45	136	673
2001	December	395	32	100	527
2002	January	1,113	134	270	1,517
2002	February	1,467	59	175	1,701
2002	March	2,391	56	292	2,739
2002	April	3,944	119	467	4,530
2002	May	1,987	113	446	2,546
2002	June	1,057	54	181	1,292
2002	July	1,157	48	149	1,354
2002	August	910	34	135	1,079
2002	September	683	36	154	873
2002	October	1,343	85	182	1,610
2002	November	1,102	129	256	1,487
2002	December	1,393	45	294	1,732
2003	January	1,954	54	452	2,460
2003	February	1,610	58	319	1,987
2003	March	2,390	112	504	3,006
2003	April	1,767	115	244	2,126
2003	May	3,074	143	284	3,501
2003	June	2,930	115	225	3,270
2003	July	2,868	74	360	3,302
2003	August	2,077	82	182	2,341
2003	September	2,111	146	201	2,458
2003	October	2,921	80	166	3,167
2003	November	2,496	122	299	2,917
2003	December	2,344	84	114	2,542
2004	January	2,444	75	181	2,700
2004	February	1,410	64	130	1,604
2004	March	1,606	79	295	1,980
2004	April	1,696	106	183	1,985
Total Settlements		70,450	4,748	11,604	86,802
Total Receipts		137,158	11,480	20,936	169,574
Total Outstanding		66,708	6,732	9,332	82,772

Most general damage claims for VWF should be settled in 2005 with most claims for Services settled in 2007.

Nuclear Installations

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent assessment she has received on the adequacy of protection measures against malevolent adversaries and terrorists at nuclear installations. [173342]

Mr. Timms: My officials are in frequent contact with the Office for Civil Nuclear Security about security arrangements and the protection of civil nuclear sites.

It is not Government policy to disclose the substance of those discussions and assessments, since such information may be of potential use to terrorists. However, the Director of Civil Nuclear Security publishes an annual report on the state of security in the civil nuclear industry and the effectiveness of security regulation. His next report is due this summer.

Post Office Closures

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many sub-post offices have been closed in *(a)* Cambridgeshire and *(b)* the constituency of Huntingdon in each year since 1997. [172632]

Mr. Timms: I am advised by Post Office Ltd. that data on post office closures by county or Parliamentary constituency is not available in the form requested as the company does not require this data for its operational purposes. However, I understand that since March 2000 the company has recorded details of post office closures

on the basis of Government region and in the East of England region as a whole, the numbers of net closures were as follows:

Region: East of England

	Number
2000–01	70
2001–02	21
2002–03	33

Post Office Ltd. produces statistics on post office closures on a quarterly basis. The latest data on net closures by region currently available for year 2003–04 is to the end of December 2003. Data for the quarter to end March 2004 is expected shortly. There were 61 net closures of post offices in the East of England region to the end of December 2003. These figures include a total of 55 closures in the East of England region under the urban reinvention programme since its commencement in late 2002.

Renewable Energy

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to make it obligatory for renewable energy developers to deliver community benefit. [170174]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 12 May 2004]:* I have no plans to do so. However the Department is commissioning a study of the actual and potential impact of community benefits schemes on the deployment of renewable, especially wind, energy projects.

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps are being taken to facilitate negotiations between renewable energy developers and local communities affected by wind farm development regarding the calculation and delivery of community benefit. [170175]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 12 May 2004]:* The community impact of wind farm developments, and any possible compensating benefits, should be addressed through the planning process in the normal way.

The Department is commissioning a study of the actual and potential impact of community benefits schemes on the deployment of renewable, especially wind, energy projects.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the effect of trends in renewable energy upon residents in Wirral, South. [170378]

Mr. Timms: As I far as I am aware recent trends in investment have not led directly to new renewables capacity in Wirral South itself. For details of developments in the surrounding Liverpool area I refer my hon. Friend to the answers I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Crosby (Mrs. Curtis-Thomas) on 25 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1109W, my right hon. Friend the Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Field) on 28 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1162–63W and my hon. Friend the Member for Bootle (Mr. Benton) on 11 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 248W.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Accountancy Services

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* nature and *(b)* value was of all contracts, consultancies or other services placed with the accountancy firms (i) Deloitte & Touche, (ii) Ernst & Young, (iii) KPMG and (iv) PricewaterhouseCoopers since 2000–01 by the Department and its agencies. [166090]

Yvette Cooper: Since the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was established on 29 May 2002, the value of contracts placed with the suppliers detailed in the question are listed as follows, along with the values of those let by agencies. The nature of all the contracts can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

	£
ODPM	
Deloitte & Touche	1,279,920
Ernst & Young	12,120,102
KPMG	3,329,904
PricewaterhouseCoopers	5,108,650
The Planning Inspectorate	
KPMG	156,921
PricewaterhouseCoopers	17,625
The Fire Service College	
Deliotte & Touche	9,037
PricewaterhouseCoopers	68,258

The QE2 Conference Centre has not placed any contracts with the consultancy firms in question.

Deprivation

Richard Burden: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what arrangements are being made with *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* other agencies to publish by district council information on pockets of deprivation identified by the new index of deprivation. [172028]

Yvette Cooper: The Indices of Deprivation 2004, published on 26 April, contains information on small pockets of deprivation. These are known as super output areas and cover between 1,000 and 3,000 people. The published information contains a rank and score for each super output area as well as the local authority and Government office region in which it is located.

Fire Service

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Defence and the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry to ensure that fire services for which their departments are responsible are aware of the Government's commitment to a change agenda following the Independent Review of the Fire Service. [172524]

Mr. Raynsford: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister meets with Cabinet colleagues on a regular basis. Ministers and officials of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are also in regular contact with colleagues from other Government Departments in the

course of Government business, including matters relating to the modernisation agenda for the Fire and Rescue Service.

Grahame Park

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether Barnet council is meeting the terms of his Department's grant for neighbourhood wardens for Grahame Park; and if he will make a statement. [153840]

Yvette Cooper: The Government Office for London have pursued the issue of whether Barnet council has complied with the terms of their funding in 2003–04. It is the understanding of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister that they have done so. We have been advised however that since August 2003, Barnet has not been supporting the eight street wardens and four neighbourhood wardens for annual leave, sickness and training under the scheme. Also because of where the base station has been located, wardens were spending 30 minutes of their duty at the beginning and end of the day travelling to and from Grahame Park. Funding from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for wardens schemes in Barnet began in December 2000 and ceased on 31 March 2004. Future funding is a matter for local agencies. Over 80 per cent. of the first round of warden schemes have already secured ongoing funding.

Green Belt

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 30 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1331–32W, on Green Belt, (1) if he will estimate how much land was used for such developments in *(a)* 1999 and *(b)* each year since 2001 for which figures are available; [172478]

(2) if he will estimate how much land was used for such developments in *(a)* 1999 and *(b)* each year since 2001 for which figures are available;. [172479]

(3) if he will estimate the number of such developments in *(a)* 1999 and *(b)* each year since 2001 for which figures are available. [172480]

Keith Hill: The answers referred to gave the full extent of information currently available. Land Use Change Statistics are derived from Ordnance Survey's map revision process. In urban areas Ordnance Survey records mostly change within six months of the development taking place but in rural areas there can be up to five years between a change taking place and its recording by Ordnance Survey. Early estimates of percentages of dwellings that are on previously developed land and of dwellings per hectare on new developments have been found to be robust and are published early. Totals of land or dwellings, however, continue to increase as further data come in and at present only the 2000 figures are close enough to their final values to be published. There was a particular problem with the 1999 data, which is incomplete and will remain so.

Housing Stock Transfer

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proposals he has for bringing housing in local housing authorities where tenants have voted against stock transfers or Arms Length Management Organisations up to the decent homes standards specified in Labour's 2001 manifesto. [172282]

Keith Hill: Where local authorities need additional funds over and above the substantial increases this government has made to funding for council housing, they have three options, establishing an Arms Length Management Organisation, using the Private Finance Initiative or transfers or their stock to a registered social landlord. If tenants reject all of these options then we will respect their decision. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no proposals for providing additional resources above the three options. It is for local authorities with their tenants to work through the Options Appraisal process and to reach a decision from the options available.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the standard spending assessment for youth and community in *(a)* Cambridgeshire and *(b)* the constituency of Huntingdon (i) was in each of the last five years and (ii) is for 2004–05. [172635]

Mr. Raynsford: The Youth and Community block is a sub-block within the Education service block and was introduced in 2003–04. In the same year the Government replaced Standard Spending Assessments (SSA) with Formula Spending Shares (FSS). Huntingdonshire is a district council and does therefore not provide Education services. The Youth and Community FSS figures for Cambridgeshire are:

	£
2003–04	4,036,647
2004–05	4,211,442

Chris Ruane: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which local authorities have been capped in the last 25 years. [172931]

Mr. Raynsford: The local authorities capped each year in England were:

	Local authorities
1985–86	Basildon; Brent; Camden; Greenwich; Hackney; Haringey; Islington; Lambeth; Leicester; Lewisham; Portsmouth; Sheffield; Southwark; Thamesdown
1986–87	Basildon; Camden; Greenwich; Hackney; Haringey; Islington; Lambeth; Lewisham; Liverpool; Newcastle-upon-Tyne; Southwark; Thamesdown
1987–88	Basildon; Brent; Brighton; Camden; Gateshead; Greenwich; Hackney; Haringey; Hounslow; Islington; Lambeth; Lewisham; Middlesbrough; Newcastle-upon-Tyne; Newham; North Tyneside; Sheffield; Southwark; Thamesdown; Tower Hamlets
1988–89	Basildon; Camden; Ealing; Greenwich; Hackney; Haringey; Hull; Lambeth; Lewisham; Liverpool; Manchester; Middlesbrough; Newcastle-upon-Tyne; Southwark; Thamesdown; Tower Hamlets; Waltham Forest
1989–90	Camden; Greenwich; Hackney; Lewisham; Southwark; Thamesdown; Tower Hamlets

	Local authorities
1990–91	Avon; Barnsley; Basildon; Brent; Bristol; Calderdale; Camden; Derbyshire; Doncaster; Greenwich; Hammersmith and Fulham; Haringey; Hillingdon; Islington; Lambeth; North Tyneside; Rochdale; Rotherham; Southwark; St. Helens; Wigan
1991–92	Basildon; Bristol; Greenwich; Ipswich; Lambeth; Langbaurgh; Middlesbrough; Milton Keynes; Norwich; Reading; Somerset; Stoke; Warwickshire; Wirral
1992–93	Basildon; Cheltenham; Gloucester; Gloucestershire; Greenwich; Hillingdon; Lambeth; Langbaurgh; Middlesbrough; Warwickshire
1993–94	Castle Point; Gloucestershire; Harlow
1994–95	Langbaurgh; Sheffield; Slough
1995–96	Norwich; Barnsley; Sheffield; Newcastle upon Tyne; Devon; Gloucestershire; Shropshire
1996–97	Cambridgeshire; Oxfordshire
1997–98	Oxfordshire; Somerset; Warwickshire
1998–99	Derbyshire

Capping legislation was originally introduced in 1984. More flexible reserve capping powers were taken in 1999. These have not been used until this year. My Statement in the House on 29 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1019, sets out the action the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is taking this year.

Diana Organ: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the standard spending assessment for youth and community services in Gloucestershire *(a)* was in each of the last four financial years and *(b)* is for 2004–05. [169874]

Mr. Raynsford: The youth and community block is a sub-block within the education service block and was introduced in 2003–04. In the same year the Government replaced standard spending assessments (SSA) with formula spending shares (FSS). The youth and community FSS figures for Gloucestershire are:

	£
2003–04	4,138,595
2004–05	4,303,748

Ministerial Visits

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list visits made by each Minister in the Department between December 2003 and April 2004, broken down by *(a)* date, *(b)* constituency visited and *(c)* cost. [171572]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his latest estimate is of the number and percentage of registered voters for the pending national election in each province of Afghanistan; and if he will make a statement. [172091]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: According to the Afghanistan Joint Electoral Monitoring Body, as of 6 May a total of 2,033,568 Afghans (approximately 20 per cent.) have been registered to vote, of whom 30 per cent. (615,818) are women. Following is a regional breakdown.

Regional breakdown	*Number*
Central	837,650
East	299,416
North East	150,790
South East	49,844
Central Highlands	46,576
North	212,568
South	143,846
West	292,878

Phase I of voter registration (in Kabul and regional centres) has been completed. Phase II (designed to reach more rural areas) was launched on 1 May.

The UK is committed to supporting the electoral process. Last year we contributed £10.55 million to support election registration. We have pledged a further £0.5 million for voter education and £2.77 million to support preparations for the elections themselves.

British Citizens (Imprisonment Abroad)

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many British citizens were imprisoned abroad in each of the last three years, broken down by country of imprisonment. [171254]

Mr. Mullin: The total number of British citizens detained overseas in the last three years is:

	Number
2002–03	7,861
2001–02	7,499
2000–01	8,428

I have placed a breakdown by country of imprisonment and British Posts for 2002–03 in the Library of the House. It would incur disproportionate costs to provide a breakdown by country for those detained in 2001–02 and 2000–01. However, the following tables show those British Posts recording the highest numbers of British citizens detained for the last three years:

2000–01

Post	*Numbers detained*	*Percentage of British citizens detained compared to all overseas Posts*	*Country*
Ibiza	2,006	24	Spain
Malaga	394	5	Spain
Tenerife	296	4	Spain
Orlando	296	4	USA

2000–01

Post	Numbers detained	Percentage of British citizens detained compared to all overseas Posts	Country
Lille	292	3	France
Los Angeles	253	3	USA
New York	229	3	USA
Sydney	220	3	Australia
Alicante	216	3	Spain
Houston	155	2	USA
Total	4,357	52	—

2001–02

Post	Numbers detained	Percentage of British citizens detained compared to all overseas Posts	Country
Ibiza	1,531	20	Spain
Orlando	492	7	USA
Tenerife	318	4	Spain
Lille	272	4	France
Los Angeles	257	3	USA
New York	243	3	USA
Kingston	230	3	Jamaica
Palma	229	3	Spain
Athens	190	3	Greece
Sydney	164	2	Australia
Total	3,926	52	—

2002–03

Post	Numbers detained	Percentage of British citizens detained compared to all overseas Posts	Country
Malaga	619	8	Spain
Orlando	546	7	USA
Houston	391	5	USA
Los Angeles	384	5	USA
New York	327	4	USA
Tenerife	315	4	Spain
Sydney	246	3	Australia
Alicante	231	3	Spain
Palma	227	3	Spain
Dublin	225	3	Ireland
Total	3,511	45	—

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many British citizens were sentenced to life imprisonment abroad in each of the last three years, broken down by country of imprisonment; and how many of these sentences were revised on appeal. [171256]

Mr. Mullin: The number of British Nationals detained in prisons overseas is collected on a quarterly and annual basis by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The data is not categorised by the length of sentence received and only represents those prisoners who have asked the local authorities to inform the British consulate of their arrest or who request consular assistance.

Burma

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the Department's assessment is of *(a)* the Burmese Government's seven point road map to democracy and *(b)* the proposed national constitutional convention. [172511]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We are encouraged by the State Peace and Development Council's plans to reconvene the National Convention on 17 May to draft a new constitution, the first step of the road map outlined by Prime Minister Khin Nyunt on 30 August 2003. But it is essential that the National Convention is an inclusive, transparent process with a clear time frame. All political parties and ethnic groups should be invited to join the Convention, and to select their representatives freely. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all other National League for Democracy (NLD) members should be released immediately to allow them to prepare their approach to the National Convention.

Without the participation of the NLD, the Convention will lack all credibility. There must be full freedom of debate and speech in the Convention and freedom of activity and association for political parties and ethnic groups. This includes ensuring that the 104 principles of the previous National Convention (1993–1996) are open for debate. Freedom from prosecution for views expressed on the Convention must be guaranteed.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions the Department has had with the Burmese Government regarding the *(a)* recent opening of the National League for Democracy's headquarters in Rangoon and *(b)* the continued closure of its other offices. [172513]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We welcome the recent opening of the National League for Democracy's (NLD) headquarters in Rangoon. We have repeatedly called on the Burmese regime to re-open all NLD offices throughout Burma.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions have taken place with the Burmese Government regarding the possible release of Aung San Suu Kyi. [172515]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We have repeatedly called on the Burmese regime to fully release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners and to allow them to play an active role in national reconciliation in Burma.

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he intends to reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 6 April with regard to Mr. Mehrat Din and Muhammed Aqdas Din. [172250]

Mr. MacShane: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary replied on 28 April.

Departmental Staff

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what percentage of policy entrants to his Department in each of the last five years attended public or independent schools. [172116]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The information requested is in the following table.

Policy entrants

	Percentage from independent schools
1999	60
2000	64
2001	48
2002	24
2003	37

The recruitment section records school information as "independent" (which includes public schools) or "comprehensive".

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs who the members of the Departmental Board are, broken down by *(a)* gender, *(b)* race or ethnicity, *(c)* whether they attended public or independent school and *(d)* whether they attended Oxford University or Cambridge University; and how long each has been in post. [172117]

Mr. Straw: The Data Protection Act prevents us from providing information about the ethnicity or race of individuals. The members of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Board, and the background information requested, as published in Who's Who, is as follows:

Sir Michael Jay—Sir Michael has been in his current post for two years. He was educated at Oxford and London Universities, and Winchester College.

Sir Stephen Brown—Sir Stephen has been in his current post for two years. He was educated at Sussex University, the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and Leeds Grammar School.

John Sawers—John Sawers has been in his current post for one year. He was educated at Nottingham University, and Beechen Cliff School, Bath.

Kim Darroch—Kim Darroch has been in his current post for one year. He was educated at Durham University, and Abingdon School.

Martin Donnelly—Martin Donnelly has been in his current post for two months. He was educated at Oxford University and Saint Ignatius College.

William Ehrman—William Ehrman has been in his current post for two years. He was educated at Cambridge University, and Eton.

Richard Stagg—Richard Stagg has been in his current post for one year. He was educated at Oxford University, and Winchester College.

David Warren—David Warren has been in his current post for three months. He was educated at Oxford University, and Epsom College.

Simon Fraser—Simon Fraser has been in his current post for two years. He was educated at Cambridge University, and St. Paul's School.

Simon Gass—Simon Gass has been in his current post for three years. He was educated at Reading University, and Eltham College.

The Board also has two non-executive members, Allan Gormly, Chairman of BPB Industries, and Lucy Neville-Rolfe, Director of Corporate Affairs, Tesco plc.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office needs to be, and to be seen to be, representative of the diverse UK population as a whole; we are committed to achieving this and now have 21 female and two minority ethnic heads of posts. But we are aware that we have some way to go.

Iraq

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government supports the establishment of a United Nations mediator to Iraq. [171810]

Mr. Rammell: The Government supports a vital and developing role for the United Nations in Iraq. The UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser, Lakhdar Brahimi, is already playing an important role building an Iraqi consensus on the formation of an Interim Government by 30 June. We welcome his proposals and look forward to working with him and the people of Iraq on developing them. We also welcome the role of Carina Perelli, Head of the UN's Elections Assistance Division, whose proposals for the preparations for elections in early 2005 have been agreed by the Iraqi Governing Council.

Ms Drown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will encourage those responsible for the final Iraq constitution to amend the constitution so that the target of 25 per cent. of women in political positions in the interim constitution becomes a minimum requirement. [172201]

Mr. Rammell: The Transitional National Assembly will be formed by democratic elections by early 2005. The Transitional Administrative Law stipulates that the electoral law shall aim to achieve the goal of having women constitute no less than one quarter of the National Assembly. The members of that Assembly will draft the Iraqi constitution, which will then be ratified by a referendum. We would expect democratically-elected members to ensure appropriate representation of women and we will ensure they are fully aware of the Government's policy of encouraging this.

Libya

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the Government has made to the Libyan Government concerning the sentencing to death of five Bulgarian nurses and a Palestinian doctor for allegedly infecting children with HIV; what discussions the Government has held with European partners on this matter; what plans the Government has to raise this matter at the UN Commission on Human Rights; and if he will make a statement. [172667]

Mr. Straw: My noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean telephoned Libyan Foreign Minister Shalgam on 9 May to express our concern at the verdict. The EU Troika met Mr. Shalgam during the EuroMed Ministerial in Dublin on 6 May to highlight the EU's concern at the court's decision and underline that a satisfactory resolution to this case is a factor in the further improvement of Libya's relations with the EU. I spoke immediately after the verdicts were handed down to Bulgarian Foreign Minister Passy to offer our support. The next session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights will take place in spring 2005. The Government will consider nearer the time whether action in that forum is appropriate.

Nigeria

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions have taken place with the Nigerian Government regarding the issue of people trafficking. [172512]

Mr. MacShane: The British High Commission in Abuja is in regular contact with the Nigerian National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons to identify ways to intensify co-operation to prevent trafficking in human beings. President Obasanjo has recently appointed a Special Assistant on Trafficking who is charged with establishing a National Strategy.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with EU partners on the situation in Darfur; and if he will make a statement. [172664]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 12 May 2004]:* The situation in Darfur was discussed at the EU General Affairs and External Relations Council on 26 April. Since then it has also been discussed by the Political and Security Committee, the Africa Working Group and the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Working Group. Our Ambassador in Khartoum, as a member of the local EU Troika, took part in a demarche on the acting Foreign Minister on the subject of Darfur on 8 May.

I met the Sudanese Foreign Minister, Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail on 11 May in London.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment the Government have made of the relationship between the Janjaweed militias and the Sudanese Government in Darfur. [172666]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 12 May 2004]:* According to reports from the UN and non-governmental organisations, the Janjaweed militias have been operating in close coordination with the forces of the Government of Sudan. The Secretary of State for International Development and I made clear to the Sudanese Foreign Minister, during his visit on 11 May, that the Sudanese Government has an obligation to protect its civilians and must act now to rein in the Janjaweed militias.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the recent report commissioned by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation in Darfur. [172696]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 12 May 2004]:* The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has recently issued a report on its visit to Darfur, western Sudan. The Acting High Commissioner for Human Rights briefed the Security Council on the content of this report on 7 May, highlighting the seriousness of the humanitarian and human rights situation in Darfur. We are studying the recommendations in the report and considering the best way in which to take these forward.

We have called on all parties to abide by the cease-fire and stop targeting civilians. I met the Sudanese Foreign Minister on 11 May and made clear that the human rights abuses and breaches of international humanitarian law are unacceptable and must stop, and that the Sudanese Government has a responsibility to rein in the Janjaweed militias which are responsible for many of the worst atrocities.

Sudan

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the recent vote in the UN Human Rights Commission concerning the human rights situation in Western Sudan, with particular reference to the Government's position on the two defeated amendments to the Human Rights Commission's decision on the Sudan moved by the United States. [172665]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 12 May 2004]:* The language of the Commission on Human Rights decision on Sudan was disappointingly weak. But it was a better outcome than last year, as the decision mandates an independent expert to provide formal international scrutiny of the human rights situation in Sudan. The EU insisted on the establishment of an independent expert to carry out this work. Such international scrutiny has been lacking since the end of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur when the EU-sponsored Sudan Resolution was defeated at last year's Commission on Human Rights.

We fully supported the draft EU Item 9 Resolution on Sudan, but Commission on Human Rights procedure meant that an alternative draft decision on Sudan, tabled by the African Group under a different agenda item, took precedence. We also supported the two amendments to the decision proposed by the US, but these were defeated in a vote.

Syria

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions the Department has had with the Syrian government regarding the recent arrest of the lawyer and human rights activist Aktham Naisse. [172506]

Mr. Rammell: We regularly raise our concerns about Syria's human rights record, bilaterally and in conjunction with EU partners. Our Ambassador to Damascus was a member of the EU Troika which demarched the Syrian government on the arrest of Aktham Naisse on 26 April 2004.

Vietnam

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions the Department has had with the Vietnamese Government regarding human rights abuses against the Central Highlands minority Christian population. [172509]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: I raised human rights and the situation in the Central Highlands with the Vietnamese government during my visit to Vietnam in March. We are very concerned about the recent violence in the region, and the reported deaths of several protesters. Our Ambassador in Hanoi expressed our concern to the Vietnamese government on 16 April and I subsequently discussed the issue with the Vietnamese Foreign Minister on 4 May, and with Deputy Foreign Minister Le Van Bang, whom I met in London on 5 May. The EU has also made representations, calling on the

Vietnamese authorities to respect fully international human rights standards in their response to demonstrations; to allow the international community access to the area; and to address the grievances of the ethnic minority people in the Central Highlands.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Apprenticeships

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding will be made available for the establishment of *(a)* Young Apprenticeships, *(b)* Pre-Apprenticeships, *(c)* Apprenticeships and *(d)* Advanced-Apprenticeships in the next financial year. [172975]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: For Young Apprenticeships £3.5 million is available in the programme's first academic year 2004/05. Funding of Apprenticeship programmes post 16 are a matter for the Learning and Skills Council. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to the hon. Member with this information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many residents of Stockton, South have undertaken apprenticeships in each of the last five years. [171456]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not available at parliamentary constituency level. However, figures are available for Learning and Skills Council (LSC) areas and, prior to the creation of the LSC, Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) areas. The following table shows the number of starts on modern apprenticeships in Tees Valley LSC area between April 2001 and the end of July 2003, as well as the number of starts from April 1998 to March 2001 in Tees Valley TEC area.

Time period[1]	*TEC/LSC*	*Advanced MA*	*Foundation MA*
April 1998 to March 1999	Tees Valley TEC	1,700	400
April 1999 to March 2000	Tees Valley TEC	1,900	3,100
April 2000 to March 2001	Tees Valley TEC	2,100	3,300
April 2001 to July 2002	Tees Valley LSC	1,000	3,200
August 2002 to July 2003	Tees Valley LSC	900	2,600

[1] TECs reported figures in financial years. LSC reports figures in academic years. The first LSC 'year' was 16 months in order to bring the financial year figures into line with academic years.

Note:
All figures rounded to nearest 100.

Sources:
TEC Management Information.
LSC Individualised Learner Record.

Bootle Schools

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools in Bootle deemed to be failing since 1997 have since reached satisfactory standards. [172022]

Mr. Miliband: One school in Bootle has been deemed to be failing since 1997 and has subsequently reached satisfactory standards.

Bullying

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many instances of bullying were recorded in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in Brent in each year since 1997; and what the average figures for (i) English borough councils and (ii) London boroughs were in each year. [172811]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Data on bullying are not collected centrally and there is no reliable basis for an estimate of prevalence. However, any level of bullying is too high and we are determined to help schools to tackle the problem. Our guidance pack 'Bullying: Don't Suffer in Silence' and the anti-bullying Charter and the anti-bullying website www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying offer detailed advice on preventing and addressing bullying. In November 2003 I launched our anti-bullying Charter for schools, which schools are now signing. It is accompanied by a summary of effective practice to help schools review and enhance their anti-bullying policies. The Charter was launched at the first of a series of regional conferences which have been running since November 2003 and culminate with a final conference in June. These conferences are an opportunity for schools and other partners to share good practice on this issue. Details of the conferences can be accessed online at www.teachernet.gov.uk/antibullying.

Class Sizes (Wigan)

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Wigan were taught in classes of more than 30 *(a)* in 1997 and *(b)* at the latest date for which figures are available. [169283]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information requested is shown in the table, final figures for 1997 and 2003 plus latest provisional figures for 2004 have been provided.

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1]*: number of pupils in classes of 31 or more pupils taught by one teacher*

Position as at January each year

	Maintained primary			*Maintained secondary*		
		Number of pupils in classes of 31 or more			*Number of pupils in classes of 31 or more*	
Wigan parliamentary constituency	*Total pupils in all classes*	*Number of pupils*	*Percentage of pupils*[2]	*Total pupils in all classes*	*Number of pupils*	*Percentage of pupils*[2]
1997	7,130	3,260	45.7	4,890	220	4.5
2003	6,230	1,290	20.8	5,470	700	12.7
2004 (Provisional)	6,320	1,300	20.5	5,630	800	14.2

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Percentage of pupils in those classes expressed as a percentage of pupils in the sum of constituent items and the total.

Note:
Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10, therefore there may be discrepancies between all classes taught by one teacher.

Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Classics

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which secondary schools in the maintained sector in England offer *(a)* Ancient Greek and *(b)* Latin at A level. [17244f]

Mr. Miliband: The DfES does not have on information which schools offer individual subjects. We can only identify those schools where pupils were entered for a subject in a part.cular year.

There are eight maintained secondary schools where at least one student attempted an A level in Greek in the academic year 2002–03. The schools are:

The Camden School for Girls
St. Francis Xavier's College, Liverpool
Weatherhead High School, Wallasey
Easingwold School, York
Ripon Grammar School
Reading School
Colchester Royal Grammar School
Lancaster Royal Grammar School

There are 84 maintained secondary schools where at least one student attempted an A level in Latin. The schools are:

The Camden School for Girls, Camden
The London Oratory School, Hammersmith and Fulham
The Cardinal Vaughan Memorial RC School, Kensington and Chelsea
The Henrietta Barnett School, Barnet
St Michael's Catholic Grammar School, Barnet
Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar School, Bexley
St. Olave's and St. Saviour's Grammar School, Bromley
Drayton Manor High School, Baling
The Latymer School, Enfield
St. Ignatius College, Enfield
The Tiffin Girls' School, Kingston upon Thames
Tiffin School, Kingston upon Thames
Ilford County High School, Redbridge
Woodford County High School, Redbridge
Nonsuch High School for Girls, Sutton
The John Fisher School, Sutton
King Edward VI Handsworth School, Birmingham
King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Girls, Birmingham
Old Swinford Hospital, Dudley
Wolverhampton Girls' High School, Wolverhampton
Archbishop Blanch Church of England Voluntary Aided High School A Technology College, Liverpool
St. Francis Xavier's College, Liverpool
The Blue Coat School, Liverpool
Manor High School, Sefton
Chesterfield High School, Sefton
West Kirby Grammar School, Wirral
Weatherhead High School, Wirral
St. Anselm's College, Wirral
Thornleigh Salesian College, Bolton
Altrincham Grammar School for Boys, Trafford
Loreto Grammar School, Trafford
St. Anthony's Catholic Girls' School, Sunderland
Ripon Grammar School, North Yorkshire
Ermysted's Grammar School, North Yorkshire
All Saints RC School, York
Dr. Challoner's High School, Buckinghamshire
Aylesbury Grammar School, Buckinghamshire
Wycombe High School, Buckinghamshire
The Royal Grammar School, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire
Bournemouth School, Bournemouth
St. John's School and Community College, Wiltshire
Reading School, Reading
Kendrick Girls' Grammar School, Reading
St. Bernard's Convent School, Slough
The King's School, Peterborough
Devonport High School for Boys, Plymouth
Chelmsford County High School for Girls, Essex
King Edward VI Grammar School, Chelmsford, Essex
Colchester Royal Grammar School, Essex
Colchester County High School for Girls, Essex
Brentwood Ursuline Convent High School, Essex
Southend High School for Boys, Southend on Sea
Maidstone Grammar School, Kent
Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School, Kent
The Judd School, Kent
Dartford Grammar School, Kent
Cranbrook School, Kent
The Archbishop's School, Kent
Tonbridge Grammar School for Girls, Kent
Dover Grammar School for Boys, Kent
The Rochester Grammar School for Girls, Medway
Lancaster Royal Grammar School, Lancashire
Stroud High School, Gloucestershire
Hitchin Boys' School, Hertfordshire
Hitchin Girls' School, Hertfordshire
Freman College, Hertfordshire
Watford Grammar School for Boys, Hertfordshire
Watford Grammar School for Girls, Hertfordshire
The Bishop's Stortford High School, Hertfordshire
Boston High School, Lincolnshire
Spalding High School, Lincolnshire
Spalding Grammar School, Lincolnshire
Caistor Grammar School, Lincolnshire
The Henry Box School, Oxfordshire
Wheatley Park School, Oxfordshire
Northgate High School, Suffolk
Oxted School, Surrey
George Abbot School, Surrey
Stratford-upon-Avon Grammar School for Girls A Specialist Language College, Warwickshire
Kenilworth School and Sports College, Warwickshire
Rugby High School, Warwickshire
Chichester High School for Girls, West Sussex
Hazelwick School, West Sussex
Bishop Luffa Church of England School, Chichester, West Sussex

Correspondence

Mr. Illsley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills under what circumstances the Minister for Lifelong Learning and Higher Education received a copy of the letter written by the hon. Member

for Barnsley, Central to Professor Boucher, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sheffield, dated 26 January. [171105]

Alan Johnson: I will write to the hon. Gentleman.

Departmental Policies

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will set out, with statistical information relating as closely as possible to the constituency of Ilford, North, the effect of his Department's policies on Ilford, North since 1997. [164884]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The constituency of Ilford, North falls within Redbridge local education authority. Where the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) can or does collect information by constituency, it has been provided.

Additional information could be provided only at disproportionate cost. However, my Department is investigating ways in which we disseminate information about the effects of our policies at a local level. We hope to have systems to facilitate this in place later this year.

Children, Young People and Families

Early Education

All 3 and 4-year-olds are now guaranteed a free, part-time, Government funded, early education place if their parents want it throughout England. We understand that the current early education participation rate in the Redbridge authority is around 68 per cent.

Child Care

There has been a major expansion in child care provision since 1997. We only have figures at local authority level. Since April 1999 we had created, by March 2004, over 3,200 new child care places benefiting over 5,800 children in Redbridge.

Children's Social Services

Children's social services in the constituency are delivered by Redbridge council which is a two star social services authority, with services for children and families assessed as serving most people well with promising prospects (as published in the Annual Review of Performance Reports, issued by the Chief Inspector of the Social Services Inspectorate).

Disadvantaged Area Programmes

Some of our key programmes for young children and families target the most disadvantaged communities. We have created three Neighbourhood Nurseries in the constituency with 136 new places. There are no Sure Start local programmes or Early Excellence Centres within the constituency. Redbridge intends to create four children's centres at least one of which is likely to be in Ilford, North.

Connexions

Connexions, the Government's front line support service for all young people aged 13–19, is providing advice, guidance and support to young people in Ilford, North constituency through East London Connexions Partnership. Since its launch in June 2002, young people aged 13–19 have had access to support and advice on a range of issues to help them participate and achieve in education, employment and training and to reach their full potential as adults.

Youth Services

Although not recently inspected by Ofsted, Redbridge Youth Service has used the findings of an independent inspection based on the Ofsted Framework and the Government's requirements within Transforming Youth Work to reconfigure the service during 2003/04. The 2004–05 plan, although still draft, demonstrates a commitment to achieving the performance measures required by Transforming Youth Work: Resourcing Excellent Youth Services.

Extended Schools

The Department is supporting the rollout of up to 240 full service extended schools by 2006, so that there will be at least one in each LEA area. Redbridge LEA will be developing one full service extended school from this year.

Schools

Recurrent Funding

The estimated[1] increase in per pupil funding in Redbridge in real terms from 1997–98 to 2004–05 is £700 compared with the national average of £880.

Capital Funding

Redbridge LEA had an allocation of £13.1 million (including £3.2 million which is devolved directly to schools) for 2003–04 compared with £9.9 million in 1996–97. Redbridge LEA has been allocated £16.1 million for 2004–05. Some Voluntary Aided allocations have still to be included for 2004–05.

School Performance Tables

Key Stage (KS) figures can be found at on the DfES website at: www.dfes.gov.uk/performancetables

Class Sizes

The number of 5, 6 and 7-year-olds in classes over 30 has fallen from 2,331 in 1997 to 95 by January 2003.

Teachers

Since 1997 (to 2003) there are 370 more teachers (FTE), 429 more teaching assistants and 548 more support staff.

Specialist Schools

There are nine Specialist Schools in Redbridge LEA.

Beacon Schools

There are two Beacon Schools in Redbridge LEA.

Primary Strategy Leadership

10 primary schools in Redbridge LEA are part of the Primary Strategy Leadership programme this year. Additional schools will be selected by the LEA to enter the programme in 2004/05.

Leadership Incentive Grant

There is one secondary school in Redbridge in receipt of LIG, the Loxford School of Science and Technology. This is a high-performing school which receives LIG because more than 35 per cent. of its pupils are eligible for Free School Meals.

Behaviour Improvement Projects

All secondary schools in Redbridge LEA receive support from the Behaviour and Attendance strand of the Key Stage 3 Strategy, including a behaviour audit and training materials and support from specialist LEA-level consultants. Primary schools in the area receive

support through the Primary National Strategy's Behaviour and Attendance Pilot, which includes a primary behaviour audit and curriculum and training materials with special focus on children's social, emotional and behavioural skills.

14–19 Education

The Government's strategy for 14–19 education and training, set out in "14–19: opportunity and excellence", will provide all young people with the opportunity to continue their education in different settings, including schools, colleges, and the workplace.

The impact of the 14–19 agenda on Ilford, North includes:

Strategic Area Reviews (StARs)

In April 2003, all local Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs) started strategic area reviews (StARs) of post-16 LSC-funded provision. These reviews aim to achieve the right mix of provision in an area to improve participation, raise attainment and improve learner choice. StARs will ensure that there is the breadth of opportunity and quality of provision to meet the needs of learners, employers and communities.

All local LSCs have been gathering information, reviewing provider missions, and consequently building an understanding of each provider's role and the provision on offer. The next step is to develop strategic options.

In the case of Ilford, North, and its local LSC, London East, progress is good and work continues with developing borough profiles and strategic proposals.

To support the StAR process, and to provide local providers with a clear understanding of what the local learning and skills priorities are, LSC London East are producing an over arching strategic framework document.

The LSC London East has, in addition to the StAR process, conducted a survey to test its assumptions about what young people, adults and employers want from education.

Vocational Provision

London East LSC currently has four work-based learning providers delivering vocational programmes in the constituency of Ilford, North.

Learners in the borough have access to all of the remaining 42 work-based learning providers in the London East portfolio. Within a reasonable travelling distance they can gain entry to over 40 occupational areas ranging from Accounting, Engineering, Childcare, Retail, Hospitality and Catering and Information technology.

Educational Maintenance Allowances

Redbridge is not an EMA pilot area. However the scheme has now been launched nationally and all eligible students in England can apply for EMA for academic year 2004/05.

Higher Education

The number of 18 to 20-year-olds entering full-time Higher Education courses, are as follows.

Redbridge LEA

	Number
1997	1,317
1998	1,366
1999	1,389
2000	1,604
2001	1,648
2002	1,799

Adult Education

The Local Labour Force Survey shows that in Ilford, North:

The proportion of working age people qualified to at least level 4 rose from 17.4 per cent. in 1999 to 21.1 per cent. in 2002.

The proportion of working age people qualified to at least level 2 rose from 59.5 per cent. in 1999 to 64.3 per cent. in 2002.

The proportion of working age people without any qualification rose from 11.5 per cent. in 1999 to 14.7 per cent. in 2002.

The proportion of working age people who received job related training in the last four weeks has fallen from 12.3 per cent. in 1999 to 9.4 per cent. in 2002.

[1] Includes provisional estimates of grants and allocations still to be confirmed. Total funding per pupil aged 3–19 includes Education Formula Spending (EFS) and all relevant grants in the DfES Departmental Expenditure Limits but, for comparability, exclude the pensions transfer to Learning and Skills Council and EFS in 2003–04 and 2004–05. Real terms at 2002–03 prices.

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to the Newcastle East and Wallsend constituency, the effects on Newcastle, East and Wallsend of his Department's policies and actions since 1997. [166879]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The constituency of Newcastle Upon Tyne, East and Wallsend covers part of both Newcastle upon Tyne and North Tyneside local education authorities. Where the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) can or does collect information by constituency, it has been provided.

Additional information could be provided only at disproportionate cost. However, my Department is investigating ways in which we disseminate information about the effects of our policies at a local level. We hope to have systems to facilitate this in place later this year.

Children, Young People and Families

Early Education

All 3 and 4-year-olds are now guaranteed a free, part-time, Government funded early education place if their parents want it throughout England. We understand that the current early education participation rate in the Newcastle upon Tyne authority is around 100 per cent. and in the North Tyneside authority 94 per cent.

Child Care

There has been a major expansion in child care provision since 1997. We only have figures at local authority level, but at March 2004 we had created over 4,200 new child care places since April 1999, benefiting over 7,500 children, in Newcastle upon Tyne, and over 4,300 new places benefiting over 7,700 children in North Tyneside.

Children's Social Services

Children's social services in the constituency are delivered by two councils—Newcastle and North Tyneside. Newcastle is a three star social services authority with services for children and families assessed as serving most children well with excellent prospects. North Tyneside is a one star council with services for children and families assessed as serving some children well with promising prospects. These judgments are set out in the annual review of Performance Ratings for Social Services in England published by the Chief Inspector of the Social Services Inspectorate in November 2003.

Disadvantaged Area Programmes

Some of our key programmes for young children and families target the most disadvantaged communities. The constituency contains three Sure Start local programmes, two in Newcastle (West Walker and Fossway) and one in North Tyneside (Wallsend). The West Walker programme is also linked to the Walkergate Early Years Centre Early Excellence Centre. Wallsend and West Walker also have Neighbourhood Nurseries which, along with another two standalone projects, have created 131 new places in the constituency. Both authorities are now working on their plans for children's centres which will build on this existing provision. Newcastle upon Tyne intends to create nine centres and North Tyneside six, two of which have already been designated.

Connexions

Connexions, the Government's front line support service for all young people aged 13–19, is providing advice, guidance and support to young people in Newcastle Upon Tyne, East and Wallsend constituency through Tyne and Wear Connexions Partnership. Since its launch in April 2002 young people aged 13–19 have had access to support and advice on a range of issues to help them participate and achieve in education, employment and training and to reach their full potential as adults.

Youth Services

There are two local authority youth services in Newcastle upon Tyne, East and Wallsend: Newcastle; and North Tyneside. Both services have been subject to Ofsted inspections in recent years, and in both significant weaknesses were found. But both local authorities have responded positively, increasing their investment in their youth services. They have also revised and updated many of their procedures and have fully embraced the Transforming Youth Work agenda.

Extended Schools

The Department is supporting the rollout of up to 240 full service extended schools by 2006, so that there will be at least one in each LEA area. Benfield School in Newcastle LEA has been developing as a full service extended school from 2003–04.

Schools

Recurrent Funding

The estimated[1] increase in per pupil funding in real terms from 1997–98 to 2004–05 is £920 in Newcastle upon Tyne and £940 in North Tyneside compared with the national average of £880.

Capital Funding

North Tyneside LEA had an allocation of £11.5 million (including £2.6 million which is devolved directly to schools, £2.4 million in targeted Capital funding and £0.5 million in VA Targeted Capital funding) for 2003–04 compared with £1.4 million in 1996–97. North Tyneside LEA has been allocated £6.7 million for 2004–05. Some Voluntary Aided (VA) allocations have still to be included for 2004–05.

Newcastle LEA had an allocation of £16.3 million (including £3.4 million which is devolved directly to schools and £5 million for VA Targeted Capital funding) for 2003–04 compared with £1.0 million in 1996–97. Newcastle LEA has been allocated £69.7 million for 2004–05 (including 360 million in PFI credits). Some VA allocations have still to be included for 2004–05.

School Performance Tables

Key Stage (KS) figures can be found at on the DfES website at: www.dfes.gov.uk/performancetables

Class Sizes

In North Tyneside LEA the number of 5, 6 and 7-year-olds in classes over 30 has fallen from 2,183 in 1997 to 0 by January 2003.

In Newcastle upon Tyne LEA the number of 5, 6 and 7-year-olds in classes over 30 has fallen from 2,964 in 1997 to 63 by January 2003.

Teachers

In North Tyneside LEA the number of teachers (FTE from 1997 to 2003) is unchanged. However there are 110 more teaching assistants than in 1997 and 345 more support staff than in 1997.

In Newcastle LEA the number of teachers has risen by 50 (FTE from 1997 to 2003). However there are 246 more teaching assistants than in 1997 and 434 more support staff than in 1997.

Specialist Schools

There are eight specialist schools in Newcastle upon Tyne LEA and seven specialist schools in North Tyneside LEA.

Beacon Schools

There are six beacon schools in Newcastle upon Tyne LEA and eight beacon schools in North Tyneside LEA.

Primary Strategy Leadership

17 primary schools in Newcastle upon Tyne LEA and 13 primary schools in North Tyneside LEA are part of the Primary Strategy Leadership programme this year. Additional schools will be selected by the LEAs to enter the programme in 2004/05.

Leadership Incentive Grant

There are 11 secondary schools in Newcastle upon Tyne in receipt of LIG and 11 secondary schools in North Tyneside in receipt of LIG. All are eligible for LIG because they are part of the Excellence in Cities programme.

Behaviour Improvement Projects

All secondary schools in Newcastle upon Tyne and North Tyneside receive support from the Behaviour and Attendance strand of the Key Stage 3 Strategy, including a behaviour audit and training materials and support from specialist LEA—level consultants. In addition, four secondary schools and 27 primary

schools in Newcastle upon Tyne and four secondary schools and 15 primary schools in North Tyneside participate in the Behaviour Improvement Programme, which provides more intensive support for schools facing the greatest challenges.

14–19 Education

The Government's strategy for 14–19 education and training, set out in "14–19: opportunity and excellence", will provide all young people with the opportunity to continue their education in different settings, including schools, colleges, and the workplace.

The impact of the 14–19 agenda on Newcastle Upon Tyne, East and Wallsend includes:

16–19 Area Inspection (14–19 from March 2003)

16–19 Area Inspections were introduced in 1999 as a key means of securing improvements in learning for young people. Both Newcastle Upon Tyne and North Tyneside have had a 16–19 area inspection, copies of their Ofsted reports can be found on their website www.ofsted.gov.uk.

With Tyne and Wear LSC in the lead, local partners have developed Action Plans for both areas, which have been accepted by Ministers. Tyne and Wear LSC are responsible for the implementation of both action plans, which are still ongoing.

In the autumn, Newcastle will under-go a further Area Inspection of 14–19 learning which will be undertaken jointly by Ofsted and the ALI. The LSC Tyne and Wear and the LEA will be jointly asked, along with local partners to prepare and implement an Action Plan, following the 14–19 Area Inspection.

Strategic Area Reviews (StARs)

In April 2003, all local Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs) started strategic area reviews (StARs) of post-16 LSC-funded provision. These reviews aim to achieve the right mix of provision in an area to improve participation, raise attainment and improve learner choice. StARs will ensure that there is the breadth of opportunity and quality of provision to meet the needs of learners, employers and communities.

All local LSCs have been gathering information, reviewing provider missions, and consequently building an understanding of each provider's role and the provision on offer.

In LSC Tyne and Wear's area there were five 16–19 area wide inspections between spring 2000 and spring 2002, including for Newcastle and North Tyneside (the local authority areas in which the constituency of Newcastle East and Wallsend falls). As a result of these inspections both authorities, in conjunction with the local LSC and many other partners in the Learning Partnerships, produced and are now implementing 14–19 strategies. The objectives of these strategies align perfectly with that of the LSC's Strategic Area Review process.

In both authorities, learning providers work in partnership on a wide range of learning issues, to deliver a learner entitlement for all young people. Over the last three years both authorities have seen an upward trend in participation and attainment at both GCSE and post-16 levels.

The StAR process for LSC Tyne and Wear in relation to 14–19 provision is, therefore, one which builds on this effective partnership work, rather than proposing structural reorganisation.

Vocational Provision

Learners in Newcastle have easy access within the city to 21 work-based learning providers delivering a wide range of vocational programmes covering occupational areas/sectors which are significant to the sub-regional economy including Business and Administration, Construction, Engineering, Health and Care, Hospitality, ICT, Retail. These programmes are available at a range of levels, from Entry to Employment through Foundation Modern Apprenticeships to Advanced Modern Apprenticeships and, increasingly, to 14–16 learners as part of their individual learning programme.

Four work-based learning providers are based in North Tyneside offering Business Administration, Construction, Engineering, Hair and Beauty, Hospitality and Catering programmes, as well as a very significant amount of Entry to Employment programmes and provision for learners with learning difficulties. Like Newcastle the provision in North Tyneside is appropriate for employment opportunities in the Tyne and Wear area.

In the compact sub-region which comprises LSC Tyne and Wear learners from both of these local authority areas have access to more than 60 providers of work-based opportunities.

Educational Maintenance Allowances

There is one Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) pilot area in Newcastle upon Tyne East and Wallsend. The pilot scheme has been in operation in North Tyneside since September 2000. In its first year the EMA provided financial support for 800 students and in each subsequent year 1,500 students have benefited from the scheme. In the financial year 2003–04 a total of £1.3 million in EMA payments were made for eligible students living in North Tyneside.

The scheme has now been launched nationally and all eligible students in England can apply for EMA for academic year 2004/05.

Higher Education

The number of 18 to 20-year-olds entering full-time Higher Education courses, are as follows:

	Newcastle upon Tyne LEA	*North Tyneside LEA*
1997	826	746
1998	925	772
1999	956	821
2000	1,001	769
2001	1,242	698
2002	1,269	651

Adult Education

The Local Labour Force Survey shows that in Newcastle upon Tyne, East and Wallsend:

The proportion of working age people qualified to at least level 4 rose from 15.8 per cent. in 1999 to 21.1 per cent. in 2002.

The proportion of working age people qualified to at least level 2 has fallen from 65.2 per cent. in 1999 to 62.7 per cent. in 2002.

The proportion of working age people without any qualifications rose from 18.3 per cent. in 1999 to 19.4 per cent. in 2002.

The proportion of working age people who received job related training in the last four weeks rose from 7.5 per cent. in 1999 to 12.5 per cent. in 2002.

[1] Includes provisional estimates of grants and allocations still to be confirmed. Total funding per pupil aged 3–19 includes Education Formula Spending (EPS) and all relevant grants in the DfES departmental Expenditure Limits but, for comparability, exclude the pensions transfer to Learning and Skills Council and EPS in 2003–04 and 2004–05. Real terms at 2002–03 prices.

Departmental Procurement

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of the *(a)* crockery, *(b)* cutlery and *(c)* glassware procured by his Department over the last five years is of British manufacture. [170798]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The percentage of crockery, cutlery and glassware procured by my Department over the last five years, which is of British manufacture is as follows:

(a) crockery 90 per cent.

(b) cutlery unknown country of origin not displayed

(c) glassware 0 per cent.

Education Services (Bootle)

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Bootle have benefited from the Excellence in Cities programme; and what the per pupil spending was in each year since the programme's inception. [172682]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows the number of children in Bootle benefiting from EiC, and the annual spend per pupil for the years in question.

	Number of children	*Total EiC expenditure[1] (£)*	*Spend per pupil (£)*
2000–01	4,219	373,916	88.63
2001–02	7,846	1,150,998	146.70
2002–03	7,821	1,297,269	165.87
2003–04	7,825	2,498,105	319.25

Note:
All funding figures supplied by Sefton Excellence in Cities Coordinator.

The increase in the number of pupils benefiting from EiC from 2001 onwards is due to the schools in the Education Action Zones in the area coming under the control of the Sefton EiC Partnership.

The large increase in the rate of EiC funding in 2002–03 is due to the extra funding provided through the Behaviour Improvement Programme and the increase in 2003–04 is due to the introduction of the Leadership Incentive Grant.

Education Statistics (Manchester)

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what public funding has been spent on adult *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy in Manchester, Blackley in each of the last five years. [172889]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The estimated total spend on "Skills For Life" (the Government's strategy for literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners from pre-entry level up to and including level 2) and on Key Skills (essential skills of communication, application of number and information technology), from April 2001 to July 2003, in the Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area is set out in the following table:

£000

	Basic skills	*Key skills*
April 2001 to July 2001[1]	8,925	2,598
August 2001 to July 2002	15,369	3,586
August 2002 to July 2003	27,258	4,210

[1] The figures for April to July 2001 include costs incurred from August 2000 on learning aims continuing into April 2001.

From the information available to the LSC it has not been feasible to obtain estimates at constituency level or separate figures by subject without incurring disproportionate cost. Likewise it has not been feasible to obtain comparable figures for periods before April 2001 when the Skills for Life strategy was launched and the LSC was formed, but information shows it was considerably less than at present.

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools in Manchester, Blackley deemed to be failing since 1997 have since reached satisfactory standards. [172890]

Mr. Miliband: One primary school in Manchester, Blackley has been deemed to be failing on two inspections since 1997 and placed in special measures twice. Following the second designation, the requirement for special measures was removed in June 2003.

Free School Meals (Edmonton)

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children received free school meals in the constituency of Edmonton in *(a)* 1991–92, *(b)* 2001–02 and *(c)* 2003. [169304]

Mr. Stephen Twigg *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* The available data on free school meals is shown in the table. Information for 1991–92 is not available at Parliamentary Constituency level.

Maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools[1]: school meal arrangements Position as at January each year—Edmonton Parliamentary Constituency

	Number on roll	*Number of pupils taking free school meals*	*Percentage taking free school meals*	*Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals*	*Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals*
Maintained Nursery and Primary					
2001	10,703	2,556	23.9	2,977	27.8
2002	10,686	2,540	23.8	3,046	28.5
2003[2]	10,616	2,611	24.6	3,097	29.2

Maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools[1]: school meal arrangements Position as at January each year—Edmonton Parliamentary Constituency

	Number on roll	Number of pupils taking free school meals	Percentage taking free school meals	Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals
Maintained Secondary					
2001	5,791	822	14.2	1,282	22.1
2002	5,964	727	12.2	1,258	21.1
2003[2]	5,822	738	12.7	1,189	20.4

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Includes dually registered pupils and boarding pupils.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

GCSEs

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of 15 and 16-year-olds in Wigan achieved five or more GCSEs at grade A* -C or GNVQ equivalent in each of the last seven years. [169287]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is as follows:

Percentage of 15-year-old pupils[1] achieving five or more grades A–C at GCSE/GNVQ*

Percentage

Academic year	Wigan	England
1997	44.8	45.1
1998	43.2	46.3
1999	45.7	47.9
2000	46.7	49.2
2001	47.1	50.0
2002	49.3	51.6
2003	50.7	52.9

[1] GCSE/GNVQ results are reported as standard as the results of pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year i.e. 31 August and therefore reaching the end of compulsory education at the end of the school year.

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the GCSE results in the constituency of Edmonton were in *(a)* 1991–92, *(b)* 2001–02 and *(c)* 2003. [169305]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* The information requested is as follows:

Percentage of 15-year-old pupils[1] achieving five or more grades A-C at GCSE/GNVQ*

Academic year	Edmonton parliamentary constituency	England
1991/92	42.4	38.3
2001/02	42.4	51.6
2002/03	44.0	52.9

[1] GCSE/GNVQ results are reported as standard as the results of pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year i.e. 31 August and therefore reaching the end of compulsory education at the end of the school year.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of 15 and 16-year-olds in South Ribble achieved five or more GCSEs at grade A* -C or GNVQ equivalent in each of the last seven years. [171981]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is as follows:

Percentage of 15-year-old pupils[1] achieving five or more grades A–C*

Percentage

Academic year	South Ribble	England
1997	54.7	45.1
1998	53.9	46.3
1999	56.0	47.9
2000	61.0	49.2
2001	59.5	50.0
2002	61.5	51.6
2003	63.7	52.9

[1] GCSE/GNVQ results are reported as standard as the results of pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year i.e. 31 August and therefore reaching the end of compulsory education at the end of the school year.

Higher Education (Specialist Courses)

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students enrolled on specialist textile and clothing education courses in universities and colleges in each of the last 15 years for which figures are available. [167591]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The following table shows the number of enrolments on fashion and textiles courses in further education colleges from 1995–96 to 2002–03 inclusive. Figures for earlier years are not available due to changes in data collection methods. Figures for higher education enrolments to textile and clothing education courses are not held centrally.

Enrolments on 'fashion and textiles' courses in further education sector colleges in England: 1995–96 to 2002–03

	Number of enrolments[1]
1995/96	7,890
1996/97	9,970
1997/98	9,600
1998/99	7,960
1999/2000	7,410
2000/01	6,480
2001/02	6,210
2002/03[2]	4,990

[1] Council-funded further education only.
[2] Provisional.
Note:
Numbers are rounded to nearest 10.
Source:
LSC Individualised Student/Learner Record

Key Stage 2

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of pupils achieved each level for *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy at Key Stage 2 in each year since the introduction of SATs. [172934]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is:

Percentage of pupils achieving each level

	D	A	F	B	N	W	1	2	3	4	5
English											
2003[1]	1	1	—	3	2	—	—	1	17	48	27
2002	1	1	—	3	2	—	—	1	17	46	29
2001	1	1	—	3	2	—	—	1	17	46	29
2000	1	2	—	4	2	—	—	1	20	47	23
1999	0	2	—	3	2	—	—	1	20	48	22
1998	0	2	—	4	2	—	—	1	26	48	17
1997	0	3	—	4	2	—	—	1	26	48	16
1996	0	3	2	—	—	0	1	6	30	45	12
Mathematics											
2003[1]	0	1	—	3	2	—	—	1	20	44	29
2002	1	1	—	2	2	—	—	1	20	46	27
2001	0	1	—	2	2	—	—	1	22	45	25
2000	0	2	—	3	2	—	—	1	20	45	26
1999	0	2	—	3	2	—	—	1	23	45	24
1998	0	2	—	3	3	—	—	1	31	42	17
1997	0	3	—	3	2	—	—	2	28	44	18
1996	0	3	2	—	—	0	1	5	34	40	14

[1] 2003 results are provisional.

Notes:

A—represents pupils who were absent.

D—represents pupils who have been disapplied under section 364/365 of the Education Act.

B—represents pupils who were assessed by teacher assessment only.

N—represents pupils who took the tests but failed to register a level.

W—represents pupils who are "working towards" level 1 but have not yet achieved the standards needed for level 1.

F—represents pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence.

Mayoral Meetings

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills on what dates *(a)* he and *(b)* his predecessor has held official meetings with the Mayor of London since July 2000; and what the subject of each meeting was. [171437]

Mr. Stephen Twigg *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* Ministers from the Department for Education and Skills have met the Mayor of London from time to time and discussed a variety of subjects relating to education and skills.

Residential Experiences

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to his address to the NASUWT conference, if he will make a statement on funding support for residential experiences for school children. [171057]

Mr. Miliband: Many schools already offer opportunities for residential experience for their students. My Department is looking at how residential opportunities can contribute to more young people taking advantage of extra curricular activities. As a starting point a map of existing residential opportunities will be established. I will also reflect fully on further advice from the Tomlinson Group on 14–19 reform about young people developing broader skills through wider activities.

Safe Routes to Schools Programme

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of schools *(a)* in Bolton, North East, *(b)* in Greater Manchester and *(c)* in England have implemented initiatives under the Safe Routes to Schools programme. [172601]

Mr. Jamieson: I have been asked to reply.

Local transport plan annual progress reports submitted by local authorities at the end of July 2003 showed that by the end of March 2004 *(a)* they did not expect any schools in the area covered by Bolton metropolitan borough council to have either a safe route to school or a school travel plan in place; *(b)* they expected 260 schools in Greater Manchester to have at least one safe route to school and 167 to have a school travel plan in place; and *(c)* they expected over 3,800 schools nationally to have at least one safe route to school and over 3,500 to have a school travel plan in place. Local transport plan annual progress reports do not enable us to identify the numbers of safe routes to school and school travel plans by constituency area.

Although no schools in Bolton currently have a safe route to school or school travel plan in place, I understand that at least seven local traffic calming schemes have been implemented within the immediate environs of schools, one school has prepared a draft school travel plan and several others have expressed an interest in developing a plan.

School Buildings

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cost was of outstanding repairs to school buildings identified by the 2003 Asset Management Survey; and when he will publish the full results of that survey. [171241]

Mr. Miliband: The data supplied to the Department by English local education authorities and derived from their condition assessments of school buildings show maintenance requirements of approximately £8,000 million. This figure includes outstanding repairs and work needed over a five year period from the dates of the assessments. The Department has been working with authorities to resolve data quality issues and will shortly publish analysis of the data.

Central government capital support for investment in school buildings has increased from under £700 million in 1996–97 to £4.5 billion this year and will rise further to over £5 billion by 2005–06. Progress is being made year-by-year in improving the quality of the school building stock.

School Exclusions

Mr. Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what reports he has received on the exclusion of disruptive children from schools during Ofsted inspections. [172375]

Mr. Miliband: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has not received any reports of disruptive children being excluded during Ofsted inspections.

Pupils may be excluded only for disciplinary reasons, in response to serious breaches of a school's discipline policy, and if allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school.

An exclusion which is not carried out in accordance with the formal procedures set out in regulations and guidance would be illegal.

School Locations

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary school pupils live more than three miles away from the school that they attend, broken down by region. [167866]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* The information requested is shown in the table.

Numbers of pupils living more than three miles [1] from the maintained primary and secondary schools [2] that they attend—January 2003

	Primary Number of school population travelling more than three miles	Secondary Percentage of school population travelling more than three miles	Number of school population travelling more than three miles	Percentage of school population travelling more than three miles
North East	5,996	2.6	22,703	12.5
North West	17,045	2.7	62,996	13.3
Yorkshire and the Humber	12,909	2.8	51,235	14.6
East Midlands	14,931	4	58,757	19.6
West Midlands	17,648	3.6	54,095	14.2
East of England	21,386	4.7	88,607	22.9
London	14,576	2.3	55,741	13.2
South East	30,805	4.7	114,785	22.5
South West	19,891	5	78,074	23.9
England	155,187	3.7	586,993	17.8

[1] Distances calculated are straight line.

[2] Includes middle schools as deemed.

Source:

Pupil Level Annual Schools' Census.

Schools (Outdoor Pursuits)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when he last discussed access to outdoor and adventurous activities for young people with the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. [171604]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Outdoor and adventurous activities is one of six areas of activity for which programmes of study have been drawn up within National Curriculum Physical Education. The Secretaries of State for Education and Skills and for Culture, Media and Sport have regular bilateral meetings at which a range of issues are discussed, including provision for PE and school sport.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps his Department is taking to promote adventure holidays and outdoor pursuits in schools; and if he will make a statement. [171606]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The extent to which schools incorporate adventure holidays, and outdoor pursuits in their provision (beyond the provision for outdoor and adventurous activities within National Curriculum Physical Education), is at their discretion. The Department will reflect fully on further advice from the Tomlinson Group on 14–19 reform about young people developing broader skills through wider activities.

Secondary Schools (Cambridgeshire)

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many vacant secondary school places there were in Cambridgeshire, broken down by *(a)* school year group, *(b)* district and *(c)* establishment, at the start of the spring term of school year 2003–04. [172637]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows the number of surplus secondary school places in Cambridgeshire broken down by individual establishment. The figures state the position at the beginning of the calendar year beginning 2003 rather than the school year.

We do not collect surplus place data by school year group, or borough or district area.

Number of surplus places in secondary schools in Cambridgeshire at January 2003

School name	Surplus
Bottisham Village College	40
Impington Village College	61
Swavesey Village College	128
Parkside Community College	0
Chesterton Community College	122
Coleridge Community College	223
Cottenham Village College	114
Melbourn Village College	176
The Cromwell Community College	174
Sir Harry Smith Community College	5
Witchford Village College	38
The Manor Community College	281
The Netherhall School	156
St. Ivo School	13
Ernulf Community School	103
City of Ely Community College	244
The Neale-Wade Community College	34
Hinchingbrooke School	65
Ramsey Abbey School	0
St. Bede's Inter-Church Comprehensive School	21
Gamlingay Village College	54
Bassingbourn Village College	37
The Queen's School	198
Sawtry Community College	0
Comberton Village College	158
Sawston Village College	90
Ailwyn Community College	3
Longsands College	27
St. Peter's School	243
Soham Village College	36
Union Village College	32
Total	2,876

Teacher Numbers

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* teachers, *(b)* support staff and *(c)* teachers in secondary schools there were (i) in 1997 and (ii) on the latest date for which figures are available in (A) the London borough of Waltham Forest and (B) the London borough of Redbridge. [171992]

Mr. Miliband: The tables show the total number of full-time equivalent regular teachers in all maintained schools, support staff in maintained schools and regular teachers in maintained secondary schools in January 1997 and 2003 in the two local education authorities requested.

Redbridge LEA

	Regular teachers	Support staff	Regular secondary teachers
1997	2,100	600	1,060
2003	2,470	1,140	1,300

Waltham Forest LEA

	Regular teachers	Support staff	Regular secondary teachers
1997	2,010	740	840
2003	1,940	1,230	890

[1] Includes maintained and non-maintained special schools.

Sources:

Annual School Census (support staff) and the annual survey of teachers in service and teacher vacancies (618g) (teachers).

Teacher Workload

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the change in teacher workload since the publication of Red Tape and Bureaucracy in Schools; and what progress has been made against the targets announced in the document. [171828]

Mr. Miliband: The main means by which teacher workload is monitored is through the regular diary surveys undertaken for the Office for Manpower Economics. Last year's survey was conducted in March 2003. The most recent one was conducted in March 2004, with results available in the autumn. The March 2003 survey showed some reductions in hours, but this was obviously too early to draw any conclusions. The "Making a Difference—Red Tape and Bureaucracy in Schools Second Report" was published in March 2003. The Report included 125 separate outcomes to be completed up to September 2005, of which 79 have now been completed.

The Implementation Review Unit (IRU) panel of 12 experienced practitioners drawn from schools across England was established in April 2003 to ensure that the bureaucratic and workload implications of both new and existing policies are kept under rigorous review, and to advise how red tape and bureaucracy can be minimised. Their first annual report was published on 30 April 2004, which provides an assessment of the progress that has been made, including the introduction of a system within the DfES to assess the impact of new initiatives before they are introduced. The report is available at www.dfes.gov.uk/iru.

Teenage Pregnancy

Mr. Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures are being taken in schools to *(a)* promote the safer sex message and *(b)* reduce unplanned pregnancies. [172577]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Teaching about safer sex is a key element of the Government's sexual health strategy and is covered by our Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) guidance which was sent to all schools in July 2000. All maintained secondary schools have a statutory responsibility to teach SRE including sexual health, contraception and the range of advice and support services which are available.

Effective SRE should ensure that young people understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity, including unwanted pregnancies, and give them the skills and knowledge to make informed decisions.

Truancy (Nottinghamshire)

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average truancy rate for secondary schools in Nottinghamshire was in each of the last five years. [171517]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is as follows.

Percentage of half days missed due to unauthorised absences for secondary schools in Nottinghamshire

Academic year (September-May)	*Percentage*
1998	1.49
1999	1.38
2000	1.34
2001	1.24
2002	1.30
2003	1.49

Unemployed Graduates

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many graduates claimed unemployment benefit for *(a)* one to three months, *(b)* four to six months, *(c)* seven to nine months and *(d)* 10 to 12 months directly after graduation in each year since 1997. [172628]

Alan Johnson: Administrative data relating to claims of jobseekers' allowance in the year after graduation are not available.

Information on economic activity more generally is collected, though not at the detailed level requested. The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) collects data on the employment position of students six months after graduation, through the annual First Destination Survey. Summary results are available in the relevant Statistical First Releases which are placed in the House of Commons Library.

The Department also commissioned the Institute of Employment Research to analyse the early careers of 1995 graduates. The published report[1] provides more detail of labour market transitions in the first year post-graduation. This research is currently being extended in an analysis of 1999 graduates which we expect to be published later this year.

[1] Elias, P. & K. Purcell (1999) Moving On—Graduate Careers Three Years After Graduation DfEE-CSU-AGCAS-IER

Universities

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) when his Department will agree the new criteria for degree-awarding powers and university title in England and Wales; [172288]

(2) whether the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education has extended its moratorium on the grant of new degree-awarding powers to institutions in Wales. [172289]

Alan Johnson: A moratorium on new applications for Degree Awarding Powers (DAP) and University Title (UT) was put in place for institutions in England and Wales last year as we consulted on revised criteria for DAP and UT. In a written ministerial statement on 16 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 16WS, I announced that we would be holding further discussions on renewable DAP and a paper will be issued on 14 May 2004. A copy of this paper will be placed in the House Libraries and will also be available on the Department for Education and Skills website. We hope to finalise new criteria for DAP and UT in England and Wales by this summer.

Vocational Qualifications

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress has been made in reducing the number of adults without a NVQ level 2 or equivalent qualification by 2010; and if he will make a statement. [172976]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Good progress is being made to reach our 2010 target of reducing by 40 per cent. those without a level 2 qualification (NVQ level 2 or equivalent). According to the Labour Force Survey, the reduction realised as of autumn 2003 was 5.4 per cent. from the autumn 2001 baseline. The interim milestone for 2006 is that there should be 1 million more adults in the workforce with full level 2 or better than in 2002. Autumn 2003 figures show an increase of 187,000 adults with at least a level 2 compared to the autumn 2002 baseline.

These figures are broadly in line with the planned trajectories for meeting the PSA targets for both 2006 and 2010.

The Skills Strategy White Paper (published July 2003) includes a wide range of interlinked measures to remove barriers to learning, support participation for individuals and increase the amount of training undertaken with employers. It set out our intention to introduce a new entitlement for any adult in the labour force to have access to free tuition for their first full level 2 qualification. We are working with the LSC on phasing in the level 2 entitlement, with phase one in 2004–05 and full rollout beginning the following year.

In September 2003, we started piloting the new Adult Learning Grant in ten local LSC areas, which offers up to £30 per week to adults on low incomes studying full-time for a first full level 2 qualification. Over 3,000 ALG applications have been received and over 2,000 awards have been made to learners. From September, we are doubling the size of the current pilot by extending the ALG throughout the SE and NE regions, as part of linked trials of key initiatives announced in the Skills Strategy.

There are currently 12 Employer Training Pilots (ETPs) which are testing new financial support measures to improve access to training and enable employees to attain basic and level 2 skills. By mid April over 49,000 learners and nearly 9,000 employers were engaged. The expansion of ETPs was announced in the Budget and ETPs will now be available in 20 LSC areas in England.

We believe that these and other related measures in the Skills Strategy will enable us to accelerate the trajectory towards meeting these targets.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Advisers/Consultants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies spent on external consultants and advisers in each of the last three years. [171874]

Maria Eagle: The Department for Work and Pensions was formed in 2002. Expenditure for years 2000–01 and 2001–02 is for the former Department of Social Security.

	£ million
2000–01	104.7
2001–02	169.5
2002–03	291.5

Benefit Claimants (Over-50s)

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of claimants of disability benefits aged between 50 and state pension age worked immediately prior to their claim, in each year since 1997, broken down by region; and if he will make a statement. [172540]

Maria Eagle: Information is not available on whether people worked immediately prior to claiming disability living allowance or industrial injuries disablement benefit. Both of these benefits can be paid to people in work, as well as to those who have stopped work or never worked.

Carers' Allowance

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the cost to the Exchequer of abolishing the overlapping benefit rule in respect of carers' allowance for *(a)* women over 60 years and *(b)* men and women over 65 years. [171344]

Maria Eagle: The gross cost of exempting all pensioners over 65 in receipt of carers' allowance from the overlapping benefits rule would be around £200 million. After adjusting for offsets in income-related benefits the cost would be around £130 million[1]. Exempting women only, aged 60 and over, would cost £155 million (£100 million after adjustments), although our commitment to the European directive on equal treatment would of course prevent us from introducing such a measure.

These costs do not take account of the introduction of pension credit where carers' allowance is taken fully into account but an additional amount may be awarded in respect of the caring.

Neither do the figures take account of the behavioural effect of carers who have not claimed a carer's allowance but who would be induced to do so if the overlapping benefits rules were amended as suggested.

[1] Estimates use benefit rates for 2003–04 and are based on a 100 per cent. extract of claims for carers' allowance taken from the carers' allowance computer system for May 2003, a 5 per cent. extract from claims recorded on the income support computer system in 2003 and a 1 per cent. extract of housing benefit/council tax benefit claims of May 2001.

Departmental Annual Report

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much the production of his Department's latest annual report cost; how many copies were printed; how many copies of it were sold at its cover price; to whom copies of the report have been provided free of charge; and how many copies were provided free of charge. [171159]

Maria Eagle: The Department for Work and Pensions latest departmental report was published on 29 April 2004. Final expenditure figures are not yet available, but the costs of production incurred by the Department are estimated to be £38,897. Publishing costs are met by the publisher, TSO (The Stationery Office), and do not fall to government.

1,500 copies of the report were produced, of which 1,160 were for the Department's use. Distribution details are set out in the following table. The report is also available free of charge on the departmental website.

The production and sale of remaining copies of the report are matters for the publisher. Meaningful information about the number of copies of the 2004 report sold at the cover price of £27 is not yet available as publication is so recent.

Recipients	*Number of copies distributed free of charge*
House of Lords	50
House of Commons	200
Chair of the Treasury Select Committee	1
Chair and members of Work and Pensions Select Committee	23
Opposition spokesmen	4
Social Security Advisory Committee	15
HM Treasury and Cabinet Office	3
Health and Safety Commission/Executive	10
Departmental staff	854
Total	1,160

Departmental Appointments

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have been employed on 13 week casual appointments in his Department in the last 12 months, broken down by agency; and if he will make a statement. [171591]

Maria Eagle: The information is in the table.

Thirteen week casual appointments during the period 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004

Business area	*Number*
DWP Corporate Centre	0
Jobcentre Plus	138
The Pension Service	5
Child Support Agency	1
Disability and Carers Service	13
The Appeals Service	0
Total	157

Departmental Computers

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to update computer *(a)* hardware and *(b)* software standard packages used in his Department. [166370]

Mr. Pond: By June this year we will have completed the modernisation of the desktop infrastructure across the Department. This has involved replacing almost all existing desktop hardware, and supporting file and print servers, upgrading the networks and delivering a standard set of software applications and packages.

In future, in common with standard industry practice, IT equipment and services will be updated in line with ongoing business needs, with value for money being an important factor in determining how and when any updates take place. Additionally, our strategy and thinking will be informed by opportunities presented by advances in technology, benchmarking against industry standards and consultation with our existing suppliers and other Government Departments.

Departmental Pay

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of his Department's staff earn less than two-thirds of male median earnings. [170584]

Maria Eagle: The information is in the table. The figures reflect the first stage of the DWP 2003 pay award. The numbers of staff earning below two-thirds of the male median will reduce when the second stage of the award is paid with May 2004 salaries.

DWP	*Under £6.00 ph*	*Over £6.00 ph*	*Total staff*
Total staff in post (Number)	26,902	117,536	144,438
Percentage of total	18.6	81.4	100

Notes:

1. The Median of Male Gross Earnings (all employees) is £9.07 according to the Office for National Statistics Labour Force Survey for Winter 2003–04. Two-thirds is therefore £6.00.
2. DWP data is taken from the February 2004 payroll.
3. DWP salaries include allowances, but not overtime as the hourly rate calculations from which the numbers are derived are based on DWP standard contractual hours.
4. The standard contractual hours used for the figures are 41 for full-time staff in the London pay zones, 36 for part-time staff in the London pay zones, 42 and 37 respectively for staff working outside these areas.

Disability Benefits

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of people are on disability benefits, broken down by *(a)* benefit and *(b)* region; and if he will make a statement. [171587]

Maria Eagle: The information is in the following tables.

People receiving disability living allowance (DLA), attendance allowance (AA) and industrial injuries disablement benefit (IIDB), as a percentage of the population of Great Britain and broken down by benefit combinations and Government Office region

Thousand

Region	*Total*	*Percentage of population*	*DLA only*	*DLA and IIDB*	*DLA and AA*	*DLA, AA and IIDB*
All	4,172.2	7.3	2,408.9	102.7	14.3	0.8
North East	250.7	10.0	141.3	13.0	0.8	[2]—
North West	625.4	9.3	381.1	18.1	2.1	[1]0.2
Yorkshire and Number	391.2	7.9	235.7	10.1	0.9	[1]0.1
East Midlands	308.8	7.3	170.3	10.2	0.9	[1]0.1
West Midlands	412.3	7.8	230.5	10.6	1.6	[1]0.1
East	320.4	5.9	170.7	6.1	1.3	[2]—
London	383.3	5.2	240.4	4.4	1.1	[2]—
South East	389.0	4.8	210.9	6.5	1.8	[2]—
South West	323.3	6.5	163.0	5.2	1.2	[1]0.1
Wales	322.7	11.1	194.8	9.0	1.1	[1]0.2
Scotland	444.8	8.8	270.1	9.5	1.5	[2]—

Thousand

Region	*AA only*	*AA and IIDB*	*IIDB only*
All	1408.1	19.2	218.2
North East	67.2	2.1	26.3
North West	191.4	2.7	29.8
Yorkshire and Number	117.2	2.1	25.2
East Midlands	104.5	1.9	20.8
West Midlands	146.9	2.1	20.6
East	126.7	0.8	14.7
London	126.4	0.7	10.4
South East	148.7	0.9	20.3
South West	137.4	1.3	15.2
Wales	102.5	2.6	12.6
Scotland	139.2	2.1	22.5

[1] Figures are less than 500 and subject to a high degree of sampling variation.

[2] Denotes nil or negligible.

Notes:

1. Figures taken from a 5 per cent. sample at 31 August 2003 for AA and DLA and at 30 September 2003 for IIDB.
2. Figures are in thousands and rounded to the nearest hundred.
3. From November 2002, the methodology for producing these figures was changed to allow statistics to be published much sooner. This has resulted in a small increase in the reported caseload. This is because some cases which have actually terminated but have not yet been updated on the computer system are now included.
4. Population Figures used to produce the percentages are mid 2002 for population of all ages. *Source:* Office for National Statistics.

5. DLA is payable to all ages, if claimed before 65. IIDB is payable to working age claimants. AA is only payable on new claims to those aged 65 plus. There remain a number of AA claims in payment from before 6 April 1992, which were not converted to DLA with the introduction of the new scheme, which explains why some people still receive a combination of DLA mobility component and AA for their care costs.
6. The total for AA does not match published individual benefit statistics as published AA statistics use rating factors to take account of late terminations.
Source:
IAD Information Centre.

Departmental Website

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost of maintaining his Department's website was in the last 12 months; how many staff are responsible for the maintenance of the website; and how many hits it received in the last 12 months. [170589]

Jane Kennedy: Development of the DWP website is carried out by the Department's own in-house web team who are responsible for its production, management and maintenance. It is not possible to quantify internal costs for the site.

There were no contracted or quantifiable costs for the Department's website in the last 12 months.

The department's IT contractor provides hosting of departmental sites, and provision of web hosting services. However, internet services are not accounted for separately and it is not possible to disentangle these costs.

The equivalent of five full-time members of staff maintain the site.

The site attracted 77,031,942 hits in the last 12 months.

Incapacity Benefit

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he will publish an assessment of the incapacity benefit pilots; and if he will make a statement. [172855]

Maria Eagle: We will be publishing reports at intervals during the course of the evaluation of the incapacity benefit pilots, although the full and final impact assessment will not be available until early 2007. From later this year onwards, qualitative findings on areas such as personal advisers and customer experiences of the reforms will be published. An interim assessment of the impact of the incapacity benefit pilots will also be available in summer 2005. In parallel we will be assessing direct feedback from those responsible for, and participating in, the pilots in order to further improve the effectiveness of the support available, and apply appropriate lessons more widely.

Occupational Pension Schemes

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will fund compensation for members of occupational pension schemes who have suffered serious loss and will not be eligible for the Pension Protection Fund. [172712]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer my hon. Friend to my reply to the hon. Member for Guildford (Sue Doughty) on 26 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 848W.

Pension Protection Fund

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether *(a)* the Chairman, *(b)* the Chief Executive and *(c)* the staff of the Pension Protection Fund will be in pensionable employment liable for the levy to the Pension Protection Fund. [172929]

Malcolm Wicks: As a part of the Pension Protection Fund (PPF) employment terms and conditions the Chairman, the Chief Executive and the staff of the Pension Protection Fund will have the opportunity to join the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme. This is in line with the pension provision currently provided for OPRA staff. The Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme, along with other similar schemes, is a funded public service pension scheme with a crown guarantee and therefore will not be required to pay the pension protection fund levies.

Public Awareness Campaigns

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what public awareness campaigns have been undertaken by his Department since 2001; and what the cost was of each. [170587]

Maria Eagle: During 2003–04 the Department for Work and Pensions ran a number of initiatives alerting people to their rights, responsibilities and entitlements through public awareness campaigns. Details of these campaigns and their respective costs are in the table.

2003–04 campaign	*Publicity expenditure (£)*
Future Pensioners/Informed Choice	2,700,000
Pensioners' Guide	1,250,000
Pension Credit	15,580,000
The Pension Service	2,650,000
Direct Payment	12,474,000
Direct Payment road show	480,000
Fraud	9,362,000
Winter Fuel	938,000
Council Tax Benefit	652,000
New Deal	7,600,000
Jobcentre Plus awareness	531,000
Jobseeker Direct help-line	1,700,000
Jobcentre Plus employer marketing	1,016,000
Age Positive	946,000
DDA Awareness	300,000

Notes:
1. All costs exclude VAT.
2. Figures have been rounded to the nearest thousand.
3. Information campaigns costing under £250,000 and the details of highly localised publicity activity by the Department's customer-facing businesses have generally not been included as a disproportionate cost would be incurred in compiling these figures.

A breakdown of publicity spend for 2001–02 and 2002–03 can be found in the Department's annual reports, copies of which are in the Library.

Unemployment Statistics (Over-50s)

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many and what proportion of people between the age of 50 and state pension age were

not in work in each year since 1997, broken down by gender; and if he will make a statement; [172531]

(2) how many and what proportion of people were in work immediately before reaching state pension age in each year since 1997, broken down by gender; and if he will make a statement; [172534]

(3) what percentage of people between the age of 50 and state pension age were long-term unemployed in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [172535]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr Holmes dated 13 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about employment and unemployment. I am replying in his absence. (172531, 172534,172535)

The attached tables provide the information requested for the three months ending in February each year from 1997 to 2004. Table 1 shows the numbers of people in employment by gender at an age one year less than the State retirement age. Table 2 shows the numbers of people by gender, aged between 50 and State retirement age, who were not in employment. Table 3 shows the numbers of people by gender, aged between 50 and State retirement age, who were unemployed for 12 months or longer.

All estimates are taken from the ONS Labour Force Survey. As with any statistical sample survey, estimates from the Labour Force Survey are subject to sampling variability.

Table 1: Numbers and proportion of people in employment immediately prior to State retirement age, United Kingdom, three months ending February each year from 1997 to 2004

Thousand, percentage

	Men aged 64 and women aged 59		*Men aged 64*		*Women aged 59*	
	Number	*Percentage*[1]	*Number*	*Percentage*[1]	*Number*	*Percentage*[1]
1997	235	41.4	102	38.0	132	44.5
1998	209	38.4	90	36.7	118	39.8
1999	226	41.1	92	36.6	134	44.9
2000	218	39.9	95	34.6	123	45.3
2001	250	42.0	103	36.1	147	47.5
2002	258	43.7	102	39.2	157	47.2
2003	274	43.5	106	36.7	168	49.3
2004	318	50.1	123	45.1	195	53.9

[1] As a percentage of population in the relevant age and gender group.
Source:
ONS-Labour Force Survey

Table 2: Numbers and proportion of people not in employment[1] *aged between 50 and State retirement age, United Kingdom, three months ending February each year from 1997 to 2004*

Thousand, percentage

	Men aged 50–64 and women aged 50–59		*Men aged 50–64*		*Women aged 50–59*	
	Number	*Percentage*[2]	*Number*	*Percentage*[2]	*Number*	*Percentage*[2]
1997	2,836	35.8	1,527	33.1	1,309	39.5
1998	2,855	34.9	1,532	32.3	1,323	38.5
1999	2,833	33.7	1,520	31.3	1,313	37.1
2000	2,896	33.8	1,578	31.9	1,318	36.5
2001	2,842	32.7	1,526	30.4	1,316	35.7
2002	2,849	32.3	1,533	30.3	1,316	35.1
2003	2,777	31.2	1,491	29.2	1,286	34.0
2004	2,715	30.3	1,448	28.1	1,268	33.3

[1] Not in employment refers to people who are either unemployed or economically inactive.
[2] As a percentage of population in the relevant age and gender group.
Source:
ONS-Labour Force Survey.

Table 3: Numbers and proportion of people who are long-term unemployed[1] *aged between 50 and State retirement age, United Kingdom, three months ending February each year from 1997 to 2004*

Thousand, percentage

	Men aged 50–64 and women aged 50–59		*Men aged 50–64*		*Women aged 50–59*	
	Number	*Percentage*[2]	*Number*	*Percentage*[2]	*Number*	*Percentage*[2]
1997	183	2.3	142	3.1	41	1.2
1998	133	1.6	102	2.1	31	0.9
1999	127	1.5	97	2.0	30	0.8
2000	104	1.2	86	1.7	18	0.5
2001	95	1.1	79	1.6	16	0.4
2002	83	0.9	63	1.2	20	0.5
2003	81	0.9	62	1.2	19	0.5
2004	71	0.8	53	1.0	18	0.5

[1] Long-term unemployment refers to people who are unemployed for over 12 months.
[2] As a percentage of population in the relevant age and gender group.
Source:
ONS-Labour Force Survey.

Websites

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total cost of the websites of *(a)* his Department and *(b)* executive agencies of his Department was in the most recent year for which figures are available. [160019]

Jane Kennedy: Development for the DWP website, agency and other campaign websites is carried out by the Department's own in-house web team who are responsible for production, management and maintenance of all sites.

Contracted and quantifiable costs are included in the following information for Jobcentre Plus and The Pensions Service websites, however it is not possible to quantify internal costs for the Department's and Child Support Agency sites.

The department's IT contractor provides hosting of departmental websites, and provision of web hosting services. However, internet services are not accounted for separately and it is not possible to disentangle these costs. Web hosting is included within the quantified costs for the Jobcentre Plus:

Organisation	*URL*	*Costs for 2002–03*
DWP	www.dwp.gov.uk	No external costs
CSA	www.csa.gov.uk	No external costs
Jobcentre Plus	www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk	[1]£763,285
The Pension Service	www.thepensionservice.gov.uk	£188,093

[1] Includes quantifiable web hosting costs and links to Job Bank jobs database e-Service.

Widows' Pensions

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the advice he gives to those *(a)* public and *(b)* private pension schemes which will allow a recipient to keep a widow's pension in the event of re-marriage. [172853]

Malcolm Wicks: In the private sector, provision of widows' and widowers' benefits is a matter for pension scheme rules. It is up to trustees to decide what information is given to members. Where a scheme is contracted out, it must provide for widows' and

widowers' benefits, but it is down to individual schemes to decide whether such payment should cease on re-marriage.

Most public service schemes have statutory rules which require widows' and widowers' pensions to terminate on re-marriage or cohabitation.

The Local Government Pension Scheme introduced widows' and widowers' pensions for life from April 1998.

Since October 2002 the new Civil Service pension scheme has provided for survivor pensions to be paid to unmarried partners; the costs of these benefits are being met by higher member contributions. At the same time the requirement to terminate widows' and widowers' pension on remarriage or cohabitation was removed.

DEFENCE

Apprenticeships

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether there will be apprenticeships in the Royal Navy in the future; and if he will make a statement. [172859]

Mr. Caplin: There are no plans to change the training of Royal Naval personnel in respect of apprenticeships in the future. The Royal Navy will continue to encourage personnel to gain external qualifications through accreditation with civilian organisations as this is a positive recruiting initiative and provides a well trained civilian work force for the future.

The training delivered to over 90 per cent. of personnel in the Royal Navy is eligible for the award of an apprenticeship as defined by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Currently over 3,200 personnel are working towards a Level 2 qualification.

BAE Systems

Mr. Jack: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the Government's relationship with BAE Systems; and what assessment he has made of the ways in which it can be improved. [171801]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* Her Majesty's Government have a professional relationship with all defence contractors, and senior company officials meet regularly with the Ministry of Defence, and other Government departments.

The MOD has set up Key Supplier Management (KSM) programmes to work with all major suppliers to improve performance from both the supplier and customer points of view.

Civilian Staff

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many civilian staff are employed *(a)* by Ministry of Defence Trading Funds and *(b)* as Royal Fleet Auxiliaries; how many of his Department's civilian staff are on (i) career breaks, (ii) long-term sick leave and (iii) secondments; and if he will list these numbers (A) for the whole of the UK, (B) for Scotland and (C) for Wales. [170450]

Mr. Caplin: The number of full-time equivalent, permanent, industrial and non-industrial civilian staff employed by the Ministry of Defence Trading Funds and Royal Fleet Auxiliaries in the whole of the United Kingdom, in Scotland and in Wales, as at the latest available date:

1 March 2004

	Trading funds	*Royal fleet auxiliaries*
Total UK	11,280	2,340
Of which:		
Scotland	540	n/a
Wales	2,470	n/a

The number of full-time equivalent, permanent, industrial and non-industrial MOD civilian staff on career breaks and secondments for the whole of the United Kingdom, for Scotland and for Wales, as at the latest available date:

1 March 2004

	Career breaks	*Secondments*
Total UK	510	220
Of which:		
Scotland	10	—
Wales	—	—

Information on the numbers of long-term sick leave for 2003 is not yet available. I will write to the hon. Member when it has been collated and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Defence Medal Offices

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many staff are employed at defence medal offices, broken down by *(a)* sex and *(b)* those employed on a (i) permanent, (ii) fixed-term and (iii) casual basis; [172035]

(2) what assessment he has made of the number of experienced staff who are prepared to transfer from Droitwich Spa to RAF Innsworth after the closure of the Army Medal Office. [172038]

Mr. Caplin: As at 10 May 2004, the following staff were employed at the four Defence Medal Offices.

	Sex	*Permanent*	*Fixed term*	*Casual*	*Total*
Army Medal Office	29 female 26 male	52	2	1	55
RAF Medal Office	6 female 9 male	12	0	3	15
RM Medal Office	6 female 1 male	7	0	0	7
RN Medal Office	11 female 1 male	11	0	1	12
		—	—	—	89

The Investment Appraisal assumed nine staff would transfer from Droitwich to Innsworth to build upon the existing cadre of experienced Innsworth based RAF Medal office staff. Until the current staff preference exercise is completed at the end of May, no further assessment can be made as to the number of experienced staff prepared to transfer from Droitwich to Innsworth.

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what the timetable is for the closure of the Army Medal Office in Droitwich Spa; [172039]

(2) if he will make a statement on his plans to minimise disruption in the issuing of medals normally issued by the Army Medal Office in Droitwich Spa during the period of its closure and relocation to RAF Innsworth. [172040]

Mr. Caplin: My written statement on 20 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 12WS, made clear that this will be a phased operation. The phased closure is part of the risk reduction strategy to counter the temporary disruption in the issuing of medals that may occur during the actual move.

Defence Projects

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list all *(a)* category A, *(b)* category B and *(c)* category C projects of his Department that have achieved their in-service date since 31 March 1997; and when the in-service date was achieved. [170560]

Mr. Ingram: A list of all Category A, Category B and Category C equipment projects procured by the Defence Procurement Agency and achieving in-service date is set out in the following table. Details prior to 1 April 2001 are incomplete as project information before that time is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Project name	*ISD*
Ocean Survey Vessel (HMS SCOTT)	June-1997
Skynet 4 Stage II	May-1998
PtarmiganMapps (Deployable Trunk Communications System)	December-2000
Medium Support Helicopter Aircrew Training Facility (MSHATF)	April-2001
Verticle Launched Anti-tank Munition (Shielder)	May-2001
COBLU-RN Communications Electronic Surveillance Measures	July-2001
Joint Command System (Logistics)	August-2001
Tractor Wheeled Earthmoving Medium	August-2001
C-17—Strategic Airlift	September-2001
Joint Operations Command System	September-2001
CHUB (Classified project)	November-2001
High Frequency Broadcast Modernisation	December-2001
SCAD 101 (submarine counter-measures acoustic devices)	December-2001
SCAD 200 (submarine counter-measures acoustic devices)	December-2001
ASRAAM (Advanced Short-Range Air-to-Air Missile)	January-2002
BOWMAN Personal Role Radio	January-2002
Replacement Precision Approach Radar (RPAR)	March-2002
RAF Command Control and Information System (RAF CCIS)	March-2002
Sea King MK7	March-2002
Combined Arms Tactical Trainer (CATT)	May-2002
Lynx Mk 7/9 Aircrew Training Service	May-2002
Radar Type 996	May-2002
Sea Dart IR Fuze	July-2002
SA80 Modification	August-2002
PSC 504—portable sitcom terminal	September-2002
Tactical Communications Digitisation Programme	November-2002
JTIDS (Joint Tactical Information Distribution System) into the SeaKing *(w)* Mk 7	December-2002
Area Weapons Effects Simulation (AWES)	January-2003
Tornado GR4 Synthetic Training Service (TSTS)	January-2003
Range Airborne Instrumented Debriefing System (RAIDS)	January-2003
Auxiliary Oiler	March-2003
Attack Helicopter Conversion Training (for aircrew, groundcrew and maintenance technicians)	April-2003
RORO—Strategic Sealift	April-2003
Secure Comms for the RAF	April-2003
Man-Portable Chemical Agent Detector (MCAD)	May-2003
Typhoon (agile combat aircraft)	June-2003
Heavy Equipment Transporter	July-2003
Landing Platform Dock (Replacement)	July-2003
DLH Offboard Active Decoy	September-2003
Survey Vessels (HMS ECHO)	September-2003
AH Crew and Special-to-arm collective training	November-2003
General Key Management	November-2003
Integrated Biological Detection System (IBDS)	November-2003
Directional Infra-Red Counter Measures (DIRCM)	December-2003
Very Low Frequency Received Signal Service	December-2003
Land System Reference Centre—Internet Protocol	January-2004
All Terrain Vehicle (Platform)—Viking	February-2004
BOWMAN—Tactical Communication System	March-2004
Hunt Mid-Life Update—Sonar Type 2193	March-2004
Successor Identification Friend or Foe (SIFF)	March-2004

Departmental Executive Agencies

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list place in the Library copies of the annual report and accounts for the *(a)* Fleet Air Arm Museum, *(b)* Royal Marines Museum, *(c)* Royal Naval Museum, *(d)* Royal Navy Submarine Museum, *(e)* National Army Museum and *(f)* Royal Air Force Museum for financial years 1997–98 to 2001–02. [172123]

Mr. Caplin: Yes.

Equipment Service Dates

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what the forecast in-service date was on 31 March 1997 for the Advanced Air-Launched Anti-Armour Weapon; [170366]

(2) what the forecast in-service date was on 31 March 1998 for the High Velocity Missile System; [170367]

(3) what the forecast in-service date was on 31 March 1999 for the *(a)* High Velocity Missile System and *(b)* Advanced Short Range Air-to-Air Missile. [170368]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the library of the House.

Royal Naval Engineering Artificer

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for what reason the title of Royal Naval Engineering Artificer is to be replaced by Engineering Technician; and whether there will be a change in the standards expected of occupants of the post. [172858]

Mr. Caplin: A review of the structure, organisation and training of both the Warfare and Engineering Branches of the Royal Navy is currently taking place. It is probable that the term Engineering Technician will be adopted for all members of the Engineering Branch below the rank of Commissioned Officer, replacing the Artificer and Mechanic titles currently in use. The title Artificer no longer adequately describes the professional role that those personnel undertake in the modern Navy. Replacing them with Engineering Technicians will align the Navy with the standards of competence published by the Engineering Council United Kingdom, and refresh the image of this key role against increasingly competitive recruitment market forces.

The fleet continues to require highly trained and experienced personnel to provide the necessary technical support to ensure that the Royal Navy delivers its full range of operational capability. An expected outcome from the current review is that training will be better targeted through a career, and that naval Engineering Technicians who complete the training satisfactorily will be awarded a Foundation Degree, reflecting the comprehensive set of skills that they will possess.

Saudi Armed Forces Project Office

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions have taken place between BAE Systems and the Department regarding the Saudi Armed Forces Project office of the Ministry of Defence between 2000 and 2002; when these discussions took place; what the nature of each discussion was; what the outcome of each was; and if he will make a statement. [171609]

Mr. Ingram: The Saudi Armed Forces Project, which is a part of the Ministry of Defence, is responsible for fulfilling the MOD's obligations in respect of the Al Yamamah (AY) programme. This includes monitoring the progress and performance of the programme prime contractor, BAE Systems, in the delivery of goods and services supplied to the Saudi Armed Forces. In this role and as the Department's focal point for AY matters, there is daily contact between members of the Project and representatives of BAE Systems on a wide range of issues affecting the performance of the AY contracts.

Support Vehicles

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department has made of the reliability of the Oshkosh support vehicles currently deployed in Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [171575]

Mr. Ingram: I assume that the Oshkosh support vehicles to which you refer are the Heavy Equipment Transporters. A fleet of 16 was deployed to Iraq in November 2003, and their reliability is assessed on a monthly basis against Key Performance Indicators. To date, these have all been achieved.

Sustainable Development

Mr. Breed: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps he is taking to promote the delivery of sustainable development within Government. [171804]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence fully supports the Sustainable Development in Government Initiative. We have been working actively with the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in the development of targets in respect of the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate.

For each of the Framework targets published to date (environmental management systems, travel, water, biodiversity and energy), the Department has published a statement within the timeframe required, outlining the steps it will take to address the targets.

The MOD contributes data to the annual Government Report on Sustainable Development report produced by DEFRA. Details of the Department's progress are available in the 2nd Annual Report (2003). The MOD will be producing an annual sustainable development report in November 2004.

We are also engaged in the current review of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy.

In addition MOD is working on its own Sustainable Development Strategy.

Mr. Breed: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress has been made with his Department's Sustainable Development Strategy. [171805]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence has been developing its own Sustainable Development Strategy (which will support its activities) based on the Government's existing strategy. We intend to publish a summary version in the near future.

In addition to its own Strategy, MOD contributes to the wider framework for sustainable development on the Government estate led by the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. MOD has published a statement for each of the framework targets published to date (environmental management system, travel, water, biodiversity and energy) outlining the steps it will take them to address them.

Territorial Army

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total strength of the Territorial Army was on 1 May; how many of its members are deployed abroad; and in which countries. [172118]

Mr. Caplin: The information requested is not yet available. For the most recent figures relating to the strength of the Territorial Army (TA) and numbers deployed, I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 26 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 728W, to the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South (Mr. Hancock).

The countries in which members of the TA are currently deployed are Iraq, Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan.

Timber

Ms. Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department plans to contribute financially to the establishment of the second phase of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [167626]

Mr. Caplin: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to her on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 31W, by my hon. Friend the Minister of State for the Environment and Agri-Environment.

Weapons Testing

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether *(a)* his Department, *(b)* non-departmental public bodies or executive agencies responsible to his Department and *(c)* consultants contracted to his Department used non-human primates in experiments to test the effects of weapons in each of the last three years. [170996]

Mr. Ingram: The only work carried out or sponsored by the Ministry of Defence on non-human primates is that undertaken by the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, (an agency of MOD) which has during the last three years conducted work using non-human primates to assess the effects and significance of human exposure to nerve agents and to develop medical countermeasures as appropriate. Additionally, work has been conducted in collaboration with allies to evaluate the performance and safety of protective countermeasures, for example, new vaccines against biological warfare agents.

Young Service Personnel (Deaths)

Mr. Stinchcombe: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many members of the UK armed forces under the age of 18 have died while serving in each of the last 10 years. [171799]

Mr. Caplin: Between 1 January 1994 and 31 December 2003, 28 regular armed forces personnel under the age of 18 have died in service. These deaths occurred in the following years:

Deaths in regular armed forces personnel aged under 18 years

	Number
1994	0
1995	3
1996	2
1997	0
1998	3
1999	5
2000	2
2001	5
2002	4
2003	1
Total	28

CABINET OFFICE

Buckingham Palace Garden Parties

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office pursuant to his answer of 26 April, to Question ref 168814, on garden parties, whether an exception has been made in the last 10 years to the policy of not permitting nominations for Commonwealth citizens to be made on the nomination form used by hon. Members. [169727]

Mr. Lammy: I have been asked to reply

The arrangements under which Commonwealth citizens are nominated by their High Commissions for invitations to Royal Garden Parties have been in place for well over 10 years. I am not aware of any exceptions having been made.

Green Minister

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if he will list the meetings his Department has been present at regarding the delivery of sustainable development across Government as coordinated by the Ministerial Sub-committee of Green Ministers. [167740]

Mr. Alexander: Departmental officials regularly attend meetings to discuss the delivering of sustainable development across Government.

As regards to Cabinet Committee business, it is established practice under exemption 2 of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information not to disclose such information.

Recycled Paper

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what percentage of paper for printed publications used by the Department in 2002–03 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained. [167733]

Mr. Alexander: Since August 2002 all printing contractors used by the Cabinet Office use the cross-departmental framework contract for the supply of

recycled paper for printed publications. Paper supplied is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum post consumer waste content of 75 per cent.

Shareholder Executive

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what consultations have been conducted by the Shareholder Executive on corporate finance and governance; and which of these consultations have been published. [171616]

Mr. Alexander: The Shareholder Executive has conducted a wide range of consultations on shareholder and governance issues, including with shareholding departments, companies owned by Government and other relevant parties outside Government. The Shareholder Executive is using these consultations to inform its work to improve Government's performance as a shareholder.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what the *(a)* resource budget, *(b)* administration cost and *(c)* staff numbers of the Shareholder Executive were for 2003–04; and when the annual report will be published. [171617]

Mr. Alexander: The resource budget allocated to the Shareholder Executive for 2003–04 was £2.2 million. The outturn administration cost, currently estimated at £1 million, reflects the Shareholder Executive being created only part way through the year. At the 31 March 2004, there were 12 members of staff in the Shareholder Executive. The Shareholder Executive is an integral part of the Cabinet Office and its activities are covered by the Cabinet Office's annual report.

Timber

Ms Walley: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office whether the Office plans to contribute financially to the establishment of the second phase of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [167623]

Mr. Alexander: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to her by my hon. Friend the Minister for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Mr. Morley) on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 31W.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Ethnic Minorities

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to bring the number of employees from ethnic minority backgrounds in *(a)* the Police Service and *(b)* the judiciary into line with ethnic breakdown of the population in Britain. [171081]

Ms Blears: The Government are committed to achieving a culturally diverse workforce in the police service that is representative of the local communities it serves. We are engaged with the leadership of the police service in addressing diversity and promoting race equality in the areas of recruitment, training and development.

We are pursuing a number of positive initiatives to improve representation in the police service. We have introduced national recruitment, assessment and selection processes that are fair and transparent and designed to weed out applicants with racist attitudes. Within this, we are encouraging, for example, all forces to use members of their minority communities as assessors in their selection processes.

In January we launched a new action plan "Breaking Through—Promoting Minority Ethnic Employment in the Police Service" to help forces focus on steps to improve recruitment, retention and progression of ethnic minorities.

We have recently conducted advertising aimed at ethnic minorities and have produced a new ethnic minority recruitment leaflet for forces. Our relaunched police recruitment website encourages applications from ethnic minorities and women.

In terms of the Judiciary, my right hon. noble and learned Friend, the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs and Lord Chancellor has introduced a bill to create a new, independent, Judicial Appointments Commission which will inspire a more diverse range of applicants through a more open, transparent and accessible system. The Department is also examining whether other barriers exist to deter applicants from minority groups, while continuing to run its comprehensive outreach programme.

Active Communities Unit

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department who the recipients of grants made by the Active Communities Unit were in *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* in each of the previous five years. [171064]

Fiona Mactaggart: A full listing of Active Community Unit grant recipients in 2003 04, and in each of the previous five years, has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the Active Communities Unit's budget is for 2004–05. [171066]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Active Community Unit's budget for 2004–05, rounded to the nearest million pounds, is currently £84 million. In addition, the unit is responsible for £57 million of the Futurebuilders Fund, which is being distributed by an independent provider under contract to the Home Office.

Antisocial Behaviour

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* anti-social behaviour orders, *(b)* curfew orders and *(c)* other measures have been used to ban individuals from railway stations without intent to travel in each year since 1997. [171904]

Ms Blears: *(a)* Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs)—Introduced under the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) ASBOs have been available to the courts since 1 April 1999. The statistical database does not identify the type of restriction imposed on orders.

(b) Curfew Orders—It is not possible from the information collected centrally to identify the individual requirements of Curfew Orders imposed at magistrate's courts and the Crown Court.

(c) Other measures— British Transport Police advise that it is their policy to ask for extended conditions to keep offenders of the railway when a Football Banning Order (FBO) is applied for. Currently there are 30 subjects whose FBO has conditions stopping persons from travelling upon the railway.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many anti-social behaviour orders have been issued against businesses in each of the last five years, broken down by region. [172427]

Ms Blears: Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) cannot be made against businesses, they can only be made against named individuals.

Asylum/Immigration

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what factors prevent his Department from removing failed asylum seekers from the UK to *(a)* Afghanistan, *(b)* Iraq, *(c)* Somalia, *(d)* Zimbabwe and *(e)* Eritrea. [164109]

Mr. Browne: All asylum and human rights claims are considered on their individual merits in accordance with our obligations under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Should a claim be refused and any appeal before the independent Immigration Appellate Authority be unsuccessful, it means that for that individual it is safe to return.

We have an agreement with the Afghan Authorities which enables us to return significant numbers of Afghan failed asylum seekers to Afghanistan each month.

We have also reached an agreement with the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq to begin enforced returns of Iraqi failed asylum seekers.

We are currently working on the practicalities of the returns programme, and will commence returns as soon as these arrangements are finalised.

We are currently facilitating the return of those Iraqis who wish to go home through the International Organisation for Migration.

We also have a returns agreement with the Somaliland authorities and have also begun to return small numbers of failed asylum seekers to Somalia.

We are currently in discussion with the Eritrean Government on improving the issuing of re-documentation to Eritrean nationals who we wish to return.

The only country to which, as a matter of policy, we do not at present generally enforce the return of failed asylum seekers is Zimbabwe. This policy is based not on asylum or human rights reasons but on our view that in the wider context of the Government's position on Zimbabwe, it would be inappropriate forcibly to return failed asylum seekers applicable at this time.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what mechanisms are in place to ensure asylum decisions affecting nationals of EU accession countries, including outstanding cases where an initial refusal was given but which are subject to further process, are expedited after 1 May when National Asylum Support Service and local authority provision for such asylum seekers ends. [167327]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* In relation to the small number of asylum seekers who may not yet have received an initial decision on their asylum application, these cases will be dealt with as a priority. Nationals of EU accession countries who have outstanding appeals against the decision to refuse their asylum claim will be advised of their rights as EU nationals and invited to withdraw their appeals. If they do not formally withdraw their appeals and are issued with a residence permit, their appeal will automatically be treated as abandoned.

In relation to the ending of support on 1 May, the National Asylum Support Service (MASS) wrote to all NASS-supported cases on 5–6 April and all interim cases on 16 April informing them of their options, namely that they can work, become otherwise self-supporting, or leave the UK.

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers have *(a)* applied for and *(b)* been refused help under section 4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. [171346]

Mr. Browne: The information requested is not available and could be produced only at a disproportionate cost.

When it is not possible for a failed asylum seeker to return to their country of origin following a negative decision, an application may be made for support under Section 4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, which came into force on 11 November 1999. There are no published statistics on the number of failed asylum seekers who have applied, and have been accepted or refused, for accommodation under Section 4.

Information on the number of asylum seekers supported by the National Asylum Support Service is published quarterly. The next publication covering the first quarter of 2004 (January to March) will be available on 25 May on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers have applied for judicial review in the last 12 months; and how many have been *(a)* successful and *(b)* unsuccessful in their application. [171347]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number of asylum seekers who have applied for judicial review, for the latest 12-month period for which data are available, are given in the table. The table shows the total number of applications, decisions and grants of permission to apply for judicial review as well as the outcomes of judicial review hearings. Decisions do not necessarily correspond to applications for permission to apply for judicial review in any given period. Only a small proportion, nine per cent. of applications for permission to apply for judicial review were granted in 2002.

Application for Judicial Review, and outcomes, excluding dependants, 2002[1]

Applications for permission to apply for Judicial Review[2]	
Applications	3,075
Decisions[3]	2,980
of which:	
Granted permission on to apply	260
Percentage of applicants granted permission to apply[4]	(9)
The outcome of judicial review hearings[2]	
Allowed[5]	
Total	25
As percentage of total determined	(30)
Dismissed[6]	
Total	60
As percentage of total determined	(67)
Withdrawn	
Total	5
As percentage of total determined	(3)

[1] Provisional figures

[2] Figures based on Administrative Court data. Figures (other than percentages) rounded to the nearest 5 with * = 1 or 2

[3] Decisions do not relate to applications in any given period

[4] The number of which granted leave to move as a percentage of decisions

[5] The decision of the respondent (in this case, the Home Office or the Immigration Appeal Tribunal) was quashed. These figures include consent order where the JR was conceded by the respondent

[6] The decision of the respondent was upheld

Statistics on judicial review are published annually; data covering 2003 are due to be published towards the end of August 2004. Copies of the most recent publications are available from the Library of the House or on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Immigration and Nationality Directorate caseworkers dealt with asylum claims in each of the past three years; what the *(a)* target and *(b)* actual maximum case load was in each year; what staff turnover was in each year; how many days' work was lost through sickness in each year; and what provision has been made for staff to receive stress counselling. [170104]

Mr. Browne: During 2003 there were 570 full time equivalent staff employed as asylum caseworkers in post. This compares with 556 and 632 caseworkers during 2002 and 2001.

The Home Office's Public Service Agreement (PSA) target for 2003–04 was to ensure that 75 per cent. of new substantive asylum applications (excluding withdrawals and third country cases) were decided within two months. This was an increase from the 65 per cent. and 60 per cent. targets met in 2002–03 and 2001–02 respectively, and reflects the Government's commitment to, and success in, speeding up the initial decision-making process.

The total number of applications received during 2003, 2002 and 2001 was 49,370, 84,130 and 71,025 respectively.

The number of asylum applications awaiting an initial decision as of December 2003 was 24,500 (the latest date for which published figures are available), the lowest level for 10 years. This compares to 42,200 and 41,300 for 2001 and 2002 respectively and is a significant reduction from the 1997 level of 51,795.

Information on the number of asylum applications out tanding and the timeliness of initial decisions is published quarterly on the Home Office website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Data are not recorded for staff turnover or absenteeism of caseworkers in contrast to other members of staff within the Home Office and would be available only at disproportionate cost. Sickness absence for the Home Office is recorded and published by the Cabinet Office.

Advice, support and counselling on dealing with stress is available to all members of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate. This is provided through the Home Office Health and Welfare Service.

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many EU citizens have been removed from the United Kingdom in each year since 1997 in circumstances where they are deemed to be unable to support themselves and are an unreasonable burden on the state, broken down by EU member state. [161402]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number of EU nationals removed from the UK and on the personal circumstances of those people who are removed is not available.

Under EEA regulations an EU national can be removed and excluded from the UK if it is decided that their removal is justified on the grounds of public policy, public security or public health. Any right of residence is subject to that individual demonstrating that they can exercise a specific treaty right to reside.

The number of people removed from the UK in 2003 is due to be published in the Home Office Statistical Bulletin "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom 2003" on the Home Office web-site at the end of August. www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Brain Fingerprinting

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department: pursuant to his answer of 5 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1541W, on brain fingerprinting, if he will evaluate the effectiveness of brain fingerprinting technologies that monitor the involuntary electrical waves emitted by the brain. [172049]

Ms Blears: There are no plans at present for the Home Office to evaluate brain fingerprinting technologies. However claims about the effectiveness of this technology will be considered in the Police Science and Technology Strategy Group with a view to deciding whether any research should be considered.

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter to him from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 5 April with regard to Mrs. Rahmat Bibi. [171780]

Mr. Blunkett: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 12 May 2004.

Crime

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in *(a)* overall recorded crime, *(b)* recorded violent crime, *(c)* burglaries and *(d)* vehicle thefts in Oldham, West and Royton has been since 1997. [170954]

Ms Blears: The information requested is not available centrally.

Oldham West and Royton comes within the Oldham Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) area. Data at CDRP level has only been published from 1999–2000 onwards. Detailed statistics at CDRP level are available for 2002–03 on the new Home Office website: http://www.crimestatistics.org.uk

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in *(a)* overall recorded crime, *(b)* recorded violent crime, *(c)* burglaries and *(d)* vehicle thefts in South Ribble has been since 1997. [171658]

Ms Blears: The information requested is not available centrally.

South Ribble is a Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) area. Data at CDRP level has only been published from 199902000 onwards. Detailed statistics at CDRP level are available for 2002–03 on the new Home Office website: http://www.crimestatistics.org.uk

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change since 1997 is in West Lancashire in *(a)* overall recorded crime, *(b)* violent crime, *(c)* burglaries and *(d)* vehicle thefts. [171722]

Mr. Blunkett: The information requested is not available centrally.

West Lancashire is a Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) area. Data at CDRP level has only been published from 1999–2000 onwards. Detailed statistics at CDRP level are available for 2002–03 on the new Home Office website: http://www.crimestatistics.org.uk

Crimes Against Business

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of the prosecutions brought as a result of National Criminal Intelligence Service operations in the last 10 years related to crimes against business. [172287]

Ms Blears: Prosecutions brought as a result of National Criminal Intelligence Service operations cannot be identified in the court proceedings statistics collected centrally.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on which dates he met small and medium sized enterprises and manufacturers to discuss crimes against business in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002, *(c)* 2003 and *(d)* 2004. [172413]

Ms Blears: My right hon. Friend, the Home Secretary, Junior Ministers and officials in the Home Office have many meetings with small and medium sized enterprises and manufacturers to discuss a range of business crime issues.

Recently we have established a Small Business Forum with members from a wide range of organisations to hear at first hand the particular crime problems small and medium sized enterprises face, and to develop and implement practical and effective measures to reduce those crimes.

Departmental Response Times

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of *(a)* Written Answers, *(b)* replies to hon. Members' written correspondence and *(c)* public correspondence with his Department was (i) seen and (ii) cleared by special advisers before being published in 2003–04. [170530]

Mr. Blunkett: Special Advisers in this Department have access to material produced by permanent civil servants in accordance with paragraph 14e of the "Model Contract for Special Advisers". Ministers approve answers to all Parliamentary Questions and replies to hon. Members' written correspondence. They also approve replies to public correspondence except that dealt with directly by permanent civil servants.

Entry Clearance Standards

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his Statement of 30 March, *Official Report*, column 1433, on entry clearance standards, whether *(a)* the hotline and *(b)* the website he announced has been set up. [172439]

Mr. Browne: I can confirm that the telephone hotline and website have been set up as announced by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary on 30 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1433.

Hirst *v.* UK

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he proposes to take in response to the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in the case of Hirst *v.* United Kingdom concerning a violation of Article 3 Protocol 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights. [172394]

Mr. Leslie: I have been asked to reply.

The Government have noted the judgment and intends to request that the case be referred to the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights in accordance with Article 43 of the Convention.

Identity Cards

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many biometric identifiers will be used on national identity cards. [170261]

Mr. Browne: There has been no firm decision made on how many biometric identifiers will be used on the identity card.

These decisions will be made in the light of work under way on the feasibility of different technologies and the design of processes around identity enrolment and verification.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the relationship between the proposed National Identity Register and the proposed population register. [170343]

Mr. Browne: Legislation on Identity Cards—A Consultation (CM 6178) explains that the National Identity Register and the population register are separate but complementary proposals. The Home Office is working closely with the Registrar-General for England and Wales on the development of the two proposals.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* preparatory work and *(b)* testing he is planning to assess the (i) requirements for the design of identity cards and (ii) arrangements for application. [170348]

Mr. Browne: Over recent months the Home Office has been in wide ranging discussions with both the public and private sectors about their potential requirements for the ID cards scheme. As explained in CM 6178—Legislation on Identity Cards— A Consultation, this will now be followed by a programme definition phase. We intend to undertake volume testing from 2007 that will cover the end to end process.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the application process for identity cards will be *(a)* monitored and *(b)* assessed. [170349]

Mr. Browne: Legislation on Identity Cards—A Consultation (CM 6178) invites views on the governance options of the scheme.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what alternative eye technologies his Department investigated before concluding that the iris should form the basis for an identity card. [170552]

Mr. Browne: Both retina and iris recognition were considered by the National Physical Laboratory in their evaluation of biometric technologies. It has not yet been decided that iris recognition will be used in the identity card scheme. The feasibility of using iris recognition for identity cards is under investigation.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which companies are being considered as potential suppliers of systems for issuing identity cards. [170814]

Mr. Browne: The Home Office has not yet made any decision about which companies would be considered potential suppliers of systems for ID Cards.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the categories of private sector organisations that will be able to apply for accreditation to access the National Identity Register under the Draft Identity Card Bill; and whether this includes overseas *(a)* private sector organisations and *(b)* governments. [173010]

Mr. Browne: No decisions have yet been taken on the precise arrangements for accreditation of businesses or other organisations seeking verification of an individual's identity from the National Identity Register.

Identity Theft

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the international standards of biometric data were agreed; and how many countries have agreed them. [173050]

Mr. Browne: In May 2003 the Air Transport Committee of International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) agreed world-wide standards for the introduction of biometrics in travel documents to protect against fraud and forgery. ICAO is a United Nations organisation with 188 contracting states.

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what standards the new passport biometrics will be required to meet; and whether they are compliant with US standards. [173051]

Mr. Browne: The Air Transport Committee of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) agreed that the primary biometric identifier should be a facial image stored on a contactless radio frequency chip. Also that additional biometrics may be used by nations on a bi-lateral basis; fingerprints and iris being agreed for this purpose. These standards were accepted and endorsed by the Committee as the globally interoperable standard and implemented through the International Standards Organisation (ISO), Standards Committee SC37. The USA along with the UK are active participants in this standards work.

Immigration and Nationality Directorate

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what procedures are in place for staff in the Immigration and Nationality Directorate to raise matters of concern with *(a)* their superiors and *(b)* ministers. [160515]

Mr. Browne: *[holding answer 11 March 2004]:* Home Office staff can raise concerns or matters of conscience either with the Head of Department or confidentially with a nominated official outside their line management chain and, if still dissatisfied, have the right to raise the matter with the Civil Service Commissioners. If events develop so rapidly that it is not possible to follow this procedure, staff may write to the Head of Department who will advise the Departmental Minister, if applicable, and inform the Head of the Home Civil Service. My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary announced on 30 March column 1433 that a telephone hotline would be set up alongside the existing procedures for staff to raise concerns or matters of conscience.

National Identity Register

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how he proposes to ensure that information stored on the National Identity Register concerning and individuals' address is up-to-date. [170260]

Mr. Browne: The draft Identity Cards Bill published on 26 April includes a requirement under clause 12 for an individual to whom an ID card has been issued to notify prescribed changes which affect the accuracy of the Register. This will help to ensure compliance with the Fourth Principle of the Data Protection Act 1998 which states that personal data should be accurate and, where necessary, kept up-to-date.

Drivers are already used to the requirement to notify a change of address to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency and we expect that people will want to keep their details up-to-date otherwise their card will be less useful to them. Failure to update prescribed details may result in the imposition of a civil penalty not exceeding £1,000 under clause 12(6).

Online Advice

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information is available online giving guidance to people from EU accession states on living and working legally in the UK. [165055]

Mr. Browne: Full guidance about the rights and responsibilities of accession nationals wishing to work and live in the United Kingdom for accession nationals was published on the Immigration and Nationality Directorate websites, www.workingintheuk.gov.uk and www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk on 27 April 2004.

Police

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police community support officers were employed by the Metropolitan Police on 1 January 2004. [170871]

Ms Blears: On 1 January 2004 the Metropolitan Police Service employed 1157 Community Support Officers.

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many fully qualified police officers were employed by the Metropolitan police on *(a)* 1 May 1997 and *(b)* 1 January. [170872]

Ms Blears: Information on police numbers is collected quarterly. The Metropolitan Police Service had 26,677 police officers on 31 March 1997. This had increased to a record number of 29,441 officers on 31 December 2003. All police officers are available for duty from the day of joining the force.

Additionally the Metropolitan police had 12,093 police staff and 1,431 Community Support Officers at the end of December 2003.

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of the total Metropolitan police uniformed force is accounted for by police community support officers. [170997]

Ms Blears: The Metropolitan Police Service does not keep records of which Police Officers and staff members are currently working in uniform. The table shows the total strength of Police Officers, Staff, Traffic Wardens and Community Support Officers as of 1 January 2004. Community Support Officers account for 2.7 per cent. of the total strength of the force.

Personnel	*Strength*
Police officers	29,886.27
Police staff (excluding CSOs and Traffic Wardens)	11,772.59
Traffic Wardens	543.30
Community Support Officers	1,157.14
Total	43,359.3

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* traffic police, *(b)* mounted police, *(c)* police dog handlers, *(d)* armed response team officers and *(e)* Criminal Investigation Department officers there are in Lancashire. [171232]

Ms Blears: Published information on police strength by police force area is available for rank, gender and ethnicity but not function. Figures on Police Strength for March 2003, were published in Home Office Statistical Bulletin 11/03, copies of which are available in the library or on the internet site: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/hosbpubs1.html.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in full-time police officers in South Ribble has been since 1997. [171659]

Ms Blears: South Ribble is in the Southern Basic Command Unit (BCU) of Lancashire Constabulary. BCU strength figures are only available for March 2002 and 2003. The information is given in the table.

	Strength	*Percentage change*
31 March 2002	462	—
31 March 2003	500	+8.2

Racial Equality Councils

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the racial equality councils that have been successful in securing section 44 funding; and what the total funding allocation was. [169737]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Commission for Racial Equality notified applicants of its funding decisions on Thursday 6 May.

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many racial equality councils are estimated to be in danger of closure as a result of recent allocations of Commission for Racial Equality section 44 funding for 2004–05. [172860]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) advises me that following its initial assessment based on grant previously awarded and local knowledge, potentially up to 11 racial equality councils may be in danger of closure. In the event of closure or significant reduction in services provided, CRE staff will work with local councils, Government Offices and Local Strategic Partnerships where appropriate to ensure there is local ownership, support and continuity of services in the areas affected.

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reasons the Commission for Racial Equality has decided to grant its section 44 funding to groups other than racial equality councils. [172861]

Fiona Mactaggart: Section 44 of the Race Relations Act 1976 sets out the purpose for which grant may be awarded. It does not prescribe which types of bodies may receive financial assistance and therefore does not limit such assistance to racial equality councils.

We warmly welcome the Commission for Racial Equality's policy of using the Getting Results programme to support any innovative project which is making a difference to race equality and race relations within its local community.

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications were received for Commission for Racial Equality section 44 funding in each of the last five bid rounds. [172862]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Commission for Racial Equality is collating this information. The chair of the CRE will write to my hon. Friend in due course.

Small Retailers

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how much has been spent through the Small Retailers in Deprived Areas initiative in each year since 2001, broken down by region; [172429]

(2) what targets are in place to measure and assess projects undertaken as part of the Small Retailers in Deprived Areas scheme; [172430]

(3) when he will publish the review of the Small Retailers in Deprived Areas scheme. [172431]

Ms Blears: The £15 million from the Capital Modernisation Fund for the Small Retailers in Deprived Areas initiative was made available as follows; 2001–02—£3 million; 2002–03—£6 million; and 2003–04—£6 million. A small amount was set aside for administration and evaluation, with the regional allocations as follows:

£

Region	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*Total*
Eastern	196,620	393,475	393,475	983,570
East Midlands	236,060	471,052	471,052	1,178,164
London	454,720	910,515	910,515	2,275,750
North East	248,530	496,244	496,244	1,241,018
North West	470,670	942,209	942,209	2,355,088
South East	246,500	493,580	493,580	1,233,660
South West	194,300	389,604	389,604	973,508
Wales	190,820	381,257	381,257	953,334
West Midlands	333,210	666,182	666,182	1,665,574
Yorkshire and Humber	327,410	655,882	655,882	1,639,174

All the funding, other than a small amount in the region of £250,000 due to slippage on some projects in 2003–04, has been fully disbursed. This equates to 1.7 per cent. of the total capital allocation.

Individual projects are developed by local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships in conjunction with Regional Home Office Directors. Part of this process is to ensure adequate local targets have been set and systems put in place to measure performance against them.

The evaluation of the scheme will pull out key best practice and learning points from eight case studies, plus four other regional sites. The evaluation will examine ways in which the scheme has impacted upon businesses, such as changes in levels of retail crime; fear of crime among businesses and their customers; business viability; partnership working; and improved security behaviour among businesses.

We hope to publish the full evaluation of the Small Retailers scheme later this year.

Stolen Goods

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the role of *(a)* pawnbrokers and *(b)* shops dealing in second hand goods in providing a market for stolen goods; and if he will make a statement. [172400]

Ms Blears: In 1998, Dr. Mike Sutton produced, on behalf of the Home Office, a report entitled 'Handling stolen goods and theft: a market reduction approach'. This identified five distinct markets for stolen goods, one of which was commercial outlets such as pawn brokers and second hand goods shops.

Under the Targeted Policing Initiative (part of the Crime Reduction Programme, which ran from 1999 to 2003), we provided funding totalling around £1.4 million to projects in Stockport, Kent and West Mercia aimed at reducing the market in stolen goods. The second hand goods trade was just one of several distribution channels for stolen goods that these projects targeted. In particular, the Stockport and Kent projects used local legislation, which regulates second hand goods outlets. Under the terms of the Kent and Medway Acts 2001, Kent and Medway Councils must also present the Home Office with a report on the working provisions of the Acts by 1 December, which will subsequently be laid before Parliament.

The Home Office has also commissioned the University of Kent to evaluate the effectiveness of these and similar pieces of legislation and we are planning to lay a summary of the results of this research before Parliament at the same time.

We are also aware of further research that is being undertaken into thieves' preferred method of disposing of stolen property and we will be looking to see what this adds to our existing knowledge.

Our programme of work to drive down the market for stolen goods includes, amongst other things, activities aimed at those pawn brokers and other second hand goods outlets that deal in stolen property.

Stolen Vehicles

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he plans to bring forward legislative proposals to make the drivers of stolen vehicles that have been immobilised remotely and which cause an accident legally responsible for any liability. [172048]

Ms Blears: There are no plans to bring forward such legislation.

Although the remote stopping of moving vehicles is technically possible, achieving this in a way that is safe and secure is some way off. Further research is being conducted into this technology and this will include the examination of legal liability issues.

Stowaways

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of undetected stowaways entering the UK in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [160372]

Mr. Browne: There is no official estimate of the number of clandestine entrants to the UK.

Illegal entry action is initiated against those people who are detected having entered or attempting to enter the country clandestinely or by means of deception, either verbal or documentary.

The available figures include those people who were identified as having entered the country clandestinely, they are not separately identifiable as such information would only be available by examination of individual case-files at disproportionate cost.

Wormwood Scrubs

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures have been taken to identify and interview members of staff of HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs who were employed in the months leading up to and including the day of the death of John Boyle in December 1994, who may have witnessed or been involved in bullying and abusive behaviour. [155659]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 2 March 2004]:* Mr. Boyle's death at HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs in December 1994 predates current Prison Service policy for investigating deaths in custody and, from the information currently available, there is no evidence to suggest that an investigation was conducted. However, staff working on the Segregation Unit on the day of Mr. Boyle's death were asked to submit incident reports at the time. A coroner's inquest into Mr. Boyle's death, for which several members of staff were called as witnesses, returned an open verdict in May 1995.

HEALTH

Animal Welfare

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidelines his Department issues for experimentation on non-human primates in order to improve cures to illnesses shared by primates and humans; and what plans he has to introduce alternatives to the use of primates in medical research. [170995]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, no animals can be used in scientific procedures if alternatives are available and primates can only be used if no other species are suitable and readily obtainable. Every effort will continue to be required to minimise primate use and find alternatives where practicable. The United Kingdom legislation regulating animal experiments is widely regarded as the toughest in the world. The Government's policy is never to allow the use of great apes.

The Medical Research Council (MRC) has established the Centre for Best Practice for Animals in Research (CBPAR) as part of its continuing commitment to high standards in laboratory animal use and welfare. Following consultation with vets, scientists, experts in primate welfare, and animal welfare organisations, CBPAR has developed guidelines on best practice in the accommodation and care of primates used in scientific procedures. These guidelines have now been published and will shortly be available on the MRC website at www.mrc.ac.uk.

Baby Food

Mr. Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what evidence he has collated of a link between consumption of high sugar content baby foods and obesity in children; and if he will make a statement; [170252]

(2) what plans he has to require baby food labelling to show prominently the sugar content; [170253]

(3) what representations he has received on the labelling of baby foods to show sugar content. [170254]

Miss Melanie Johnson: We have not collated evidence of a link between consumption of high sugar content baby foods and obesity in children.

Labelling rules for baby foods are agreed at European Union level. The presence of sugar added as an ingredient to baby foods must be declared as an ingredient—as part of the list of ingredients appearing on the product label.

Additional specific labelling requirements for these foods require the actual amounts of certain nutrients present, such as protein, fat and carbohydrate, to be declared. However, a declaration of the actual amounts of sugar present is not mandatory and there are no plans to introduce such a requirement at this time.

There have been no representations on the labelling of sugar content for baby foods over the past year.

Bounty Packs

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many Bounty packs were distributed to new mothers within maternity units in Britain in each year since 1995. [171042]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collected centrally. Bounty is an independent commercial organisation that distributes free product samples and packs containing information to expectant and new mothers.

Care Homes

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many anonymous complaints about care homes have been received since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [171607]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department does not collect information on complaints about care homes. Since April 2002, all care homes in England have been regulated by the National Care Standards Commission (NCSC), which was replaced by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) in April 2004. The NCSC and CSCI collects information about complaints.

I understand from the Chairman of CSCI that the number of anonymous complaints about care homes recorded on the Registration and Inspection database are as shown in the following table.

	Number
2002–2003	1596
2003–2004	1914

Departmental Staff (Drugs)

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many of his Department's employees received counselling for drug use in 2003. [171626]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has a contract with Corecare to provide a counselling service for its employees. Corecare received no requests from the Department's employees requesting counselling for drug use in 2003.

Emergency Services

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many administrators are involved, and at what annual cost in each trust, in dealing with the resulting paperwork from emergency service staff captured on speed cameras contravening speed limits; [170729]

(2) on how many occasions in each of the last 12 months ambulances on emergency calls in each health trust area have been captured on speed cameras contravening speed limits. [170731]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not available centrally.

However, the Department is aware that speeding tickets issued to ambulances on emergency journeys are creating extra administration costs in some areas. Officials have already had useful discussions with the Home Office and are working closely with them to provide a workable solution.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Home Affairs on the annual cost to health trusts of dealing with the paperwork generated by ambulances on emergency calls captured on speed cameras contravening speed limits. [170730]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department is aware that speeding tickets issued to ambulances on emergency journeys are creating extra administration costs in some areas. Officials have already had useful discussions with the Home Office and are working closely with them to provide a workable solution.

Gender Pay Gap

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the pay gap between men and women employed by his Department and its agencies in *(a)* Southampton, *(b)* Eastleigh, *(c)* Winchester and *(d)* Romsey. [171620]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department, and its agencies do not employ any staff in Southampton, Eastleigh, Winchester or Romsey, except for the NHS Estates agency which employs 15 staff in Winchester.

It conducts an equal pay assessment each time a new employee is appointed or when an existing employee is promoted and the proposed salary has to be agreed by the chief operating officer who conducts a "benchmarking" exercise via the human resources department.

Gloucestershire Tri-Service Centre

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money was spent on setting up the Gloucestershire Tri-Service Centre at Quedgley; when it became fully operational; and if he will make a statement. [172364]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* The Gloucestershire Tri-Service Centre has been fully operational since April 2003. It was set up with £2.6 million of funding from the Government's Invest to Save budget. The local fire, police and ambulance services jointly contributed a further £1.9 million.

Health Development Agency

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the effect on residents of Manchester, Gorton of the Health Development Agency; [167377]

Jim Dobbin: if he will make a statement on the effect on residents of Heywood and Middleton of the Health Development Agency; [168494]

Mr. Benton: if he will make a statement on the benefits for residents of Bootle of the Health Development Agency; [170537]

Tony Cunningham: if he will make a statement on the effect on residents of Workington constituency of the Health Development Agency; [170715]

Mr. Neil Turner: if he will make a statement on the effect on residents of Wigan of the Health Development Agency; [169351]

Mr. Hendrick: if he will make a statement on the effect on residents of Preston of the Health Development Agency; [168105]

Mr. Pike: what assessment he has made of the effects on residents of Burnley of the Health Development Agency; [167955]

Mr. Meacher: if he will make a statement on the benefits for residents of Oldham, West and Royton of the Health Development Agency; [170894]

Mr. Burrow: if he will make a statement on the benefits for residents of South Ribble of the Health Development Agency. [171670]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The work of the Health Development Agency (HDA) is focused on service delivery that supports the whole of the region's public health development.

The HDA manages the national healthy school standard, which is part of the Government's national strategy to reduce health inequalities for children.

The North West HDA organised the largest ever regional public health conference in March 2004 to address the problem of obesity. Over 300 regional public health professionals, including representatives from health services responsible for Gorton, will have learned of the latest obesity data for the region and will collaboratively plan a regional obesity action plan. The workshop will draw together best practice from across the region and in addition to the HDA guidance on obesity, this will provide the basis for local and regional work to tackle obesity in the coming years.

The North West HDA is currently working with the North West public health observatory and the regional cancer registries to review the main causes of cancer related deaths across the region.

The HDA, in partnership with Liverpool John Moores University and the North West Public Health Observatory, is currently completing a regional report Alcohol: A Situational Analysis for the North West.

Health Funding (Manchester)

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on health in Manchester, Gorton in each of the last seven years. [167380]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested. Expenditure per weighted head in the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area, which includes the constituency of Gorton, has increased from £582.33 in 1997–98 to £992.61 in 2002–03 (the latest year available). This does not represent the total expenditure per head as an element of health expenditure cannot be identified by SHA area.

Health Services

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in Oldham, West and Royton are receiving drug treatment. [170958]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In 2000–01, there were 737 people receiving drug treatment in Oldham. This is the latest available data. Data broken down by drug action team for 2001–02 and 2002–03 has not yet been finalised and published.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many senior citizens in Oldham, West and Royton have access to free eye tests; [170882]

(2) how many residents in Oldham, West and Royton aged over 60 years have benefited from the abolition of charges for eye tests. [170883]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Figures for the number of sight tests by constituency, or senior citizens are not collected centrally.

In 2002–03, the total number of national health service sight tests paid for patients aged 60 and over in Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority was 189,900. The total number eligible for free sight test for those aged 60 and over was 493,100.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses there were in Oldham, West and Royton in each of the last seven years. [170884]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* therapists and *(b)* scientists there were located in Oldham, West and Royton in each of the last seven years. [170885]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff in the Greater Manchester strategic health authority area as at 30 September each specified year

headcount

		1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
		5,701	5,796	5,956	6,248	6,589	7,029	7,170
5J5	Oldham PCT	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	122	133
QC9	West Pennine HA	1	1	1	2	4	n/a	n/a
REX	Oldham NHS Trust	347	346	360	393	417	n/a	n/a
REZ	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	244	249	243	259	308	n/a	n/a
RM4	North Manchester Healthcare	281	288	306	323	337	340	315
RMN	Bury Health Care NHS Trust	216	225	230	242	267	n/a	n/a
RW6	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	900	853

n/a—not applicable

Source:

Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes there have been to NHS waiting list times for the residents of Oldham, West and Royton in the last seven years. [170886]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not collected on a constituency basis but at national health service trust level. The information is shown in the table.

Patients waiting for elective in-patient admission

NHS Trust	Total number of patients waiting for admission	Patients waiting for admission by months waiting: Less than 3 months	3–5 months	6–8 months	9–11 months	12–14 months	15–17 months	18+ months
March 1997								
Oldham NHS Trust	8,436	3,837	2,293	1,339	967	—	—	—
Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	4,464	2,472	868	577	374	173	—	—
North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	5,787	2,961	1,506	708	427	157	22	6
Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	2,223	1,471	399	196	120	37	—	—
March 1998								
Oldham NHS Trust	8,332	3,954	1,976	1,650	736	16	—	—
Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	4,684	2,702	924	581	305	132	40	—
North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	6,002	2,911	1,253	827	528	308	175	—
Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	2,437	1,581	375	251	128	91	11	—
March 1999								
Oldham NHS Trust	7,338	4,156	1,904	895	315	67	1	—
Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	4,168	2,351	873	484	257	167	36	—
North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	4,699	3,342	737	369	148	76	27	—
Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	2,153	1,210	367	240	127	158	51	—
March 2000								
Oldham NHS Trust	6,484	4,012	1,364	682	371	50	5	—
Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	4,032	2,102	841	568	330	130	61	—
North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	4,262	3,131	653	230	150	78	20	—
Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	2,103	1,218	341	219	164	105	56	—
March 2001								
Oldham NHS Trust	6,427	4,092	1,478	601	213	43	—	—
Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	4,039	2,456	876	397	249	45	16	—
North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	4,016	2,884	680	303	119	27	3	—
Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	1,916	1,250	367	181	118	—	—	—
March 2002								
Oldham NHS Trust	6,297	3,830	1,631	611	225	—	—	—
Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	4,530	2,675	1,029	527	254	45	—	—
North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	4,008	2,804	795	265	114	30	—	—
Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	2,045	1,411	336	218	78	2	—	—
March 2003								
Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	15,872	10,226	3,607	1,575	464	—	—	—
February 2004								
Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	15,892	9,720	4,536	1,491	145	—	—	—

Source:
Department of Health form KH07 and monthly monitoring.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of patients with suspected cancer in Oldham, West and Royton saw an NHS consultant within two weeks in each of the last seven years. [170887]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not collected on a constituency basis but at national health service trust level. Information from 2000–01, the earliest available, is shown in the table.

Waiting times for first consultant out-patient appointment for suspected cancer following urgent general practitioner referral

Quarter	NHS trust	Seen within two weeks: Percentage	Number
2000–01			
4	Oldham NHS Trust	93.3	167
4	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	99.0	200
4	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	93.9	200
4	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	97.1	374
2001–02			
1	Oldham NHS Trust	94.8	181
1	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	97.8	224
1	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	94.9	242
1	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	96.1	345
2	Oldham NHS Trust	96.4	162
2	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	93.0	227
2	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	90.6	298
2	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	99.0	385

Waiting times for first consultant out-patient appointment for suspected cancer following urgent general practitioner referral

Quarter	NHS trust	Seen within two weeks: Percentage	Number
3	Oldham NHS Trust	98.9	181
3	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	99.6	235
3	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	94.7	286
3	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	99.5	398
4	Oldham NHS Trust	98.5	197
4	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	99.5	209
4	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	99.7	302
4	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	450
2002–03			
1	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	98.8	1,215
2	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	99.1	1,240
3	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	98.4	1,325
4	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	95.8	1,190
2003–04			
1	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	92.2	1,214
2	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	94.9	1,174
3	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	97.6	1,276

Source:
Department of Health form QMCW.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on NHS waiting times for heart surgery in Oldham, West and Royton. [170888]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There was one patient waiting more than nine months for heart surgery in the Oldham Primary Care Trust area at 30 June 2002. No patients have waited more than nine months since this date.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many residents in Oldham, West and Royton awaiting heart surgery have had the option of choosing an alternative hospital for quicker treatment in the last 12 months. [170889]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the levels of elective admissions to the NHS in Oldham, West and Royton in the past five years. [170890]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is shown in the table.

Primary care trust of responsibility, 5J5 Oldham PCT count of in-year selective admissions (waiting list, booked and planned cases) NHS hospitals, 1998–99 to 2002–03

	In-year admissions
1998–99	34,871
1999–2000	37,389
2000–01	34,386
2001–02	30,932
2002–03	29,988

Notes:
In-year admissions
An in-year admission is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider, excluding admissions beginning before 1 April at the start of the datayear. Periods of care ongoing at the end of the datayear (unfinished admission episodes) are included. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

Ungrossed Data
Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).
Primary Care Trust (PCT) and Strategic Health Authority (SHA) Data Quality
PCT and SHA data was added to historic data-years in the HES database using 2002–03 boundaries, as a one-off exercise in 2004. Data quality of PCT of GP practice for 1998–99 is poor, with a high proportion missing values where practices changed or ceased to exist. Users of time series analysis including these years need to be aware of these issues in their interpretation of the data.
Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many rapid access chest pain clinics there are in Oldham, West and Royton. [170891]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There is a rapid access chest pain clinic at the Royal Oldham Hospital, part of the Pennine Acute Hospitals National Health Service Trust.

The clinic is meeting the national service framework two-week target for patients to be seen from date of referral by general practitioner.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether there is a diagnostic and treatment centre located in Oldham, West and Royton. [170892]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There is no treatment centre in Oldham West and Royton. A treatment centre is planned for Trafford Healthcare national health service trust.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS beds were available in Oldham, West and Royton in each year since 1997. [170893]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the tables.

Average daily number of available beds, by sector, Oldham NHS trust, 1996–97 to 2002–03

	All specialties (excluding day only)	*General and acute*	*Acute*	*Geriatric*	*Mental illness*	*Learning disability*	*Maternity*	*Day only*
1996–97	764	579	441	138	124	—	61	73
1997–98	740	554	554	—	125	—	60	65
1998–99	756	573	573	—	116	—	66	73
1999–2000	764	582	582	—	116	—	66	73
2000–01	768	586	586	—	116	—	65	81
2001–02	818	642	642	—	113	—	63	72
2002–03	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Source:
Department of Health form KH03.

Average daily number of available beds, by sector, Rochdale healthcare NHS trust, 1996–97 to 2002–03

	All specialties (excluding day only)	*General and acute*	*Acute*	*Geriatric*	*Mental illness*	*Learning disability*	*Maternity*	*Day only*
1996–97	670	513	401	112	99	9	49	22
1997–98	638	482	361	121	98	8	49	23
1998–99	645	490	389	100	98	9	49	22
1999–2000	656	522	401	120	87	8	39	22
2000–01	657	520	385	135	94	8	36	25
2001–02	631	488	83	405	94	8	41	31
2002–03	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Source:
Department of Health form KH03.

Average daily number of available beds, by sector, Pennine acute hospitals NHS trust, 1996–97 to 2002–03

	All specialties (excluding day only)	General and Acute	Acute	Geriatric	Mental illness	Learning disability	Maternity	Day only
1996–97	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1997–98	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1998–99	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1999–2000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2000–01	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2001–02	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2002–03	2,321	2,142	2,142	—	—	—	179	153

Source:
Department of Health form KH03.

Average daily number of available beds, by sector, Bury healthcare NHS trust, 1996–97 to 2002–03

	All specialties (excluding day only)	General and Acute	Acute	Geriatric	Mental illness	Learning disability	Maternity	Day only
1996–97	740	582	398	184	97	12	49	10
1997–98	720	568	568	—	91	10	51	8
1998–99	686	553	553	—	83	10	39	10
1999–2000	658	539	539	—	78	10	31	8
2000–01	653	534	534	—	78	10	31	8
2001–02	667	529	529	—	84	10	44	11
2002–03	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Source:
Department of Health form KH03.

Average daily number of available beds, by sector, North Manchester healthcare NHS trust, 1996–97 to 2002–03

	All specialties (excluding day only)	General and Acute	Acute	Geriatric	Mental illness	Learning disability	Maternity	Day only
1996–97	849	669	669	—	134	—	46	23
1997–98	826	633	633	—	137	—	56	20
1998–99	766	625	625	—	108	—	33	20
1999–2000	766	617	617	—	99	—	49	31
2000–01	755	617	617	—	99	—	38	22
2001–02	680	638	638	—	—	—	41	34
2002–03	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Source:
Department of Health form KH03.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on *(a)* heart disease and *(b)* cancer care in Oldham, West and Royton in each of the last five years. [170895]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally. Allocations of funding for particular treatments are matters for the local primary care trust.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of women in Oldham, West and Royton with suspected breast cancer saw a specialist within two weeks in each of the last five years. [170896]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not collected on a constituency basis but at National Health Service Trust level. The information is shown in the table.

Waiting times for first consultant out-patient appointment for suspected breast cancer following urgent general practitioner referral

Quarter	NHS trust	Percentage	Number
1999–2000			
1	Oldham NHS Trust	100.0	8
1	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	39.6	19
1	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	81.8	45
1	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	85.0	34
2	Oldham NHS Trust	100.0	n/a
2	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	64.1	25
2	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	90.6	29
2	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	97.1	66
3	Oldham NHS Trust	100.0	n/a
3	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	70.6	24
3	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	75.0	30
3	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	58
4	Oldham NHS Trust	100.0	22
4	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	88.9	32
4	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	94.5	52
4	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	64
2000–01			
1	Oldham NHS Trust	88.9	32
1	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	84.1	37
1	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	98.7	74
1	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	77

Waiting times for first consultant out-patient appointment for suspected breast cancer following urgent general practitioner referral

Quarter	NHS trust	Percentage	Number
2	Oldham NHS Trust	97.5	77
2	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	72
2	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	89.9	71
2	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	77
3	Oldham NHS Trust	93.8	76
3	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	77
3	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	93.9	77
3	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	93
4	Oldham NHS Trust	97.1	68
4	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	71
4	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	98.6	70
4	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	88
2000–02			
1	Oldham NHS Trust	98.7	76
1	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	85
1	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	98.6	68
1	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	105
2	Oldham NHS Trust	98.7	75
2	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	95.9	71
2	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	91.3	94
2	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	93
3	Oldham NHS Trust	100.0	106
3	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	93
3	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	79
3	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	108
4	Oldham NHS Trust	100.0	84
4	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	54
4	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	66
4	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	107
2002–03			
1	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	99.4	357
2	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	99.7	357
3	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	99.0	383
4	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	97.7	334

Waiting times for first consultant out-patient appointment for suspected breast cancer following urgent general practitioner referral

Quarter	NHS trust	Percentage	Number
2000–04			
1	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	98.0	389
2	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	98.1	366
3	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	99.6	449

Note:
Where patient numbers are below six, the Department does not publish figures in order to avoid patients being identifiable due to low numbers. Where this would apply, the table reads n/a.
Source:
Department of Health form QMCW.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on health in Oldham, West and Royton in each of the last seven years. [170897]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested. Expenditure per weighted head in the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area, which includes the constituency of Oldham West and Royton, has increased from £582.33 in 1997–98 to £992.61 in 2002–03 (the latest year for which data is available). This does not represent the total expenditure per head, as an element of health expenditure cannot be identified by SHA area.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* therapists and *(b)* scientists were located in South Ribble in each of the last seven years. [171274]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff in the Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority area by organisation as at 30 September each specified year

headcount

		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Q13	Cumbria and Lancashire SHA total	3,352	3,486	3,595	3,706	3,759	3,893	4,279
5F2	Chorley and South Ribble PCT	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	93	124	147
5F3	West Lancashire PCT	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	45	48	59
QC1	South Lancashire HA	2	2	1	4	1	[1]—	[1]—
RJU	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	211	218	216	222	169	[1]—	[1]—
RJV	West Lancashire NHS Trust	183	177	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
RMF	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	378	410	435	460	468	[1]—	[1]—
RW5	Lancashire Care NHS Trust	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	260	259
RXN	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	603	726

[1] Not applicable
Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of suspected cancer patients in South Ribble saw an NHS consultant within two weeks in each of the last seven years. [171276]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information from 2000–01, the earliest available, is shown in the table.

Waiting times for first consultant out-patient appointment for suspected cancer following urgent GP referral—South Ribble

			Seen within two weeks	
	Quarter	*NHS trust*	*Percentage*	*Number*
2000–01	4	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	98.8	320
2000–01	4	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	158
2001–02	1	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	98.5	336
2001–02	1	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	204

Waiting times for first consultant out-patient appointment for suspected cancer following urgent GP referral—South Ribble

	Quarter	NHS trust	Seen within two weeks	
			Percentage	Number
2001–02	2	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	99.1	325
2001–02	2	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	231
2001–02	3	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	100.0	428
2001–02	3	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	99.6	252
2001–02	4	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	100.0	406
2001–02	4	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	291
2002–03	1	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	100.0	435
2002–03	1	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	99.7	312
2002–03	2	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	99.9	822
2002–03	3	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	99.4	822
2002–03	4	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	783
2003–04	1	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	99.9	843
2003–04	2	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	98.9	887
2003–04	3	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	990

Source:
DH form QMCW.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on NHS waiting times for heart surgery in South Ribble. [171277]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There were eight patients waiting more than nine months for heart surgery in Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust area at 30 June 2002. No patients have waited for more than nine months since this date.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses there were in Bootle in each of the last seven years; and if he will make a statement. [169264]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many residents in Taunton awaiting heart surgery have been offered the option of choosing an alternative hospital for quicker treatment in the last 12 months. [172012]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many senior citizens in Wigan have access to free eye tests; [169343]

(2) how many residents in Wigan aged over 60 years have benefited from the abolition of charges for eye tests. [169344]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data for the number of sight tests by constituency or by the number of senior citizens are not collected centrally.

The total number of National Health Service sight tests paid for by the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority in 2002–03 for patients aged 60 and over was 180,900. The total number eligible for a free sight test for those aged 60 and over was 493,100. Sight tests cannot be equated to the numbers of patients.

Macular Degeneration

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what arrangements are being made for the funding and delivery of photo dynamic therapy treatment for wet age-related macular degeneration in the Peninsula Strategic Health Authority area; and whether they comply with National Institute for Clinical Excellence guidelines. [171584]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* In line with our policy to shift the balance of power, responsibility for the funding and delivery of health services now rests with primary care trusts (PCTs). In the South West Peninsula strategic health authority area, the Peninsula Local Specialised Commissioning Group is leading on the implementation of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence guidelines on photodynamic therapy on behalf of its PCTs. Photodynamic therapy is currently provided by the South Devon Healthcare National Health Service Trust at Torbay Hospital and the service will be expanded from June to accept referrals from across the Peninsula. In addition, consideration is being given to involving some other hospitals in the area so as to improve local access to this service.

ME

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department is taking to improve the provision of essential services for severely affected sufferers of ME. [171343]

Dr. Ladyman: On 20 January 2004, I announced new services for chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis, (CFS/ME), funded by a £8.5 million cash injection. This money will see the creation of 12 new CFS/ME centres and 28 local support teams throughout England in the coming months.

Local teams are expected to develop a network of services (health, education and social services) for those more severely affected who may be house-bound or bed-bound. The Department also provides funding to support the work of voluntary organisations working with people with CFS/ME.

In addition, in response to a request from the Chief Medical Officer, the Medical Research Council produced a research strategy on CFS/ME on 1 May 2003.

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence has been commissioned to develop clinical guidelines for the diagnosis and management of CFS/ME. These guidelines will underpin the training of health professionals, ensuring people with this condition receive sound advice and support and will address a range of issues including assessment and diagnosis, adjustment and coping, symptom management and the use of rehabilitation strategies to optimising functioning and achieving greater independence.

Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-regional Strategy

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) which *(a)* individuals and *(b)* organisations will be consulted by those charged with carrying out the studies commissioned by the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Health and Social Care Sub-Group; [172168]

(2) what the *(a)* terms of reference and *(b)* intended date for completion is of each of the studies mentioned in paragraph 53 of the Cross-Government Statement (matters 1, 2, 3, 4) on the draft Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy that the Miltion Keynes and South Midlands Health and Social Care Group has commissioned; and who is responsible for carrying out each one; [172169]

(3) when he intends to publish a 30-year health and social care vision for the Milton Keynes and South Midlands sub-region, as mentioned in paragraph 98 of the Cross-Government Statement (matters 1, 2, 3, 4) on the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy. [172172]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The studies commissioned by the Milton Keynes South Midlands Health and Social Care Sub-group have been funded through the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Growth Areas Fund. These studies cover two workstreams. The first workstream is to examine how the interaction between health and the built environment can inform best practice in developing sustainable communities in the MKSM Growth Area. The second workstream is focusing on the delivery of health and social care services in response to the proposed growth in housing and population. The studies will provide a 30 year health and social care vision for the sub-region with a development plan and action plan to achieve the vision. The studies are due to be completed in June 2005.

The Chief Executive of the Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland Strategic Health Authority is the Chair of the Sub-Group. A full-time Project Director has also been appointed for the studies and to co-ordinate consultation activity.

The Sub-group has comprehensive representation from the health community, including the representatives of the relevant Primary Care Trusts, local authority social care departments, the three Strategic Health Authorities: the three Regional Public Health Groups of the Department of Health; the three Workforce Development Confederations (WDCs) and from NHS Estates. In addition a stakeholder reference group has been formed which will enable emerging ideas to be tested with a wide range of stakeholders, including health service users. This currently includes representatives from the local NHS Trusts, local authority Health Scrutiny Committees and patient representatives, and the intention is to expand its scope to include District Councils, Local Strategic Partnerships, independent sector service providers, and other interested groups.

Official Meetings (Mayor of London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) on what dates *(a)* he and *(b)* his predecessors have held official meetings with the Mayor of London since July 2000; and what the subject of each meeting was; [171436]

(2) if he will list the official meetings he and his predecessor had with the Mayor of London since July 2000 to discuss health matters in London, and the dates and subject of each meeting. [172207]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answers 10 May and 11 May 2004]:* My right hon. Friend the Member for Darlington (Mr. Milburn) and my right hon. Friend the Minister of State for Health (Mr. Hutton) met the Mayor of London from time to time and discussed a variety of subjects relating to health.

Productivity

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will set out his policy for increasing the productivity and cutting the costs of his Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies. [171732]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my hon. Friend, the Financial Secretary to Her Majesty's Treasury on 10 May, *Official Report*, columns 148-49W.

Radiation

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the potential health risk from exposure to low-level *(a)* ionising and *(b)* non-ionising radiation; and if he will make a statement. [170822]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Government is advised on the potential health risks from ionising and non-ionising radiation by a variety of bodies. The National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) provides statutory advice to Government (www.nrpb.org). The Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment (COMARE) provides advice on health effects of radiation at the levels encountered in the general environment. Low-level internal radiation emitters are the remit of the Committee Evaluating Radiation Risks from Internal Emitters and it is due to report to COMARE in the autumn of 2004. The risks from exposure to low-level internal emitters are also regularly reviewed by international organisations, such as the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effect of Atomic Radiation.

In addition, the Department runs its own radiological protection research programme in the area of low-level radiation exposure (both ionising and non-ionising), that provides information on the quantification of the risk to public health and the implementation of appropriate preventative measures. Research specifically aimed at investigating the potential health effects of mobile phone technology was set up in 2001 under the mobile telecommunications and health research programme.

For non-ionising radiation, the NRPB has recently reviewed the scientific evidence relating to possible adverse health effects of exposure to electromagnetic fields in the frequency range 0–300GHz (Documents of the NRPB: Vol 15, No 3, 2004). This document provides

the basis of NRPB advice on quantitative restrictions on exposure and other measures to avoid adverse effects. It is available on the NRPB web site.

Sexual Health/HIV

Mr. Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the National Strategy for Sexual Health and HIV; and what assessment he has made of its impact on the sexual health of young people in the UK. [172575]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The national strategy for sexual health and HIV, which is closely linked to the Government's teenage pregnancy strategy, identifies young people as a priority group for action to improve sexual health. The Government's 'Sex Lottery' and teenage pregnancy media campaigns are raising awareness among young people of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and how to avoid them. We are also tackling the most common STI through our national chlamydia screening programme, which already covers a quarter of primary care trusts in England, and is being rolled-out across the rest of the country.

Vaccinations

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his policy is on ensuring that there is an adequate provision of serum for children whose parents opt for individual inoculations rather than the combined MMR. [171743]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department does not supply single vaccines. It provides the combined measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine because it provides the most effective protection against three potentially serious diseases. The availability of single vaccines is an issue for the private clinics who offer them.

Written Answers to Questions

Friday 14 May 2004

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

China

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to his answer of 28 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1068–69W, on China (coercive population control), how and by whom the independent monitoring and evaluation of the impact of UN FPA's work in China is carried out; and if he will make a statement. [172985]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: In 2002, an impact survey was conducted by the China Population and Information Research Centre (CPIRC). Using funds provided by DFID, Southampton University provided technical assistance and quality control in the process of preparing the impact survey report.

In the current country programme which lasts from 2003 to 2005, the baseline survey and monitoring are funded by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and conducted jointly by CPIRC and the Chinese Ministry of Health. The baseline was completed in September last year. DFID is again providing funding to Southampton for quality control of the surveys. The total amount of funding from DFID is £99,200.

Development Aid (Africa)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the total amount of UK development aid to African countries has been since 1992. [172502]

Hilary Benn: The total amount of UK development aid to African countries since 1992 is set out in the first table. This includes development expenditure by DFID, other government departments and the CDC (formerly the Commonwealth Development Corporation), whose recent reorganisation will greatly enhance its ability to mobilise investment into Africa. The fluctuations in this series are due to volatility in CDC investments and debt relief over which DFID has no control.

Total UK Development Programme to Africa

	£ million
1992–93	521
1993–94	458
1994–95	475
1995–96	436
1996–97	445
1997–98	450
1998–99	574
1999–2000	631
2000–01	783
2001–02	879
2002–03	871

Source:
Statistics on International Development and Statistics database.

The DFID programme expenditure for Africa is shown in the second table; this did in fact increase by £164 million in 2002–03 although there was a slight decrease in the overall UK development aid.

DFID Programme Expenditure for Africa

	£million
1992–93	407
1993–94	395
1994–95	410
1995–96	351
1996–97	350
1997–98	345
1998–99	446
1999–2000	495
2000–01	651
2001–02	586
2002–03	750

Source:
Statistics on International Development and Statistics Database

HIPC Initiative

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when the countries which have reached decision point in the highly indebted poor countries initiative will receive their irrevocable debt relief. [172463]

Hilary Benn: Thirteen of the 27 countries that have qualified for debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative have reached Completion Point, the stage at which they receive an irrevocable reduction in their stock of debt. The next country expected to receive irrevocable debt relief is Ghana, which is expected to reach Completion Point by July 2004. A further five countries—Cameroon, Chad, Madagascar, Malawi and Rwanda—are expected to reach Completion Point by the end of 2004. Of the remaining countries, seven—Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone and Zambia—are expected to reach Completion Point in 2005, and one, the Democratic Republic of Congo by the end of 2006.

Mines

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will place in the Library a copy of the recent report on UK mine action funding policy. [171053]

Hilary Benn: In reviewing its current policy on humanitarian mine action DFID commissioned an internal report to assist in the decision making process. The report is exempt from release under Part II, section 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information on the basis that to do so would harm the frankness candour of internal discussion.

The resulting changes in policy from the review have been announced to the House in a Statement dated 10 May. I have also written to the Chair of the Commons All Party Landmine Eradication Group and the Heads of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), the United Nations Development

Programme (UNDP) Mine Action Team and the main UK based Non-Governmental Organisations working in the Humanitarian Landmine Sector.

Sudan

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what actions his Department is taking to work with the UN World Food Programme and other non-governmental organisations to assist refugees in Sudan. [171118]

Hilary Benn: There are approximately 100,000 refugees currently in Sudan. These are of Eritrean origin and are being supported by the World Food Programme's (WFP) Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation. DFID does not contribute to this World Food Programme operation.

Since October 2003, DFID has provided the following for World Food Programme operations in Sudan.

Beneficiaries	*Amount (£ million)*
Sudanese affected by conflict in Darfur	2
Sudanese refugees from Darfur in Eastern Chad	1
Sudanese population affected by war and natural disasters	3
Further support for Sudanese affected by worsening conflict in Darfur	2

DFID also provided £2 million to UNHCR in the last financial year for the assistance of Sudanese refugees in Chad.

World Bank

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of how the World Bank's Extractive Industries Review will influence future policy-making, with particular reference to *(a)* the link between extractive industries and poverty alleviation, *(b)* consultations with indigenous populations before extractive industries are set in place, *(c)* human rights obligations where extractive industries are about to be set up and *(d)* giving a higher profile and better funding to renewable energy projects. [172986]

Hilary Benn: The Government have been actively engaged in the Extractive Industries Review (EIR) process. DFID does not anticipate that the review will significantly influence future UK policy-making. It will however contribute to the ongoing process of improving the sustainable development performance of oil, gas and mining sectors; and the high standards that the World Bank encourages from its partners.

DFID supports the main conclusion of the review that the World Bank Group should remain engaged with the extractives sector and agrees that it is important that social and environmental safeguards are rigorously applied, that human rights are respected, and that efforts are made to improve the governance and transparency of revenue flows from the sector.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence to which locations UK military forces have been deployed in Afghanistan in the past six weeks; for what reason in each case; whether the deployed forces have been involved in conflict; and if he will make a statement. [172279]

Mr. Ingram: The United Kingdom currently has military forces routinely deployed in Kabul as part of the International Security Assistance Force, across the five northern provinces of Balkh, Faryab, Jowjzan, Samangan and Sar-e Pol covered by our Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) and in both Kabul and Bagram as part of the coalition headquarters. All of these forces are routinely engaged in creating the conditions for stability in Afghanistan, through conflict prevention and resolution; examples during the past six weeks include the PRT's contributions towards facilitating Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration in the North, and to calming tensions in Meymanyeh.

Defence Fire Service

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the size is of the backlog of members of the Defence Fire Service, RAF fire-fighters and contractors' personnel from military sites for their four-yearly residential refresher training at DFS Central Training Establishment at RAF Manston. [172523]

Mr. Ingram: It is estimated that there are around 1,200 fire fighters whose refresher training is now overdue. This has been caused by a temporary shortage of instructors at the Defence Fire Service Training Establishment at RAF Manston, a situation we expect to remedy over the next three months.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress has been made on his Department's consideration of the option to transfer Defence Fire Service and related training from Manston to the Fire Service College at Moreton-in-Marsh. [172525]

Mr. Ingram: Fire fighter training is included within the scope of the Airfield Support Services Project which is seeking to establish the most cost effective method of providing airfield support, and wider fire services, without compromising operational effectiveness. We are currently in the process of reviewing the bids we have received from the competing consortia and the Public Sector Comparator. Should it be determined that the Defence Fire Services will remain within the public sector we can then reassess the position with regard to the future provision of fire fighter training.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans there are for the temporary use of the Fire Service College to clear any backlog in refresher training at the Defence Fire Service Central Training Establishment. [172526]

Mr. Ingram: There are no plans for the temporary use of the Fire Service College to deliver the Ministry of Defence refresher training. To provide such training at the Fire Service College would require personnel,

equipment and vehicles to be transferred to that location, which would then have a direct impact on other specialist fire training that is undertaken at the Defence Fire Service Central Training Establishment.

Iraq

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with his counterpart in the US Administration on releasing data on the amount of munitions containing depleted uranium used by US forces during the Iraq war. [166868]

Mr. Ingram: There have been no such discussions as this is a matter for the United States Government. However, officials have advised their US counterparts of the information published by the Ministry of Defence on 1 September 2003, *Official Report*, column 900W, on the amount of depleted uranium used by United Kingdom forces during the recent conflict in Iraq.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether British forces were engaged in the siege of Fallujah. [171924]

Mr. Ingram: No.

Kosovo

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the deployment of troops in Kosovo. [173374]

Mr. Ingram: The United Kingdom normally contributes around 200 personnel to the NATO KFOR mission in Kosovo. In response to the outbreak of violence in mid-March, we deployed the Ready Battalion—the UK contribution to NATO's Over the Horizon reserve for the Balkans—to Kosovo on 17 March to assist in calming tensions. This additional deployment ceased on 17 April 2004.

Support Vehicles

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when a decision will be made on the support vehicle contract; and if he will make a statement. [171574]

Mr. Ingram: On current plans an announcement on the preferred bidder is scheduled for the early summer.

WALES

Departmental Procurement

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what percentage of the *(a)* crockery, *(b)* cutlery and *(c)* glassware procured by his Department over the last five years is of British manufacture. [170809]

Mr. Touhig: The overriding principle for all purchases by the Wales Office is value for money. It holds a stock of crockery, cutlery and glassware, some of which was manufactured in Britain.

Late Payments

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many invoices were not paid by the Wales Office within the target of 30 days in the last 12 months for which figures are available; and what the cost was of the late payment of these invoices. [172760]

Mr. Touhig: Of 1,686 invoices paid by the Wales Office in the 2003–04 financial year, 67 or just under 4 per cent. were paid late, with the remainder paid promptly within 30 days.

The Office is not aware of any charge being incurred as a result of these late payments.

Official Vehicles

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what percentage of official vehicles used by the Wales Office are run on *(a)* petrol, *(b)* diesel, *(c)* liquid petroleum gas and *(d)* compressed natural gas. [172776]

Mr. Hain: The Government Car Service provides the Wales Office with two ministerial cars, both run on petrol.

University Students

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what the average university student debt in Wales was in each year since 1997. [172590]

Mr. Touhig: General measures relating to student finance have not yet been devolved to the National Assembly for Wales.

The latest data issued by the Department for Education and Skills (from the Student Income and Expenditure Survey) revealed that the average anticipated student debt from all sources for students graduating in 2002–03 was 8,666 compared with 3,150 (3,465 in real terms) in 1998–99.

The previous survey was in 1995–96.

There are no separate figures for Welsh students or students studying at Welsh Institutions.

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many students whose home is in Wales were at *(a)* universities in Wales and *(b)* universities in England in each year since 1997. [172592]

Mr. Touhig: Welsh domiciled full time higher education enrolments at Welsh and English Higher Education Institutions[1] is as follows.

Academic year	*Studying in Wales*	*Studying in England*
1996–97	27,980	20,565
1997–98	28,715	20,650
1998–99	29,785	20,340
1999–2000	29,675	20,035
2000–01	30,595	19,900
2001–02	32,300	19,495
2002–03	33,295	19,725

[1] As at December.

Notes:

All figures have been rounded to the nearest 5.

Includes undergraduate and postgraduate enrolments.

Source:

HESA Student Record

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Business Regulation

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will place in the Library a copy of the Regulatory Impact Assessment accompanying the Conduct Regulations for Employment Agencies. [168610]

Mr. Sutcliffe: A copy of the Regulatory Impact Assessment for the Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Businesses Regulations 2003 was deposited in the Libraries of the House on 27 November 2003. The title of the RIA is the Revision of Regulations for the Private Recruitment Industry.

Dairy Industry

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations she has received on competition issues in the dairy industry. [170182]

Alun Michael: I have been asked to reply.

Over time we have received a number of representations from hon. Members and others that have raised matters to do with competition issues in the dairy sector. Where appropriate we have taken these up with the DTI and competition authorities who are responsible for competition policy and its administration.

Departmental Publications (Citizens Advice Bureaux)

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many representations the Department has received from citizens advice bureaux about shortages of the Department's leaflets and forms in each year since 1997. [172603]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I am not aware that the Department has received any representations from citizens advice bureaux specifically about shortages of the Department's leaflets and forms.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the *(a)* leaflets and *(b)* forms supplied by the Department to citizens advice bureaux; and how many of each leaflet were printed in the last 12 months. [172604]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Department's publications are listed on its website: www.dti.gov.uk/publications. The Department does not produce leaflets and forms specifically for citizens advice bureaux.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 11 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1679W, which provides information on those organisations that ordered the largest number of publications for the year ending February 2004.

Paid Leave (Oldham, West and Royton)

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of Oldham West and Royton qualify for paid leave entitlements. [170941]

Mr. Sutcliffe: All workers resident in Oldham West and Royton qualify for paid annual leave entitlements; at least four weeks as set out in the Working Time Regulations. Whilst all women are entitled to 26 weeks ordinary maternity leave, only those who meet the eligibility criteria will be able to claim statutory maternity pay for that period.

All employees in Oldham West and Royton who are eligible will be entitled to take statutory paternity leave with pay and statutory adoption leave with pay.

Workers' Rights (South Ribble)

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of South Ribble qualify for paid leave entitlements. [172149]

Mr. Sutcliffe: All workers resident in South Ribble qualify for paid annual leave entitlements; at least four weeks as set out in the Working Time Regulations. Whilst all women are entitled to 26 weeks ordinary maternity leave, only those who meet the eligibility criteria will be able to claim statutory maternity pay for that period.

All employees in South Ribble who are eligible will be entitled to take statutory paternity leave with pay and statutory adoption leave with pay.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Air Guns

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions have been brought for offences involving air guns in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [172444]

Caroline Flint: The available information is given in the table.

Statistics for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

Persons[1] proceeded against for offences relating to air weapons, England and Wales 1998 to 2002

Offence description	*Statute*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000[2]*	*2001*	*2002*
Possession of air weapon with intent to endanger life	Firearms Act, 1968 Section 16	35	29	27	35	32
Using air weapons or imitation air weapon to resist arrest	Firearms Act, 1968 Section 17(1)	1	4	1	—	—
Possessing air weapon or imitation air weapon at time of committing or being arrested for an offence specified in schedule 1 of the act	Firearms Act, 1968 Section 17(2)	34	35	47	11	32
Possessing air weapon or imitation air weapon with intent to commit an indictable offence or resist arrest	Firearms Act. 1968 Section 18(1)	16	14	21	12	11
Possession of an air weapon or imitation air weapon with intent to cause fear of violence	Firearms Act, 1968 Section 16A (as amended by Firearms (Amendment) Act 1994	136	141	154	120	127
Possession of air weapon by persons previously convicted of crime	Firearms Act 1968 Section 21(4) as amended by the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, Section 157 Sch. 8 part III	73	73	51	54	57

Persons[1] proceeded against for offences relating to air weapons, England and Wales 1998 to 2002

Offence description	*Statute*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000[2]*	*2001*	*2002*
Supplying air weapon to person denied them under Section 21	Ibid Section 21 (5) as amended by the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, section 157 Sch. 8 part III	—	1	—	—	—
Carrying loaded air weapon in public place etc.	Ibid Section 19	246	237	213	241	186
Trespassing with air weapon in a building	Ibid Section 20(1)	1	2	6	1	2
Trespassing with air weapon on land	Ibid Section 20(2)	76	35	30	35	32
Person under 17 acquiring air weapon	Ibid Section 22(1)	6	3	3	2	—
Person under 14 having with him an air weapon or ammunition therefore	Ibid Section 22(4)	9	13	21	12	7
Person under 17 having with him an air weapon in a public place	Ibid Section 22(5)	60	68	66	66	51
Person under 14 making improper use of air weapon when under supervision	Ibid Section 23(1)	2	—	1	1	1
Person supervising person under 14, permitting improper use of air weapon	Ibid Section 23(1)	—	—	2	—	—
Selling or letting on hire an air weapon to person under 17	Ibid Section 24(1)	—	—	—	—	—
Supplying air weapon to person under 14	Ibid Section 24(4)	1	2	4	2	2
Supplying air weapon to person drunk or insane	Ibid Section 25	—	—	—	—	—
Failure to hand over air weapon or ammunition on demand by constable	Ibid Section 47(2)	—	—	—	—	—
Total		696	657	647	592	540

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.
[2] Excludes figures for Staffordshire.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his policy is on preventing *(a)* crimes and *(b)* accidents involving air guns. [172447]

Caroline Flint: The Government are determined to tackle all aspects of gun crime and the underlying culture that supports it, working with the police and other statutory agencies, the voluntary sector and local communities, to tackle gun crime on a variety of fronts.

We have recently introduced measures in the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 raising the age limit to 17 for owning air weapons and making it an offence to have an air weapon in a public place without lawful authority or reasonable excuse. This means that the police can now challenge anybody seen in a public place with an air weapon and arrest them if they are unable to give a satisfactory explanation.

The Home Office produces a leaflet on the safe use of air weapons and arrangements have been made for a copy to be included with all new purchases.

Animal Research

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to visit Huntingdon Life Sciences in Huntingdon. [170856]

Mr. Blunkett: I have no plans at present to visit Huntingdon Life Sciences. However, since becoming Home Secretary, I and other Home Office Ministers have held many discussions aimed at ensuring businesses and individuals involved in important scientific research and testing where animal experimentation is necessary can safely carry on their work without impediment from those who try to intimidate or obstruct them. Most recently, my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Caroline Flint) met with you on 29 March 2004 to discuss the adverse effect the activities of animal rights extremist is having on members of staff at Huntingdon Life Sciences and the surrounding community.

Animal Rights Activists

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps his Department has taken to curb illegal activities of animal rights activists. [172060]

Caroline Flint: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to him on 6 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1692W.

Arson

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many children have been prosecuted for arson in each of the last seven years; [169107]

(2) how many children have been prosecuted for arson under the influence of sniffing petrol in each of the last seven years. [169108]

Paul Goggins: The requested information on the number of persons aged 10 and under 18 years proceeded against for arson, England and Wales 1996 to 2002 is contained in the table.

It is not possible from the information collected centrally by the Home Office to identify the number of persons aged 10 and under 18 years who were proceeded against for arson, who had been under the influence of sniffing petrol.

Statistics on court proceedings for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

Number of persons aged 10 and under 18 years proceeded against at the magistrates' courts for arson—England and Wales 1996 to 2002[1]

	Proceeded against
1996	708
1997	878
1998	823
1999	924
2000	1,005
2001	1,134
2002	1,064

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis

CCTV

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much public funding has been spent on CCTV security cameras in Sittingbourne and Sheppey since 1997. [170289]

Ms Blears: Since 1997, the Home Office has provided a total of £471,347 for CCTV schemes to Swale Borough Council, which includes the Sittingbourne and Sheppey constituency.

Allocation of that funding is a matter for Swale Borough Council and Kent County Constabulary. The information is not held centrally.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much public funding has been spent on CCTV security cameras in Oldham, West and Royton since 1997. [170956]

Ms Blears: Since 1997, the Home Office has provided £221,938 to Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council, which includes the Oldham West and Royton Constituency for CCTV schemes.

Allocation of funds across this area is the responsibility of Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council and Greater Manchester Police.

Child Offenders (Injuries)

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent representations he has received on injuries sustained by children in penal institutions, with particular reference to broken limbs; how many such injuries were suffered by children in such institutions in each of the last five years; how many and what percentage of the total are considered to have been inflicted by staff working in such institutions; what plans he has to introduce new or revised policies on the issue; and if he will make a statement. [169526]

Paul Goggins: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary has not received any recent representations on this subject.

Statistical information on injuries is not collected centrally, but the Youth Justice Board has been reviewing the use of physical restraint procedures and the National Children's Bureau recently produced a report for the board on the use of physical intervention within the juvenile secure estate. The board is currently drawing up a code of practice on the use of physical restraint, which it is intended will apply in all establishments holding young people under 18. The board is also planning to review the techniques that are used in establishments, in the light of the tragic death of Gareth Myatt at Rainsbrook on 19 April.

Civil Servants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list for each civil service grade within his *(a)* Department and *(b)* Department's executive agencies, the total number of staff employed, broken down by (i) gender, (ii) ethnic group and (iii) age group; and how many are registered disabled. [166390]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data on staffing levels in the Civil Service is collected by the Cabinet Office and published in Civil Service Statistics. A copy of Civil Service Statistics, 2002 is available in the Library, and at www.civil-service.gov.uk/statistics. The 2003 edition will be published in summer 2004.

More recent data for the Home Department and its executive agencies is given in the tables, which will be placed in the Library.

Commission for Racial Equality

Derek Conway: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the grant from public funds to the Commission for Racial Equality in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement on the reasons for the delay in distributing funds to commission area councils for racial equality, including Bexley. [169448]

Fiona Mactaggart: The grant-in-aid paid to the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) in each of the last five years was as follows:

	£ million
2000–2001	16.685
2001–2002	20.516
2002–2003	20.424
2003–2004	[1]23.902
2004–2005	19.200

[1] A further £4 million was provided in-year to cover a predicted shortfall in the value of Race Equality Council pension scheme.

Substantial additional sums were allocated in the three year period 2001–02 to 2003–04 to allow the CRE to implement the provisions of the Race Relations Amendment Act and its modernisation programme. This increase was carried forward to the baseline for this year. The new baseline of £19.2 million (which includes a 4.5 per cent. reduction in administration costs) will be the starting point for considering next year's budget.

The closing date for bids for Section 44 applications grants was 13 February 2004. Since that time the CRE and the Home Office have been working to agree this years delegated budget, and the CRE has been assessing a large pool of applications in accordance with its criteria. The number of successful applicants is higher than last year. The Commission notified applicants of its funding decisions on Thursday 6 May 2004.

Correspondence

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many letters his Department received from the right hon. and hon. Members in each month *(a)* between May 1997 and June 2001 and *(b)* since June 2001. [163122]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information is as follows:

(a)

Month	*No of letters received*[1]
April 2001	1,734
May 2001	1,423
June 2001	1,065

[1] excludes letters addressed to officials/agencies

Figures for previous years are not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

(b)

Month	*No of letters received*[1]
July 2001	724
August 2001	833
September 2001	1,346
October 2001	1,730
November 2001	1,602
December 2001	949
January 2002	1,723
February 2002	1,735
March 2002	1,443
April 2002	1,944
May 2002	1,654
June 2002	1,296
July 2002	2,001
August 2002	2,067
September 2002	1,407
October 2002	1,741
November 2002	1,466
December 2002	1,046
January 2003	2,107
February 2003	1,703
March 2003	1,963
April 2003	1,869
May 2003	1,574
June 2003	1,792
July 2003	2,270
August 2003	1,558
September 2003	1,824
October 2003	1,797
November 2003	1,800
December 2003	1,682
January 2004	1,140
February 2004	1,761

[1] excludes letters addressed to officials/agencies

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures he has taken to encourage business participation in crime and disorder reduction partnerships. [172428]

Ms Blears: We fully recognise the importance of business participation in the work of crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) and we have taken steps in a number of ways to encourage this.

Firstly, companies and retail bodies are named under section 5(3) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as invitees to participate in CDRP audits which are currently under way.

We have also appointed 10 regional business crime reduction advisers who are currently engaged in a mapping exercise that will pull together data on how CDRPs across the country are prioritising business crime in their strategies. The advisers will work with the CDRPs to promote ways of including business crime activities in their strategies.

A new toolkit on audits and strategies has been developed for CDRPs on the Crime Reduction website and a section on consulting on the findings of the audit will be available shortly highlighting the importance of consulting businesses during this process.

Finally, one of the aims of the Action Against Business Crime (AABC) group is to strengthen the links between businesses and CDRPs, further reinforcing the importance of CDRPs and business working together.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the figures for crime and disorder reduction partnerships were for *(a)* violence against the person, *(b)* sex offences, *(c)* robbery, *(d)* burglary, *(e)* theft of a motor vehicle, *(f)* theft from a vehicle and *(g)* total crime in each year since 1999 to 2000. [170373]

Ms Blears: Recorded crime statistics at Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) level for the six offence groups mentioned are available on a financial year basis from 1999–2000. There are currently 376 CDRPs in England and Wales.

CDRP figures for 1999–2000 and 2000–01 were published in July 2001 (Table 10 of Statistical Bulletin 12/01 'England and Wales, 12 months to March 2002') and can be accessed via the Home Office Research, Development and Statistics website at the following address: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hosb1201.pdf

CDRP figures for 2001–02 and 2002–03 can be found on the same website at the following address: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/hosb703sup1.xls

The National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) was introduced across England and Wales in April 2002. Some police forces adopted the standard prior to this date. Broadly, the NCRS had the effect of increasing the number of crimes recorded by the police. Therefore, following the introduction of the standard, numbers of recorded crimes are not directly comparable with previous years.

The new Home Office website www.crimestatistics.org.uk/tool/ contains quarterly data for the 2002–03 financial year at CDRP level for a wide range of offences within the Recorded Crime series.

Criminal Justice Interventions Programme

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offenders have been enrolled in the Criminal Justice Interventions Programme since its inception. [172496]

Caroline Flint: The Criminal Justice Interventions Programme (CJIP) is a three-year programme to develop and integrate measures for directing drug-misusing offenders out of crime and into treatment. The programme draws together and builds on the best existing solutions available and introduces new elements. Delivery at a local level is through integrated teams, using a case management approach to offer access to treatment and support from an offender's first point of contact with the criminal justice system through custody, court, sentence and beyond.

As the programme engages offenders in a wide range of circumstances and at different times in an individuals' contact with the Criminal Justice System, there is no concept of "enrolling" offenders in the programme. Data systems for analysing activity and outcomes across the programme are still in progress but by March 2004 some 2,800 offenders per month were being drug tested of whom 52 per cent. were testing positive.

Approximately 900 Drug Treatment and Testing Orders were being commenced each month and criminal justice drugs workers were making 5,500 contacts with offenders. These numbers will increase from April 2004 as 36 more Basic Command Units join the full programme.

Cycling Offences

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions were made for riding a cycle *(a)* without lights during the hours of darkness and *(b)* on the pavement in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [172156]

Caroline Flint: 180 defendants were proceeded against in England and Wales in 2002 for lighting and reflector offences connected with bicycles (this includes cycling without lights during the hours of darkness) and 94 defendants were proceeded against for cycling on the footway (pavement).

Statistics on court proceedings for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

Dangerous Driving

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to introduce a new penalty category of offences committed by drivers without a licence who maim or kill. [169072]

Caroline Flint: The Government is reviewing the existing framework of the criminal law concerning bad driving, particularly where death or injury results, in order to ensure that appropriate offences and penalties are put in place. The offence of driving otherwise than in accordance with a licence is not specifically included within the terms of reference of the review, which focus on the standard of driving, but the Government will of course consider all responses and issues raised during the consultation process. We hope to publish a consultation paper in the near future.

Euro 2004

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action the Department is taking to work with and assist the Portugese authorities in policing the Euro 2004 football tournament. [172493]

Caroline Flint: Multi-agency preparations for Euro 2004, co-ordinated by the Home Office, have been under way for two years. The preparations will be the most extensive ever for an overseas tournament and incorporate very close and effective liaison with the Portuguese Government, police and other authorities.

A joint communique on Anglo/Portuguese police co-operation, signed in February 2004 by the Minister of State for policing and her Portuguese counterpart, identified some key measures designed to minimise the risk of significant disorder involving England fans. These measures centred on maximum use of tough banning order legislation to prevent around 2,500 known English football troublemakers from travelling to the tournament and the deployment in Portugal of an English police delegation expert in policing English football crowds.

National Criminal Intelligence Service

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent representations he has received regarding the number of police officers seconded to the National Criminal Intelligence Service. [173135]

Caroline Flint: I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave on 28 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1105W.

The balance between the need to retain skills and contacts with local forces, while developing new capabilities is a matter for the Director General of the National Criminal Intelligence Service.

Paedophiles

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 106W, on paedophilia, for what reason the Prison Service does not have a specific offence code to cover paedophiles. [169105]

Paul Goggins: There is no specific offence code to cover paedophiles because there is no specific offence of "paedophilia". The sexual abuse of children can occur in a variety of ways and our law, if it is to be effective, has to reflect this. The Sexual Offences Act 2003, which came into force on 1 May 2004, includes a variety of new offences which cover various forms of sexual abuse inflicted on children.

Probation and Prison Services

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the budget outturn for *(a)* the National Probation Service and *(b)* HM Prison Service was for (i) 2002–03 and 2003–04. [166594]

Paul Goggins: The National Probation Service budget outturn for 2002–03 was £693.3 million. The forecast outturn for 2003–04 is £851.0 million and includes £80 million for Electronic Monitoring, which was not part of the service in the previous year.

The Prison Service budget outturn for 2002–03 was £2,636 million. The forecast outturn for 2003–04 is £2,377 million. The 2003–04 figures exclude the costs of the privately managed prisons (£173.6 million) and include income from the Department of Health to meet Prison Healthcare of £130 million.

Serious Organised Crime Agency

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the *(a)* National Criminal Intelligence Service and *(b)* National Crime Squad Service Authorities will cease to exist when the Serious Organised Crime Agency becomes operational; and if he will make a statement. [172398]

Ms Blears: Proposals for the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) were set out in the White Paper "One Step Ahead: A 21st century strategy to defeat organised crime" (CM6167), published on 29 March. As the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) and the

National Crime Squad (NCS) will become part of SOCA there will no longer be a role for the current Service Authority once the new agency comes into being.

We have invited comments on the White Paper proposals by 30 July and will consider these carefully when planning the new agency.

Standards of Proof

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions he has had on reducing the standards of proof in trials of terrorist or other serious criminal offences. [171480]

Ms Blears: I have had no recent discussions on this issue. As I said on 25 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 328, it is not my intention to lower the standard of proof in criminal cases.

A discussion paper on the future of our anti-terrorism law is currently out for consultation and I look forward to hearing the right hon. Member's contribution to that consultation.

Vehicle Registration Plates

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what advice he has given to chief constables to enforce the provisions of the Vehicles (Crime) Act 2001 relating to vehicle registration plates. [172158]

Caroline Flint: The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) has undertaken a number of actions to raise police awareness of these provisions. These include guidance on police powers of entry and inspection of registered premises, a telephone helpline (also available to vehicle registration plate suppliers and trading standards officers), meetings with police forces and accompanying police on targeted operations.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions have been made in the last 12 months for which figures are available for breaches of provisions of the Vehicles (Crime) Act 2001 relating to vehicle registration plates; and how many of these involved *(a)* the incorrect positioning of letters and numbers and *(b)* an incorrect typeface. [172159]

Caroline Flint: Within the Home Office Court Proceedings Database individual offences under the Vehicles (Crime) Act 2001 cannot be separately identified. In 2002 no prosecutions were recorded under the Act.

TRANSPORT

British Transport Police

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many officers have been employed by the British Transport Police in each year since 1997. [171899]

Mr. McNulty: The British Transport Police (BTP) have provided the following information on officers employed by the BTP since 1997.

	Number of BTP officers
1997	2,132
1998	2,095
1999	2,113
2000	2,091
2001	2,109
2002	2,123
2003	2,206
2004	2,280

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many British Transport Police officers patrol on board trains after 11 p.m. on *(a)* weekdays and *(b)* weekends. [171901]

Mr. McNulty: The British Transport Police (BTP) do not record this information at such a specific level. Officers actively patrol railway property including stations and trains.

East Midlands Airport

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what research his Department has conducted into the *(a)* levels and *(b)* effects of (i) noise and (ii) air pollution on the residents of (A) Harborough District, (B) Oadby and Wigston Borough, (C) Melton Borough, (D) Charnwood District, (E) Loughborough and (F) North West Leicestershire District arising from increases in day and night flights into and out of Nottingham East Midlands Airport by (1) 5,000, (2) 10,000, (3) 20,000, (4) 30,000, (5) 40,000, (6) 50,000, (7) 60,000, (8) 70,000 and (9) 80,000 aircraft movements per year over the next decade; and what assessment has been made of the effects in each case of such increases between 10 pm and 6 am each day; [173011]

(2) what research his Department has conducted into the *(a)* levels and *(b)* effects of (i) noise and (ii) air pollution on the residents of (A) Harborough District, (B) Oadby and Wigston Borough, (C) Melton Borough, (D) Charnwood District, (E) Loughborough and (F) North West Leicestershire District arising from increases in day and night flights into and out of Nottingham East Midlands Airport by (1) 5,000, (2) 10,000, (3) 20,000, (4) 30,000, (5) 40,000, (6) 50,000, (7) 60,000, (8) 70,000 and (9) 80,000 aircraft movements per year over the next decade (x) using the eastern and south-eastern approach and departure flight paths only and *(y)* where approaching aircraft have to circle in stacks before receiving clearance to land. [173015]

Mr. McNulty: Environmental controls at Nottingham East Midlands Airport are a matter for local control by the airport.

It is not envisaged that air pollution from these levels of movements would result in exceedence of any air quality standards. Under the system of local air quality management (LAQM), local authorities have a duty to review and assess the current, and likely future, air quality in their areas against the national objectives set out in the "Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland" and prescribed in the Air Quality Regulations 2000.

The Department is engaged in a major research study looking into attitudes to aircraft noise, "Attitudes to Noise from Aviation Sources in England" (ANASE).

Phase 1, which is nearing completion, is intended to ensure that the methodology for valuing subjective annoyance from aircraft noise, to be used in phase 2 (the main social survey), is robust.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the *(a)* employees of the airport and *(b)* the airline companies that use or intend to use this airport with whom Ministers and officials held discussions about the expansion of the capacity of Nottingham East Midlands Airport; when and where the discussions took place; and which Ministers and officials conducted them. [173012]

Mr. McNulty: During the preparation of the White Paper "The Future of Air Transport", Ministers and officials discussed the future of Nottingham East Midlands Airport on numerous occasions with a wide range of interested parties as part of the extensive consultation process. These included the management of the airport and its parent company and relevant airlines, but also other parties concerned with the future development of the airport including its consultative committee, local authorities, regional and local development agencies, business interests and environmental and local community groups. Similar discussions will continue to take place as we look to implement the policies set out in the White Paper.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his Department's policy is on the level of use of the Antonov and Boeing 747 400 freighter aircraft at Nottingham East Midlands Airport; and if he will make a statement. [173014]

Mr. McNulty: The Department does not have a policy on which types of aircraft may use particular airports, providing that restrictions such as planning conditions and noise agreements are observed and safety requirements are met.

Night Flights

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his Department's policy is on the *(a)* expansion and *(b)* restriction of night flights over rural areas; and if he will make a statement. [173013]

Mr. McNulty: At airports designated for the purposes of section 78 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982, controls on aircraft noise at night may be set under that power: at present, only Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted are so designated. At regional airports, controls may be imposed voluntarily by the airport operator, in consultation with those affected. The Department has issued Guidance to the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) on how to assess environmental impacts of changes to airspace arrangements to augment directions to the CAA under section 66(1) of the Transport Act 2000. The guidance picks up and promotes broader Government policy that the CAA should pursue policies that will help to preserve the tranquillity of the countryside where this does not increase significantly the environmental burdens on congested areas.

Shell Haven

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency report on the condition of SS Richard Montgomery, what the *(a)* timing and *(b)* frequency will be of further surveys of the main crack at the No. 2 Hatch. [172571]

Mr. Jamieson: Surveys are undertaken during optimal tidal and weather conditions. For visual inspections this is on Neap Tides during the summer months.

The survey of the SS Richard Montgomery is an evolving process which takes advantage of new technology and understanding. Diver surveys have been undertaken on approximately a decennial basis, with intervening sonar surveys to increase knowledge of the status of the wreck and surrounding area. It is not anticipated that another full visual diver survey of No. 2 Hatch area will be undertaken until 2013. However, if intervening surveys suggest a requirement to gather such information earlier, a visual survey would then be commissioned.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will undertake further sampling and metallurgical analysis of the hull plates on the SS Richard Montgomery in the Thames. [172572]

Mr. Jamieson: The form of the next survey, planned for 2005, will be discussed with specialist advisers, and decisions will be based on furthering knowledge of relevant aspects of the condition of the wreck. The use of sonar, (multi-beam, sidescan), Remotely Operated Vehicle, physical sampling, and visual or ultra sonic diver survey will all be considered, and might include further sampling and metallurgical analysis. However, as stated in the most recent report, there has been little appreciable change to the thickness of the hull plating in the last 22 years, so there is no reason to suggest this will be necessary before the next full diving survey.

TREASURY

Army Medal Office

Mr. Luff: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the implications for the Droitwich Spa office of Customs and Excise of the proposed closure of the Army Medal Office. [171977]

John Healey: I understand that the Ministry of Defence (MOD) are to close their office in Droitwich. HM Customs and Excise have an arrangement with the MOD to occupy the building until March 2006. Customs are now considering the implications for its 115 staff based at Droitwich and are exploring alternative accommodation options.

Childcare Tax Credit

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many spot checks the Inland Revenue has carried out on child care providers to check that the childcare tax credit has been properly used in each quarter since the introduction of the childcare tax credit. [171603]

Dawn Primarolo: Of working tax credit awards for 2003–04 that included help with child care costs, there were about 350,000 instances in which claimants reported making payments to child care providers. For all of these, Inland Revenue has contacted the child care provider by letter or telephone to check child care.

Civil Service

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his Answer of 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1677W, on the Gershon Review, when he expects the first reductions in the number of civil servants to be made as a result of the Lyons Review. [171393]

Mr. Boateng: I refer the right hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave in the House on 13 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 466.

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his answer of 1 April, *Official Report*, column 1677W, on the Gershon Review, when he expects the first reductions in the number of civil servants to be made towards the reduction of 14,000 civil servants in the Inland Revenue and HM Customs. [171394]

Mr. Boateng: I refer the right hon. Gentleman to the answer my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave yesterday in the House *Official Report*, column 453—and in particular that implementing the job reductions will be included in the remit of the first executive Chairman of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

Council Tax

Dr. Vincent Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will update the information set out in the Answer of 10th June 2003, Official Report, columns 746–47W, on council tax, to take account of the effects of taxes and benefits on household income in 2002–03. [172602]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Dr. Vincent Cable, dated 14 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question to the Chancellor of the Exchequer asking for an update for 2002–03 of the figures for council tax as a percentage of gross income for Great Britain, together with a breakdown for England, Scotland, and Wales, given in the previous answer of 10 June 2003. (172602)

Estimates have been produced from the Office for National Statistics' analysis "The effects of taxes and benefits on household income" published on the National Statistics website on 6 May 2004 at http://www.statistics.gov.uk/taxesbenefits. The analysis includes measures of income inequality for the United Kingdom as a whole based on data from the Expenditure and Food Survey.

The current analysis presents data for the category 'Council tax and Northern Ireland rates', as opposed to the category 'Local taxes' used in previous analyses. This is because, from this year, charges made by water authorities for water, environmental and sewerage services have been excluded. This treatment conforms to the National Accounts classification and definition of taxes where water rates and related charges are considered a charge for services rather than a tax. They have therefore been excluded from the calculation of disposable income. This reply is based on the new methodology and I have included updated figures on this basis for 2001–02 for comparison.

The following table shows the estimated gross and net council tax for all households in Great Britain and *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* Wales, for each income quintile where households are ranked by equivalised disposable income. The net council tax figures are gross council tax less benefits and discounts. The table also shows the equivalised disposable income quintile point boundaries, which have been calculated separately for Great Britain and each country. For example, the 1st quintile point for each country is the income below which one fifth of households in that country are estimated to lie.

Council tax as a percentage of gross income

Great Britain *Percentages*

		Quintile groups of all households ranked by equivalised disposable income									
		Bottom		*2nd*		*3rd*		*4th*		*Top*	*All households*
2001–02											
Quintile points (equivalised disposable income, £ per year)	Great Britain		10,647		14,943		20,231		28,840		
	England		10,771		15,094		20,641		29,328		
	Scotland		10,035		13,838		18,331		26,339		
	Wales		10,103		14,367		18,429		25,604		
Gross council tax	Great Britain	7.2		4.4		3.1		2.3		1.4	2.6
	England	7.1		4.3		3.0		2.2		1.4	2.5
	Scotland	8.4		5.3		3.8		3.0		2.1	3.4
	Wales	6.0		3.5		2.6		2.1		1.4	2.3
Net council tax[1]	Great Britain	4.7		3.3		2.8		2.3		1.4	2.2
	England	4.7		3.3		2.8		2.2		1.3	2.2
	Scotland	5.0		4.1		3.3		2.9		2.1	2.9
	Wales	4.2		2.5		2.5		2.1		1.4	2.0
2002–03											
Quintile points (equivalised disposable income, £ per year)	Great Britain		11,242		15,541		20,977		29,745		
	England		11,397		15,870		21,392		30,254		
	Scotland		10,503		13,965		18,679		26,176		
	Wales		9,902		14,392		18,695		26,080		
Gross council tax	Great Britain	7.1		4.6		3.2		2.4		1.6	2.7
	England	7.1		4.4		3.1		2.4		1.5	2.7
	Scotland	8.4		5.8		4.3		3.0		2.0	3.4
	Wales	6.2		4.0		2.8		2.2		1.6	2.6

Council tax as a percentage of gross income

Great Britain *Percentages*

		Quintile groups of all households ranked by equivalised disposable income					
		Bottom	*2nd*	*3rd*	*4th*	*Top*	*All households*
Net council tax[1]	Great Britain	4.6	3.4	2.9	2.4	1.6	2.4
	England	4.6	3.3	2.8	2.3	1.5	2.3
	Scotland	5.3	4.1	3.7	2.9	2.0	2.9
	Wales	4.0	2.9	2.4	2.0	1.6	2.2

[1] Net council taxes after deducting benefits and discounts

Source:

Office for National Statistics, based on the analysis 'The effects of taxes and benefits on household income', published on the ONS website and in Economic Trends.

Operation Gestalt

Norman Lamb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the assistance being provided by *(a)* the Government and *(b)* government agencies to the Metropolitan Police with regard to Operation Gestalt. [172421]

John Healey: It is for the Metropolitan Police Service to determine the nature and extent of their inquiries and the information they require. The Commissioners of Customs and Excise have made it clear that the police will have their full co-operation in any investigation.

Tax Credits

Mr. David Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Inland Revenue expects to finalise awards of *(a)* child tax credit and *(b)* working tax credit in respect of 2003–04. [172897]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave the hon. Member for Birmingham Northfield (Richard Burden) on 19 November 2003, *Official Report*, columns 1099–1100W.

Tax Credits (Blackpool, South)

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in Blackpool, South have received the child tax credit. [173065]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to my answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Burton (Mrs. Dean) on 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 98W.

Teenage Pregnancy

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the percentage change in conceptions among girls under *(a)* 18 and *(b)* 16 years in Kent is since 2001. [172214]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Julian Brazier, dated 14 May 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking what the percentage change in conceptions, among girls under *(a)* 18 and *(b)* 16 years, in Kent is since 2001. (172214)

The table gives the numbers and rates of conceptions in 2001 and 2002 (the latest year for which figures are available) among girls aged under 16 and under 18 in Kent. The table also shows the percentage change in the rates of conception between these two years.

Numbers of conceptions are estimated from registrations of births and notifications of abortions. Miscarriages before the 24th week of gestation are not included.

	Conceptions at ages: Under 16			*Conceptions at ages: Under 18*		
	Number	*Rate*[1]	*% change in rate*	*Number*	*Rate*[2]	*% change in rate*
2001[3]	205	8.0	-12	986	39.3	-5
2002[4]	183	7.0		945	37.2	

[1] Rate per 1,000 females aged 13 to 15

[2] Rate per 1,000 females aged 15 to 17

[3] Provisional figures

[4] Provisional estimate based on incomplete abortion data

WORK AND PENSIONS

Computers (Wigan)

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Wigan have received a computer to assist in seeking employment or retraining. [169362]

Jane Kennedy: No computers have been purchased for customers within the Wigan District. However, help has been provided to three customers to upgrade an existing computer; to enable the purchase of parts to repair a computer; and for the purchase of a printer. The purchase of such items is via the Advisers Discretionary Fund (ADF). ADF is a financial option designed to help Jobcentre Plus customers make the transition from claiming benefits to employment. ADF was introduced to help support customers with their jobsearch and/or to purchase essential items without which they would be unable to take up a job. Advisers have the discretion to make awards from the ADF, up to a maximum of £300, for any goods and services needed to support the customer in taking up a job.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many new appointments have been made to his Department and its agencies in the last five years; and of these how many were aged *(a)* 60 years or over and *(b)* 65 years or over. [173298]

Malcolm Wicks: Information on the number of new appointments made to the Department for Work and Pensions and its agencies in the last three years is in the table. Information on new recruits in earlier years is not available.

	Total appointments	Appointments aged 60 years and over	Appointments aged 65 years and over
2001–02	14,855	91	0
2002–03	10,917	97	0
2003–04	8,342	73	4

Notes:
Numbers exclude temporary appointments.
Each year stated runs from 1 April to 31 March.

Employment Training (Wirral, South)

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the provision of employment training in Wirral, South. [168912]

Jane Kennedy: Employment training for unemployed people in Wirral South is available through a range of Jobcentre Plus programmes. Training is provided in occupations including: construction, engineering, administration, agriculture, retail, basic skills, IT, health care and self employment.

People in Wirral South can also access training in construction and IT through our Ambition programmes. These programmes are designed to give unemployed and disadvantaged people the skills and experience they need to get sustained jobs with career potential in areas of specific local labour market shortages. On the 28 April, we announced our Ambition Health programme which will give people the chance of support and training to help them into jobs in the NHS. The Merseyside pilot, which Wirral South residents will be able to access, starts in September.

Help with travel costs is available for unemployed people undertaking our training programmes, and those known to face particular disadvantage in the labour market may be exempt from an unemployment qualifying period and can join Jobcentre Plus programmes from day one of their unemployment. These can include: disabled people, lone parents and people with basic skills needs.

Health and Safety

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what representations the Government has received from *(a)* sporting groups and *(b)* others involved in outdoor pursuits with regard to health and safety issues within the last six months; and if he will make a statement. [168232]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 28 April 2004]*: The Health and Safety Executive is responsible for enforcement of health and safety legislation in Great Britain. It has received approximately 430 representations from sporting groups and others involved in outdoor pursuits with regard to health and safety issues within the last six months. This includes meetings, letters to Ministers and officials in HSE, and also approximately 350 responses to the Health and Safety Commission's consultation document on proposals for work at height regulations. HSC/E is currently considering these and other responses to the consultation document before putting final proposals to Ministers. I also refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Bedfordshire North East on the 26 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 847–48W.

Pension Credit

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his most recent estimate is of the average time between a pensioner submitting an application for pension credit and receipt of the first payment. [172003]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available in the form requested. However, the average time taken to clear Pension Credit applications in March was 9.6 working days, running from the time when all the necessary evidence has been obtained from the customer to the point at which a decision on the application is made. Payment will normally follow within a few days.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department plans to reduce the length of the pension credit application form. [172006]

Malcolm Wicks: The pension credit application form is kept under review and improved where necessary, most recently in April this year. There are no current plans to fundamentally alter its format or length. The application process for pension credit has been designed to be straightforward and the majority of application forms are completed for the customer over the freephone application line.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer of 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1461W, on pensions, if he will estimate the effects of this reform in 2006–07 on the number of recipients of pension credit. [173397]

Malcolm Wicks: It is estimated that under the suggested reform there would be 1,100,000 fewer recipients of pension credit in 2006–07 (rounded to the nearest 100,000) than under the existing system.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adult Learning

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding will be provided for adult learning in colleges over the next four years. [171890]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 12 May 2004]*: The Department allocates funds to the Learning and Skills Council for the provision of education and training in the post-16 learning and skills sector. The Department does not provide a specific budget to the LSC for adult learning in further education colleges. It is for the Learning and Skills Council to determine for itself the right level of investment in further education colleges for the provision of adult learning from the funds allocated to it for learning participation. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will to write to the hon. Friend on this matter. A copy of his reply will be placed in the House Library.

Broadband

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to his answer of 29 April, *Official Report*, column 1253W, on broadband, if he will

list the schools which *(a)* have and *(b)* do not have access to broadband connectivity, broken down by type of local authority in which they are located. [173096]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department does not hold the information requested as collection would incur disproportionate costs. I provided available information on the proportion of rural schools with broadband connections at August 2003 in my response to PQ 168668, on 29 April, *Official Report*, column 1253W.

Capital Modernisation Fund

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many Capital Modernisation Fund computer-learning centres have been established in Manchester, Gorton. [167442]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Five Capital Modernisation Funded UK online centres have been established in Manchester, Gorton.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many Capital Modernisation Fund computer-learning centres have been established in Burnley. [167932]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Four Capital Modernisation Funded UK online centres have been established in Burnley.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money has been allocated to Burnley from the Capital Modernisation Fund. [167934]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Capital modernisation funding is awarded to individual projects. Projects often span constituency boundaries and therefore the information is not available on the basis requested.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money was allocated to Preston from the Capital Modernisation Fund. [168121]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Capital modernisation funding is awarded to individual projects. Projects often span constituency boundaries and therefore the information is not available on the basis requested.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money was allocated to Oldham West and Royton from the Capital Modernisation Fund. [170928]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Capital modernisation funding is awarded to individual projects. Projects often span constituency boundaries and therefore the information is not available on the basis requested.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money has been allocated to Bootle from the Capital Modernisation Fund since its establishment. [171128]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Capital modernisation funding is awarded to individual projects. Projects often span constituency boundaries and therefore the information is not available on the basis requested.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money has been allocated to Manchester, Gorton from the Capital Modernisation Fund. [167432]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Capital modernisation funding is awarded to individual projects. Projects often span constituency boundaries and therefore the information is not available on the basis requested.

Computer Learning Centres (Birkenhead)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many capital modernisation fund computer learning centres have been established in Birkenhead. [166322]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Four capital modernisation fund computer learning centres have been established in Birkenhead.

These are at:

Arch Initiatives, Oliver Street East;

Birkenhead Central Library, Borough Road;

Encore Computer Training, Odyssey Business Centre; and

Livingstone Street Play and Community Centre, St. Anne's Street.

Consultants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much his Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies spent on external consultants and advisors in each of the last three years. [171877]

Mr. Charles Clarke: This Information could be supplied only at disproportionate cost.

Education (Heywood and Middleton)

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many Capital Modernisation Fund computer-learning centres have been established in Heywood and Middleton. [168507]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Thirteen Capital Modernisation Funded UK online centres have been established in Heywood and Middleton.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money was allocated to Heywood and Middleton from the Capital Modernisation Fund. [168509]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Capital modernisation funding is awarded to individual projects. Projects often span constituency boundaries and therefore the information is not available on the basis requested.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate he has made of the cost of introducing the educational maintenance allowance in schools in England. [173394]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Education Maintenance Allowance Scheme will be available in colleges as well as schools. The Department estimates the overall cost for the next three financial years to be:

2004–05—£275 million

2005–06—£403 million

2006–07—£476 million

These estimates take account of the phased roll-out to one cohort at a time and the cost of administering, promoting and evaluating the scheme. They take account of new estimates of the population of young people and household income distribution.

Education Services

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on computers for schools in Blackpool South in each of the last seven years. [173067]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department does not collect information on school spend on computers at constituency level. However, Blackpool South is in Blackpool LEA and in the last seven years schools in Blackpool have benefited from the following funding through the Standards Fund grant for ICT (including match funding from the LEA):

£

	Allocation to Blackpool LEA
1998–99	233,891
1999–2000	376,443
2000–01	471,538
2001–02	531,056
2002–03	750,176
2003–04	774,460
2004–05	1,021,894

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public money has been spent on computers for schools in *(a)* Tamworth constituency and *(b)* Staffordshire in the last five years. [173281]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department does not collect information on school spend on computers at constituency level. However, Tamworth is in Staffordshire LEA and in the last five years schools in Staffordshire have benefited from the following funding through the Standards Fund grant for ICT (including match funding from the LEA):

	Allocation to Staffordshire LEA (£)
2000–01	3,000,000
2001–02	4,383,181
2002–03	6,933,997
2003–04	6,257,291
2004–05	8,262,812

FE Colleges

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether it is his policy for per capita funding for 16 to 18 years old students attending further education colleges to be the same as that for 16 to 18 year old pupils attending state schools; and if he will make a statement. [169471]

Alan Johnson: The government has set out its investment plans for 2003–04 to 2005–06 to support its Success for All strategy to reform further education and training. These plans enable the Learning and Skills Council to increase funding for further education significantly. For the academic year 2003–04, core funding rates per qualification increased by 3 per cent. for school sixth forms and 4.5 per cent. for further education colleges (setting aside the impact on rates of changes to targeted funds for pay and staff training and teachers' pension funding). Our expenditure plans to 2005–06 should see that trend continue.

Headquarters Staff

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to his answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 41W, how many headquarters staff there were in his Department as at 17 March. [171391]

Mr. Charles Clarke: As at 1 April 2004, my Department employed 4,487 staff. Staffing numbers are produced quarterly.

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to his answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 41W, on headquarters staff, what information is being provided to staff regarding plans to reduce the number of headquarters staff in his Department; and if he will place a copy of that information in the Library. [171409]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Staff received the latest in the series of messages from the Permanent Secretary on 30 April 2004 which set the context for the changes and explained how the reductions will be achieved. In addition, staff have been given information on the Human Resource policies to support the transition. Senior managers have written to staff in their parts of the Department and are discussing the changes with them. A copy of the Permanent Secretary's message will be placed in the House of Commons Library.

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to his answer of 19 April 004, *Official Report*, column 41W, on headquarters staff, when he expects the first reductions in the number of headquarters staff in his Department to be made. [171410]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Department plans to reduce its size by 850 posts by April 2006 and a further 610 posts by April 2008, based on the full time equivalent staff in post, figures as at October 2003 (4660). Reductions will be spread throughout that period and the Department intends to make the first reductions of staff by the end of 2004.

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to his answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 41W, on headquarters staff, what discussions he has had with trade unions regarding his plans to reduce the number of headquarters staff in his Department. [171411]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I met the Trade Unions in my Department on 25 March 2004 and plan to do so again in June.

More generally there have been regular and constructive discussions between management and the unions about the reductions and how they will achieved.

Information and Communication Technologies (Preston)

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many Capital Modernisation Fund computer-learning centres have been established in Preston. [168119]

Mr. Charles Clarke: 16 Capital Modernisation Funded UK online centres have been established in Preston.

Modern Apprenticeships

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much of the 2004–05 budget for Modern Apprenticeships is allocated to large businesses to convert their existing training for young employees into Modern Apprenticeship qualifications; and what proportion this represents of the total Modern Apprenticeship training budget allocation. [169467]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to the hon. Friend with this information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Truancy

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in the East Riding of Yorkshire played truant from school in each of the last five years. [171791]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is as follows:

Number of pupils that missed at least a half day due to unauthorised absence in schools in East Riding of Yorkshire

Academic year[1]	*Primary schools*	*Secondary schools*
1998	1,844	3,853
1999	1,419	3,643
2000	2,013	4,171
2001	1,766	2,875
2002	1,956	3,805
2003	1,725	4,025

[1] September to May

Percentage of pupils that missed at least a half day due to unauthorised absence in schools in East Riding of Yorkshire

Academic year[1]	*Primary schools*	*Secondary schools*
1998	7.67	20.36
1999	6.07	18.84
2000	8.31	20.97
2001	7.21	14.26
2002	8.07	18.34
2003	7.62	19.20

[1] September to May

HEALTH

Anti-psychotic Drugs

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many items of *(a)* anti-psychotic drugs excluding atypicals and *(b)* atypical anti-psychotic drugs were prescribed in (i) January to March 2000 and (ii) January to March 2003; [172417]

(2) how many anti-psychotic drug items were prescribed in *(a)* January to March 2000 and *(b)* January to March 2003. [172418]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table. The data covers prescription items dispensed in the community in England only. It does not cover prescription items dispensed in hospitals/mental health trusts or private prescriptions.

Number of prescription items (thousands) of anti-psychotics dispensed in the community in England January to March 2000 and January to March 2003

Prescription items (thousands)

	January to March 2000	*January to March 2003*
Anti-psychotics excluding atypicals	953.5	574.4
Atypical anti-psychotics	244.5	701.2
Total anti-psychotics	1,198.1	1,275.6

Notes:

1. The prescription information is from the Prescription Cost Analysis system and is based on a full analysis of all prescriptions dispensed in the community, i.e. by community pharmacists and appliance contractors, dispensing doctors and prescriptions submitted by prescribing doctors for items personally administered in England. Also included are prescriptions written in Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and the Isle of Man but dispensed in England. The data do not cover drugs dispensed in hospital or private prescriptions.
2. Antipsychotics are defined in the table as British National Formulary paragraph 4.2.1 "Antipsychotic drugs". Antipsychotic depot injections (BNF paragraph 4.2.2) are not included in this data.

Asylum Seekers (Health Screening)

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many asylum claimants refused the offer of basic health screening in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [171856]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not available on a national basis. Data collected locally shows that health screening was refused by around one per cent. (28 of 2,406) of asylum claimants who were received at the East Kent induction centre during the last six months. A new system of collating data was introduced in autumn 2003, and local information for a 12-month period could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Clinical Negligence

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what plans he has to bring forward a bill on clinical negligence; and if he will make a statement; [171761]

(2) which of the recommendations of the Chief Medical Officer's report, Making Amends into Medical Negligence, have been implemented. [171762]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department is reviewing the responses to the consultation document 'Making Amends'. It is intended to publish a statement of policy later this year, setting out how the National Health Service response to clinical negligence will change in the

future. Following this, the Department intends to introduce the changes which require primary legislation as soon as Parliamentary time allows.

Competent Authorities (EU Accession States)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 29 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1222W, on competent authorities (EU accession states), when he expects to receive from the European Commission a list of competent authorities operating in the accession countries in respect of the health and social care profession. [172101]

Mr. Hutton: The European Commission has undertaken to provide this information within the next month. Meanwhile, it has advised that the competent authorities are the Health Ministries of the Member States concerned.

Correspondence

Mr. Hawkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he will respond to the letter he has received from Mr. C.J. Ray of Ash Vale, Surrey, a constituent. [172796]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* A reply was sent to Mr. Ray on 10 May 2004.

Dentistry

Dr. Richard Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures he is taking to ensure that NHS dentists understand the detail of the new NHS contract. [169817]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 4 May 2004]*: This Government is committed to rebuilding and restoring National Health Service dentistry to improve the oral health of the Nation. The proposals in the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 represent the most radical reform of NHS dentistry since 1948. Our proposals for NHS dentistry will underpin a modernised, high-quality primary dental service provided through contracts between primary care trusts (PCTs) and dental practices. The service will be properly integrated with the rest of the NHS providing better access to services and an improved patient experience.

We have made considerable progress on implementation. We have consulted widely with representatives of stakeholders on the framework proposed for the new primary dental services. The consultation period ended on 30 April and we are considering the responses received and will use them to inform implementation plans.

The Department, supported by the special health authority shadow arrangements we put in place last year, will ensure that the NHS, both strategic health authorities and their PCTs, have the information they need to open meaningful discussion with their potential local providers of primary dental services to establish contracts for the provision of NHS dentistry in the new world. PCTs will be supported in this through the national primary and care trust development programme (NatPaCT) and by the shadow special health authority.

The underpinning principles on which we are working were set out in a letter from the Chief Dental Officer to all dentists in England in January 2004, copies of this letter have been placed in the Library. Now that the consultation on the framework proposals is over, the Department plans to communicate directly with dentists in England on a regular basis to keep them informed of developments.

Eating Disorders

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what additional funding his Department has made available to support the implementation of the new National Institute for Clinical Excellence guidelines relating to the treatment of eating disorders. [172477]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Funding to meet recommendations of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence has been included in the allocations notified to primary care trusts for the period 2003–04 to 2005–06. This funding is not separately identified.

Fluoride

Mr. Etherington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the availability of routine NHS dental treatment to remove the physical manifestations of dental fluorosis. [172111]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Dental fluorosis is characterised by a flecking or more rarely a mottling of the teeth, which may leave some people concerned about the appearance of their teeth, although they are endowed with the extra resistance to decay offered by exposure to fluoride.

The report, A Systematic Review of Water Fluoridation, published by the University of York in October 2000 estimated that only 12.5 per cent, of cases of dental fluorosis were the cause of aesthetic concern. Often the effects can be ameliorated by dental polishing or alternatively National Health Service patients can, if clinically appropriate, have veneers fitted to the front of the affected teeth.

General Practitioners

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of general practitioners *(a)* work part-time, *(b)* will retire in three years' time and *(c)* have indicated that they are prepared to work out of hours under the new general practitioner contract. [171507]

Dr. Ladyman: Of the 33,564 all general practitioners employed in the National Health Service as at September 2003 8,687 or 25.9 per cent, were part-time.

We do not collect information on the number of GPs who will retire in three years' time. Neither do we centrally collect any information on the workings of local out of hours services. Strategic health authorities have responsibility for the performance management of their primary care trusts in their delivery of out of hours services.

Health Services

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many rapid access chest pain clinics there are in South Ribble. [171270]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Lancashire Teaching Hospitals National Health Service Trust has rapid access chest pain clinics at both the Royal Preston Hospital and Chorley and South Ribble Hospital. Both clinics are meeting the national service framework two week target for patients to be seen from date of referral by a General Practitioner.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many residents in South Ribble aged over 60 years have benefited from the abolition of charges for eye tests; [171272]

(2) how many senior citizens in South Ribble have access to free eye tests. [171279]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer my hon. Friend to the response I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Workington (Tony Cunningham) today.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes there have been to NHS waiting list times in the last seven years for residents of South Ribble. [171275]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information most closely associated with place of residency is not collected on a constituency level, but at a health services commissioner level.

Data are shown as follows for the South Lancashire Health Authority for the period 1997 to 2002 and the Chorley and South Ribble and West Lancashire Primary Care Trusts for 2003.

In-patient waiting list in months

	Name of Commissioner	*Total*	*0–2*	*3–5*	*6–8*	*9–11*	*12–14*	*15–17*	*18+*
1996–97	South Lancashire HA	10,092	4,565	2,587	1,696	1,069	160	12	3
1997–98	South Lancashire HA	10,414	4,566	2,391	1,580	1,128	563	186	0
1998–99	South Lancashire HA	9,179	4,259	2,285	1,354	839	356	86	0
1999–2000	South Lancashire HA	8,604	4,251	2,042	1,260	715	270	66	0
2000–01	South Lancashire HA	8,283	4,401	1,979	1,041	559	208	95	0
2001–02	South Lancashire HA	8,047	4,317	1,997	1,090	544	99	0	0
March 2003	Chorley and South Ribble PCT	4,761	3,108	1,108	510	35	0	0	0
March 2003	West Lancashire PCT	3,042	1,390	844	564	244	0	0	0
September 2003	Chorley and South Ribble PCT	4,922	3,278	1,178	447	19	0	0	0
September 2003	West Lancashire PCT	2,813	1,681	788	306	38	0	0	0

Source:
Department of Health QF01

Out-patient waiting list in weeks

	Name	*13–25*	*26+*
1997–98	South Lancashire HA	2,200	6,291
1998–99	South Lancashire HA	2,790	1,373
1999–2000	South Lancashire HA	2,135	5,07
2000–01	South Lancashire HA	1,823	374
2001–02	South Lancashire HA	1,676	1

	Name	*13–17*	*17–21*	*21–26*	*26+*
March 2003	Chorley and South Ribble PCT	363	108	0	0
March 2003	West Lancashire PCT	196	72	0	0
December 2003	Chorley and South Ribble PCT	615	17	0	0
December 2003	West Lancashire PCT	250	1	0	0

Source:
Department of Health

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many residents in South Ribble awaiting heart surgery have had the option of choosing an alternative hospital for quicker treatment in the last 12 months. [171268]

Miss Melanie Johnson: This information requested is not collected centrally.

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many residents in West Lancashire aged over 60 years have benefited from the abolition of charges for eye tests. [171547]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer my hon. Friend to the response I gave to my hon. Friend, the Member for Workington (Mr. Cunningham) today.

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many senior citizens in Workington constituency have access to free eye tests; [170704]

(2) how many residents in Workington constituency aged over 60 years have benefited from the abolition of charges for eye tests. [170705]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data for the number of sight tests by constituency or by the number of senior citizens is not collected centrally.

The total number of sight tests paid for by Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority in the year 2002–03 for those aged 60 and over was 189,100.

The total number of eligible for a free eye test for those aged 60 and over was 429,300. Sight tests cannot be equated to the number of patients.

Source:
Department of Health statistics.

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* therapists and *(b)* scientists were located in Workington constituency in each of the last seven years. [170707]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff in the Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority area by organisation as at 30 September each specified year

headcount

		1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Q13	Cumbria and Lancashire SHA total	3,352	3,486	3,595	3,706	3,758	3,893	4,279
5D6	West Cumbria PCT	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	128	128	130
RE7	West Cumbria Health Care NHS Trust	187	209	224	243	[1]	[1]	[1]
RLG	Carlisle Hospitals NHS Trust	200	206	230	230	[1]	[1]	[1]
RNL	North Cumbria Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	351	331	366

[1] Not applicable

Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of suspected cancer patients in Workington constituency saw an NHS consultant within two weeks in each of the last seven years. [170709]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information from 2000–01, the earliest available, is shown in the table.

Waiting times for first consultant outpatient appointment for suspected cancer following urgent GP referral—Workington

			Seen within two weeks	
	Quarter	*NHS trust*	*Percentage*	*Number*
2000–01	4	West Cumbria Health Care NHS Trust	89.6	190
2000–01	4	Carlisle Hospitals NHS Trust	79.6	227
2001–02	1	North Cumbria Acute NHS Trust	89.8	467
2001–02	2	North Cumbria Acute NHS Trust	85.3	492
2001–02	3	North Cumbria Acute NHS Trust	84.9	594
2001–02	4	North Cumbria Acute NHS Trust	78.7	511
2002–03	1	North Cumbria Acute NHS Trust	83.1	674
2002–03	2	North Cumbria Acute NHS Trust	85.6	734
2002–03	3	North Cumbria Acute NHS Trust	87.1	757
2002–03	4	North Cumbria Acute NHS Trust	81.2	722

Waiting times for first consultant outpatient appointment for suspected cancer following urgent GP referral—Workington

			Seen within two weeks	
	Quarter	*NHS trust*	*Percentage*	*Number*
2003–04	1	North Cumbria Acute NHS Trust	82.4	831
2003–04	2	North Cumbria Acute NHS Trust	96.9	946
2003–04	3	North Cumbria Acute NHS Trust	99.8	991

Source:
Department of Health form QMCW.

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many residents in Workington constituency awaiting heart surgery have had the option of choosing an alternative hospital for quicker treatment in the last 12 months. [170711]

Miss Melanie Johnson: This information is not collected centrally.

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the levels of elective admissions to the NHS in Workington constituency in the past five years. [170712]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Count of in-year elective (waiting time, booked, planned) admissions—Primary care trust of responsibility—5D6 West Cumbria PCT—NHS Hospitals, England 1998–99 to 2002–03

PCT of responsibility	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
5D6 West Cumbria PCT	16,395	16,163	16,579	16,577	16,613

Notes:
1. An in-year admission is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one health care provider, excluding admissions beginning before 1 April at the start of the datayear. Periods of care on-going at the end of the datayear (unfinished admission episodes) are included. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
2. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on heart disease and cancer care in Workington constituency in each of the last five years. [170716]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally. Allocation of funding for particular treatments are matters for local primary care trusts.

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on health in Workington constituency in each of the last seven years. [170718]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested. Expenditure per weighted head of the population in the Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area, which includes the constituency of Workington, has increased from £600.03 in 1997–98 to £1,173.57 in 2002–03 (the latest year available). This does not represent the total expenditure per head as an element of health expenditure cannot be identified by SHA area.

Hip Fractures

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department is taking to *(a)* raise public awareness of osteoporosis and *(b)* reduce the number of avoidable hip fractures. [169468]

Dr. Ladyman: A considerable amount of work is under way which will help to raise general awareness of osteoporosis, for example, The National Institute for Clinical Excellence is to develop two clinical guidelines and a technology appraisal to provide the best available evidence of what is effective in:

the assessment and prevention of falls in older people;

the assessment of fracture risk and the prevention of osteoporotic fractures in individuals at high risk; and

the prevention and treatment of osteoporosis

The clinical guideline on the assessment and prevention of falls in older people is currently out for consultation. Although osteoporosis does not cause falls it significantly increases the likelihood of a fracture when a fall happens.

The falls guideline will provide recommendations for good practice that are based on the best available evidence of clinical and cost effectiveness. It is due to be completed in August this year. A second clinical guideline has been commissioned to look at the assessment of fracture risk and the prevention of osteoporotic fractures in individuals at high risk.

We know it is the fractures which result from osteoporosis which can lead to pain, disability, greatly reduced quality of life and premature death. This guideline will look at all groups of people recognised to be at high risk of osteoporotic fracture. It will examine both interventions used to prevent an initial fracture and those used to prevent subsequent fractures where one has already occurred.

It will cover care from primary and secondary National Health Service healthcare professionals who have direct contact with and make decisions about the care of high risk individuals. It will look at areas where collaboration is needed between primary and secondary NHS services. Although it does not specifically cover areas outside the NHS, it will be relevant to practice in non-NHS residential and nursing homes, social services and the voluntary sector. This guideline will build on and where necessary extend the work already completed around osteoporosis. It is due to be completed in June 2005.

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* number and *(b)* percentage of patients who suffered a hip fracture died as a consequence of the fracture in (i) 2001–02 and (ii) 2002–03. [169469]

Dr. Ladyman: Numbers are not available on patients who die specifically from hip fractures. However there is information on the number of deaths with the main injury of hip fracture and also with an underlying cause of osteoporosis.

Information on the number of hospital episodes of patients admitted with hip fracture is shown in the tables.

Number of deaths with underlying cause of death of Osteoporosis[1] persons, England and Wales 2001–02

	Number of deaths
2001	11,542
2002	11,605

[1] ICD-10 codes M80-M81

Number of deaths with main injury of Hip fracture[1] persons, England and Wales 2001–02

	Number of deaths
2001	2,214
2002	2,151

[1] ICD-10 codes S72.0-S72.2

These two groups are mutually exclusive.

Count of finished admission episodes primary diagnosis hip fracture (ICD-10 diagnosis code S72)—NHS

NHS hospitals	*Finished admission episodes*
2001–02	63,999
2002–03	70,508

Note:
Finished admission episodes—A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) Department of Health
Ungrossed Data:
Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (ie the data are ungrossed)

Immigrant Medical Inspections

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the publication Instructions to Medical Inspectors was last updated; and if he will place a copy in the Library. [156839]

Miss Melanie Johnson: "Instructions to Medical Inspectors" was last updated in 1992. It was marked for disclosure "only to persons authorised to receive it", but it is no longer known why this restriction was placed on the document. I am arranging for a copy to be placed in the Library. We will consider the need to review the "Instructions" in the light of any decisions taken as a result of the Cabinet Office review of imported infection.

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health who is responsible for making appointments of medical inspectors of immigrants; who employs them; who is responsible for the policy to be operated by medical inspectors; and what changes to these arrangements will occur if the Health Protection Agency Bill is enacted. [156841]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Paragraph 1(2) of Schedule 2 to the Immigration Act 1971 (c.77) provides that medical inspectors for the purposes of the Act may be appointed by the Secretary of State, or in Northern Ireland, by the Minister of Health and Social Services or other appropriate Minister of the Government of Northern Ireland in pursuance of arrangements made between that Minister and the Secretary of State.

The Secretary of State's responsibilities for appointing medical inspectors in Scotland was transferred to Scottish Ministers by The Scotland Act 1998 (Transfer of Functions to the Scottish Ministers etc.) Order 1999 (Statutory Instrument 1999 No. 1750).

Medical inspectors are employed by the National Health Service (in England, in some cases by primary care trusts and in others by the Health Protection Agency). The policy to be operated by medical inspectors is governed by the Immigration Act and Immigration Rules (HC 395 as amended) and is the joint responsibility of the Home Office (which is responsible for immigration policy) and the Department of Health and the devolved administrations (which are responsible for health policy).

Paragraph 3 of Schedule 3 to the Health Protection Agency Bill will allow the Secretary of State to direct that his function of appointing medical inspectors is also exercisable by such persons specified in the direction who exercise functions relating to health in England or Wales. The intention is to use this power to delegate the appointment of medical inspectors to the National Assembly for Wales in Wales, and to the Health Protection Agency in England. Such delegation takes account of the fact that arrangements for identifying medical inspectors are best made locally. The Bill does not change the responsibility for the policy operated by medical inspectors.

NHS (Road Traffic Matters)

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many persons employed by or on behalf of the NHS undertake work relating to road traffic matters, including alleged speeding offences of ambulance drivers; and what the annual salary cost thereof to public funds was in 2003–04. [171036]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* The information requested is not collected centrally.

However, the Department is aware that speeding tickets issued to ambulances on emergency journeys are creating extra administration costs in some areas. Officials have already had useful discussions with the Home Office and are working closely with them to provide a workable solution.

NHS Beds (Burnley)

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS beds were available in Burnley in each year since 1997. [167954]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information on beds is collected on a provider basis from national health service organisations and the latest data available is for the year 2002–03. Beds data for 2003–04 will be published later this year.

Beds data for the relevant trusts is shown in the tables.

Average daily number of available beds, by sector, Burnley Health Care NHS Trust, 1996–97 to 2002–03

	All specialties (excluding day only)	*General and acute*	*Acute*	*Geriatric*	*Mental illness*	*Learning disability*	*Maternity*	*Day only*
1996–97	858	659	458	201	163	0	36	51
1997–98	879	669	475	194	163	0	47	30
1998–99	838	627	627	—	163	—	48	35
1999–2000	837	626	626	—	163	—	48	33
2000–01	840	643	643	—	149	—	48	25
2001–02	810	620	620	—	141	—	49	26
2002–03	680	632	632	—	—	—	48	31

Source:

Department of Health form KH03

Average daily number of available beds, by sector, Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust, 1996–97 to 2002–03

	All specialties (excluding day only)	*General and acute*	*Acute*	*Geriatric*	*Mental illness*	*Learning disability*	*Maternity*	*Day only*
1996–97	824	588	478	110	157	—	79	57
1997–98	857	618	532	86	166	—	73	53
1998–99	824	603	511	91	150	—	72	56
1999–2000	808	604	517	87	138	—	66	67
2000–01	833	623	531	93	143	—	67	67
2001–02	825	633	530	104	122	—	70	67
2002–03	680	611	505	106	—	—	70	67

Source:

Department of Health form KH03

Average daily number of available beds, by sector, Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale PCT 1996–97 to 2002–03

	All specialties (excluding day only)	General and acute	Acute	Geriatric	Mental illness	Learning disability	Maternity	Day only
1996–97	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1997–98	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1998–99	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1999–2000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2000–01	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2001–02	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2002–03	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Source:
Department of Health form KH03

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the percentage change in sexually transmitted infections among *(a)* girls and *(b)* boys under (i) 18 and (ii) 16 years in Kent is since 2001. [172213]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The percentage change in the number of sexually transmitted diseases diagnosed in males and females in the under 16, and 16 to 19 age groups in Kent between 2001 and 2002 are shown in the table. The data refer to diagnoses made in genitourinary medicine clinics.

Diagnoses of sexually transmitted infections[1] by gender and selected age groups, Kent: 2001 to 2002

Gender	Age group	2001	2002	Percentage change
Female	16	32	55	72
Male	16	13	11	-15
Female	16–19	553	738	33
Male	16–19	260	310	19

[1] Primary and Secondary syphilis, uncomplicated gonorrhoea, uncomplicated genital chlamydia, genital herpes (first attack) and genital warts (first attack)

Stoke Mandeville Hospital

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the time scale for the signing and implementation of the private finance initiative agreement to rebuild Stoke Mandeville Hospital. [172208]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* The £46 million redevelopment of Stoke Mandeville Hospital, part of Buckinghamshire Hospitals National Health Service Trust, is expected to reach financial close this month.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Legal Aid (London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many people *(a)* applied for and *(b)* received legal aid in Greater London, broken down by borough, in each of the last seven years. [173197]

Mr. Lammy: The Legal Services Commission is unable to answer in full the question asked. The Commission will shortly be able to provide details of the applications received from suppliers for funding, and funding certificates issued but only for the last four years, broken down by its London bid zones which largely equate to the London boroughs. This information will not be a wholly accurate representation of the number of people assisted in each London borough, since applicants can be assisted by lawyers based in different geographical areas from those where the applicants are resident and vice versa.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

British Grand Prix

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what further consultations with outside interests her Department is holding, in conjunction with other departments, in order to safeguard the long-term position of the British Grand Prix. [172974]

Mr. Caborn: The East Midlands Development Agency is currently leading discussions on behalf of the Government about the developments around Silverstone. These discussions are ongoing. The current negotiations about the retention of the British Grand Prix at Silverstone are part of a commercial deal, and the Government is not directly involved.

Computer File Formats

Mr. Allan: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what her Department's policy is in respect of the computer file formats used for the *(a)* distribution and *(b)* archiving of publicly available documents. [173354]

Mr. Caborn: The Department follows the e-GIF standards as set out by the Office of the e-Envoy. The standard formats used for distributing publicly available documents are Microsoft Word and Adobe Acrobat.

Publicly available documents committed to archive are stored on paper as per our obligations under the Public Records Act. The Department is moving to a full electronic document management system and documents held in this system will be stored in their original e-GIF compliant format.

Mayor of London (Meetings)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the official meetings she and her predecessor had with the Mayor of London since July 2000 to discuss matters on London within her Department's responsibilities, and the dates and subject of each meeting. [172205]

Tessa Jowell *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* Between July 2000 and July 2001 my predecessor met the Mayor of London on 1 occasion in the course of official business:

23 March 2001—Lee Valley meeting

Since July 2001 I have met the Mayor of London on 10 occasions in the course of official business:

24 September 2002—Olympics meeting
16 January 2003—Olympics meeting
22 January 2003—Olympics meeting
13 April 2003—Marathon lead vehicle
15 May 2003—Olympics meeting
20 October 2003—Olympics meeting
28 October 2003—Olympics meeting
23 January 2003—Olympics meeting
10 January 2004—Olympics meeting
16 January 2004—Olympics launch

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list *(a)* the official meetings she has had with the Mayor of London since July 2000 and *(b)* the dates and subject of each meeting. [170568]

Tessa Jowell *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* Since July 2001 I have met the Mayor of London on 10 occasions:

24 September 2002—Olympics meeting
16 January 2003—Olympics meeting
22 January 2003—Olympics meeting
13 April 2003—Marathon lead vehicle
15 May 2003—Olympics meeting
20 October 2003—Olympics meeting
28 October 2003—Olympics meeting
23 January 2003—Olympics meeting
10 January 2004—Olympics meeting
16 January 2004—Olympics bid launch

Official Vehicles

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what percentage of official vehicles used by her Department are run on *(a)* petrol, *(b)* diesel, *(c)* liquid petroleum gas and *(d)* compressed natural gas. [172780]

Mr. Caborn: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport does not have official vehicles, but uses cars, supplied with drivers, by the Government Car and Despatch Service. Vehicles used by the Royal Parks Agency are either diesel fuelled (40 per cent.) or duel fuelled Petrol/Liquid Petroleum Gas (60 per cent.).

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Advisers/Consultants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much her Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies spent on external consultants and advisers in each of the last three years. [172436]

Alun Michael: The information requested is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Bovine TB

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures are taken to confirm that badgers found to have TB after testing in an animal sanctuary or hospital have been destroyed. [159068]

Mr. Bradshaw: Triple testing of badger cubs for TB in animal sanctuaries or hospitals, is part of a voluntary protocol adopted by responsible wildlife rehabilitation organisations and endorsed by the National Federation of Badger Groups, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and the Secret World Wildlife Rescue. Cubs testing positive to any of the three TB blood tests must be euthanased under licence from Defra.

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to her answer of 29 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1180W, on badgers, when she expects to decide whether to allow departmental policymakers access to the interim results of the Independent Scientific Group on Cattle TB. [171271]

Mr. Bradshaw: This is currently being considered by Ministers.

BSE

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the time scale is for the introduction of comprehensive testing for BSE; and if she will make a statement. [170624]

Mr. Bradshaw: The UK already undertakes extensive BSE testing which includes all casualty cattle and fallen stock aged over 24 months; all healthy cattle entering the Over Thirty Months Scheme (OTMS) aged over 42 months and born after 31 July 1996; a random sample of 10,000 older healthy animals entering the OTMS; and any cattle aged over 30 months sold for human consumption (currently limited to a small number of cattle aged 30 to 42 months from herds approved under the Beef Assurance Scheme). Since January 2001, the UK has tested over a million cattle.

Health Ministers are currently considering advice from the Food Standards Agency that the Over Thirty Month rule could be replaced by testing. For practical reasons related to the need to cull cohorts of BSE cases, Rural Affairs Ministers agreed last year that cattle born before August 1996 should remain permanently excluded from the food chain for both domestic consumption and export. Any cattle aged over 30 months sold for human consumption will be tested.

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many employees in her Department took early retirement and at what total cost, in the last financial year. [170824]

Alun Michael: In 2003–04, 45 Defra employees took early retirement at a total cost of £6,109,000.

33 of these left the Department under the provisions of the Early Departure Scheme, which falls within strand four of the Defra Change programme. Departures consisted of eight SCS, four Grade 6s and 21 Grade 7s. The total cost amounted to 5,204,000.

The remaining 11 employees who took early retirement cost a total of £905,000. They consisted of four HEOs; one SAHO; two EOs; one AO; two typists and one SGB2.

Fisheries

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 27 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 861W, on fisheries, in which member states UK registered fishing vessels have *(a)* an entitlement and *(b)* an historic entitlement to fish within six to 12 miles zones. [172460]

Mr. Bradshaw: All UK registered vessels, except those in the beam trawling fleet with engine powers in excess of 221 kWs, are permitted to fish within the six to 12 mile zone.

Horse Passports

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she intends to publish the revised Horse Passport Statutory Instrument. [171387]

Alun Michael: We hope to lay the revised Horse Passport Statutory Instrument later this month.

Parish Councils

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of parish and town clerks she estimates have achieved a relevant qualification in order to help qualify towards their council being a Quality Parish Council. [171390]

Alun Michael: Since the launch of the Certificate in Local Council Administration as the bespoke qualification for town and parish clerks, 55 clerks have qualified while another 450 clerks have requested to take the qualification in the next 12 months representing 6 per cent. of the 7,900 parish and town clerks in England. This figure is based on estimates provided by the Society of Local Council Clerks. This represents an excellent start for such a new professional qualification.

Clerks who have gained the Certificate of Higher Education in Local Policy, provided by the University of Gloucester also meet the relevant Quality Council criteria. Since this course started in 1987 the University estimate that over 450 people have gained the qualification although it is not known how many of the earlier students are still serving as clerks.

Parliamentary Questions

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of Ordinary Written Questions to her Department were answered within five sitting days of tabling, and what proportion of Questions for a Written Answer on a named day received a substantive answer on that day, in *(a)* the 2002–03 parliamentary session and *(b)* this parliamentary session, broken down by month. [171183]

Alun Michael: Records for Session 2002/03 were not maintained in such a way to enable the Department to extract the information requested without incurring disproportionate costs. I can confirm that the new database does record all the information.

For this parliamentary session up to 30 April 2004 the information requested is below.

Written Questions

	Total Received	Number answered within five sitting days	Percentage answered within five sitting days
27/11/2003–27/12/2003	395	205	51.9
28/12/2003–27/01/2004	478	263	55
28/01/2004–27/02/2004	490	126	25.7
28/02/2004–28/03/2004	590	114	19.3
29/03/2004–30/04/2004	228	80	35

Named Day Questions

	Total Received	Number received a substantive answered on the given day	Percentage answered on the given day
27/11/2003–27/12/2003	69	9	13
28/12/2003–27/01/2004	73	20	27.4
28/01/2004–27/02/2004	73	13	17.8
28/02/2004–28/03/2004	108	13	12
29/03/2004–30/04/2004	45	0	0

Defra endeavours to reply to all parliamentary questions within parliamentary deadlines wherever possible. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. friend the Leader of the House to the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker) on 3 March 2004, *Official Report* column 907W.

Productivity

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her policy is for *(a)* increasing the productivity and *(b)* cutting the costs of (i) her Department and (ii) its agencies and non-departmental public bodies. [172181]

Alun Michael: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mrs Ruth Kelly) on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column, 149W.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the cost to his Department has been for *(a)* first and *(b)* business class travel incurred by employees in each of the last three financial years; and which of his Department's staff are entitled to travel *(a)* first and *(b)* business class. [172114]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* Foreign and Commonwealth Office expenditure on First and Business class air travel by its staff during the last three financial years was:

£

Financial year	*First class*	*Business class*
2001–02	723,145	12,392,629
2002–03	675,400	11,684,958
2003–04	377,680	10,983,035

For journeys with a flying time of up to three hours only Senior Management Staff in Pay Band 2 or above may travel business class. Where flights last over three hours Senior Management Staff with Permanent Secretary rank may travel first class, others business class.

Heads of Mission not entitled to first class by grade may travel first class on the last leg of the journey on first arrival at their Post, on the first leg of the journey on final departure from their Post or on their first visit to any other country, to which they are accredited.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much has been spent from his Department's budget towards paying school fees for children of his Department's staff in each of the last three years. [172115]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* During the last three financial years Foreign and Commonwealth Office expenditure on education fees for children of members of staff was:

£

Financial year	*Amount*
2001–02	13,806,197
2002–03	15,990,618
2003–04	17,761,886

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office accounts for 2003–04 have not yet been finalised and may therefore be subject to revision. The published accounts will be expressed in resource rather than cash terms.

Early Retirement

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many employees in his Department took early retirement, and at what total cost, in the last financial year. [172194]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: 46 employees of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office took early retirement during the 2003–04 financial year at an initial cash cost of £1,385,153. Ongoing payments to employees who retired before 2003–04 amounted to a further £2,026,971.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office accounts for 2003–04 have not yet been finalised and may therefore be subject to revision. The published accounts will be expressed in resource rather than cash terms.

Saddam Hussein

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what effects the *(a)* possibility of Saddam Hussein receiving a capital sentence and *(b)* implications of the European Convention on Human Rights have had on the provision of information by the UK Government to the investigations into Saddam Hussein's alleged crimes. [162066]

Mr. Rammell: On 10 December 2003, the Iraqi Governing Council approved the Statute creating the Iraqi Special Tribunal to try major crimes committed under the former Ba'athist regime. The Transitional Administrative Law signed on 8 March 2004 confirms the establishment of the Tribunal. The Tribunal itself must now be set up and the judges selected.

The UK Government has made it clear that it opposes the use of the death penalty. We were instrumental in securing the suspension of the death penalty in Iraq under Coalition Provisional Authority Order No 7. It will be up to the new Iraqi Government to determine whether this punishment will be reinstated following the transfer of authority. After the transfer of power to the new Iraqi Government, we will continue to lobby against the death penalty.

The UK will consider any request to provide information to the Tribunal consistent with our obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights and our opposition to the death penalty. Iraq is in any event an evidence rich environment, with considerable documentary proof of the atrocities committed by the former regime. The important question is how to ensure that Saddam and other members of his regime suspected of major crimes are tried under an Iraqi process that meets international standards.

Taiwan

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his policy is on the forthcoming Peace Referendum in Taiwan. [160083]

Mr. Rammell: The referenda failed to get the necessary number of votes to make them valid.

The United Kingdom monitors cross-straits relations closely.

We attach great importance to the avoidance of conflict. We take every appropriate opportunity to convey to the Chinese Government and, through informal channels, to the Taiwanese Authorities our strong opposition to the use of force or any action that raises cross-straits tensions.

United Nations

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the *(a)* timetable for the preparation of draft reports, *(b)* consultation period, *(c)* deadlines for submission to reporting bodies and *(d)* provisional dates and locations of public hearings to consider the UK periodic reports for each UN international obligation are; and which (i) Department and (ii) officials have primary responsibility in each case. [171373]

Mr. Rammell: Setting out the situation with regard to all the UK periodic reports for every obligation within the UN framework would incur disproportionate costs. However, it might be helpful to set out the process with regard to one specific area, human rights, as an example of the UK's reporting obligations.

With regard to the six core UN international human rights treaties which require States Parties to submit reports, the timetables for reporting and consideration of reports vary from treaty to treaty and can depend on the workload of, and recommendations expressed by, the relevant treaty monitoring body. Lead responsibility for the UK's reports also varies within Government, but in each case the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is responsible for coordinating material relating to the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies.

For the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, reporting is required every five years. The UK's last report was submitted in 1999 and examined in October 2001. The relevant treaty monitoring body has asked that the UK submits its next report by 1 November 2006. The Department for Constitutional Affairs is responsible for coordinating the UK's report, directed by officials from within its Human Rights Division.

For the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, reporting is also required every five years. The UK's last report was submitted in 2001 and examined in May 2002. The relevant treaty monitoring body has asked that the UK submits its next report by 30 June 2007. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is responsible for coordinating the UK's report, directed by officials from within its Human Rights Policy Department.

For the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, reporting is required every four years. The UK's latest report was submitted on 4 December 2003. A date has not yet been scheduled for the examination in Geneva. The timing of the next report will depend on the recommendations of the relevant treaty monitoring body. The Department for Constitutional Affairs is responsible for coordinating the UK's report, directed by officials from within its Human Rights Division.

For the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, reporting is required every two years. The UK's last report was submitted in October 2002 and examined on 6–7 August 2003. The relevant treaty monitoring body has asked that the UK submits its next two reports combined by 6 April 2006. The Home Office is responsible for coordinating the UK's report, directed by officials from within its Race Equality Unit.

For the Convention on the Rights of the Child, reporting is required every five years. The UK's last reports were submitted in 1999 and examined in September 2002 for the UK and 2000 for the Overseas Territories and the Isle of Man. The relevant treaty monitoring body has asked that the UK submits its next two reports combined by 15 July 2007. The Department for Education and Skills is responsible for coordinating the UK's report, directed by officials from within its Children, Young People and Families Directorate.

For the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, reporting is required every four years. The UK's last report was submitted in July 2003. The relevant treaty monitoring body has scheduled an examination of the report for July 2005 in New York and the date of the next report will depend on its recommendations. The Department for Trade and Industry is responsible for coordinating the UK's report, directed by officials from within its Women and Equality Unit.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Planning

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the occasions when costs have been awarded against *(a)* a local council and *(b)* councillors following an appeal against their refusal to grant planning permission when their decision was to uphold their local plan. [173083]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not record such details.

Empty Homes (London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many empty residential dwellings there were in each Greater London borough, in each year since 1997. [173296]

Keith Hill: The available information on empty residential dwellings in Greater London boroughs is presented in the table. This data has been provided from a combination of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Housing Investment Programme return and Housing Corporation's Regulatory Statistical Return.

Total vacant dwellings at 1 April in London boroughs, 1997–2003

	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997
Barking and Dagenham	775	1,117	1,329	2,172	2,005	1,727	1,509
Barnet	5,179	4,915	3,153	4,068	4,673	4,442	4,211
Bexley	2,064	1,644	1,982	1,185	2,203	2,467	2,410
Brent	5,115	5,670	5,504	6,174	5,151	3,754	4,792
Bromley	4,297	4,256	4,318	3,718	3,715	-	-
Camden	3,605	4,018	4,335	4,703	6,261	4,745	4,033
City of London	75	32	31	-	-	22	32
Croydon	4,526	4,650	4,401	4,130	4,598	5,505	5,594
Ealing	1,630	1,749	2,449	2,308	5,397	5,705	5,433
Enfield	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Greenwich	3,308	3,096	3,058	4,541	4,421	4,508	4,523
Hackney	4,307	-	3,254	3,970	3,284	4,486	5,165
Hammersmith and Fulham	3,191	4,141	4,557	4,138	3,710	4,026	4,108
Haringey	-	3,538	4,815	4,417	5,604	4,413	5,419

Total vacant dwellings at 1 April in London boroughs, 1997–2003

	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997
Harrow	1,196	1,180	1,218	1,231	1,325	1,081	983
Havering	2,777	505	2,702	-	-	-	-
Hillingdon	2,454	3,003	2,511	2,468	2,497	2,273	2,628
Hounslow	1,950	2,056	1,050	1,903	2,012	2,211	2,306
Islington	2,643	3,719	3,237	2,773	2,897	2,970	5,392
Kensington and Chelsea	6,025	6,040	6,067	1,715	1,655	-	8,387
Kingston upon Thames	-	-	-	1,152	-	-	-
Lambeth	3,851	4,262	2,572	4,639	4,646	4,656	5,213
Lewisham	4,072	3,643	4,025	3,251	3,259	-	5,246
Merton	2,597	2,332	2,114	2,310	1,793	1,625	1,733
Newham	3,276	3,140	5,102	4,663	5,717	5,183	3,424
Redbridge	-	2,335	-	-	-	-	-
Richmond upon Thames	1,953	1,947	1,757	1,629	1,600	1,714	2,420
Southwark	4,112	3,840	6,367	6,917	6,649	4,658	3,665
Sutton	2,542	2,489	2,238	1,243	2,342	2,205	1,826
Tower Hamlets	4,519	4,620	5,429	5,306	5,507	5,071	4,894
Waltham Forest	1,470	3,969	2,739	3,004	2,601	4,939	4,840
Wandsworth	2,293	2,229	2,079	2,314	2,511	1,991	2,783
Westminster	4,378	3,176	2,957	3,063	3,407	3,295	3,128
London	100,648	101,017	105,181	105,016	112,665	111,952	121,298

Note:
Missing data is denoted by a "-". London total includes imputation for these missing values.
Sources:
ODPM's annual Housing Investment Programme (HIP) returns and the Housing Corporation's annual HAR 10 and Regulatory and Statistical Return (RSR).

Guildford (Council Elections)

Sue Doughty: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the letters and reports he has received from the Electoral Commission in relation to the Guildford borough council elections of 1 May 2003. [173299]

Phil Hope: I refer the hon. Member to the answers given on 11 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 211W and 29 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 226W. The statutory evaluation report referred to is the only report or letter that the Government have received from the Electoral Commission on the all-postal pilot election held in Guildford on 1 May 2003.

Homelessness

Simon Hughes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many homeless families there were in each Greater London borough, in each of the last seven years. [173294]

Yvette Cooper: The latest available information reported to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister about the number of households accepted by each of the London boroughs as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need is tabled as follows.

Households accepted as homeless and in priority need

	1997–98[1]	1998–99[1]	1999–2000[1]	2000–01[1]	2001–02[1]	2002–03[1]	2003[2]
Barking and Dagenham	65	257	230	234	364	595	[3]—
Barnet	876	1,048	1,109	1,159	1,112	838	852
Bexley	285	319	275	359	454	468	372
Brent	1,200	920	1,045	1,145	1,236	1,039	956
Bromley	610	728	839	881	785	867	905
Camden	1,422	1,555	1,338	1,021	1,111	1,329	1,510
City of London	44	53	64	18	14	39	22
Croydon	956	882	1,219	1,886	1,198	1,291	1,409
Baling	1,068	1,016	989	1,026	860	1,001	1,190
Enfield	743	754	793	1,007	1,150	1,191	1,072
Greenwich	1,318	1,456	1,242	1,227	1,217	1,003	1,021
Hackney	676	705	963	762	967	1,138	[3]—
Hammersmith and Fulham	598	709	895	917	805	811	[3]—
Haringey	1,157	975	1,716	1,362	1,094	1,315	[3]—
Harrow	691	725	668	700	444	399	296
Havering	283	386	440	649	173	180	416
Hillingdon	1,144	1,083	686	1,003	1,119	958	888
Hounslow	858	1,056	1,003	945	957	852	692
Islington	949	1,176	1,298	1,556	1,387	1,397	[3]—
Kensington and Chelsea	590	611	534	658	605	417	463
Kingston upon Thames	437	400	306	421	400	450	426
Lambeth	779	1,106	1,124	1,110	1,470	1,651	1,632
Lewisham	865	1,085	1,248	892	1,102	1,170	1,559
Merton	186	205	242	168	173	156	180
Newham	1,053	1,105	1,411	1,495	1,377	1,388	1,542
Redbridge	322	302	450	464	437	556	[3]—
Richmond upon Thames	584	633	432	343	399	325	320

Households accepted as homeless and in priority need

	1997–98[1]	1998–99[1]	1999–2000[1]	2000–01[1]	2001–02[1]	2002–03[1]	2003[2]
Southwark	884	1,204	1,614	1,703	1,317	1,857	1,671
Sutton	274	299	513	429	474	429	344
Tower Hamlets	971	1,070	1,130	1,282	1,400	1,617	1,701
Waltham Forest	880	1,048	856	1,024	1,121	1,140	1,048
Wandsworth	440	613	758	886	926	1,072	1,095
Westminster	1,124	1,266	1,152	1,075	1,154	1,074	1,060
London total	24,330	26,750	28,580	29,810	28,800	30,010	32,300

of which: Households with dependent children or a pregnant woman

	1997–98[1]	1998–99[1]	1999–2000[1]	2000–01[1]	2001–02[1]	2002–03[1]	2003[2]
Barking and Dagenham	36	169	160	165	229	339	[3]—
Barnet	672	797	878	756	795	528	613
Bexley	192	217	206	285	377	376	278
Brent	618	663	714	719	905	774	707
Bromley	477	574	607	644	587	565	564
Camden	805	934	836	631	676	749	798
City of London	40	50	61	9	6	14	11
Croydon	662	609	903	1,397	892	935	1,034
Baling	850	759	763	826	680	779	901
Enfield	594	624	678	876	941	875	814
Greenwich	849	981	899	899	875	690	660
Hackney	451	535	780	605	691	847	[3]—
Hammersmith and Fulham	455	556	735	681	531	533	[3]—
Haringey	921	764	1,351	989	775	918	[3]—
Harrow	575	574	512	513	327	286	232
Havering	227	311	107	157	125	135	281
Hillingdon	842	909	512	793	722	570	554
Hounslow	502	741	706	710	745	548	407
Islington	506	622	699	855	780	602	[3]—
Kensington and Chelsea	334	324	312	361	277	256	264
Kingston upon Thames	292	295	245	285	282	278	233
Lambeth	489	680	808	798	982	985	852
Lewisham	729	908	1,106	746	799	818	1,134
Merton	147	160	173	32	109	103	106
Newham	808	884	1,144	1,196	982	1,048	1,027
Redbridge	235	230	353	380	368	100	[3]—
Richmond upon Thames	415	420	239	213	260	156	176
Southwark	528	711	1,006	1,085	787	1,117	1,048
Sutton	190	182	353	261	278	237	164
Tower Hamlets	699	824	825	917	1,048	1,153	1,131
Waltham Forest	679	865	721	825	931	900	815
Wandsworth	333	469	558	610	575	647	664
Westminster	593	696	669	628	595	578	537
London total	16,750	19,040	20,620	20,850	19,930	19,440	21,060

[1] Source: ODPM Housing Investment programme return (financial year). Data for 2003–04 will be available in October 2004.
[2] Source: ODPM P1E homelessness returns (sum of quarterly data).
[3] Data not available.

Housing

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his Department's definition of affordable housing is. [172879]

Keith Hill: For the purposes of Government funding, a working definition of affordable housing is housing available at social rents (i.e. subject to the rent restructuring regime) or other forms of submarket housing, which can generally only be accessed by existing social tenants or people on waiting lists or others groups specifically identified, such as key workers, with other groups having much lower priority.

For the purposes of planning decisions, guidance (PPG3) puts the onus on local planning authorities to define affordable housing in terms of the relationship between local income levels and housing prices or rents for different types and sizes of housing, and housing for identified groups such as key workers, and for these definitions to be based on an up-to-date assessment of housing needs.

Local Authority Housing (Evictions)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many evictions there were from local authority housing stock for rent arrears in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* each London borough during each of the last three years. [173297]

Keith Hill: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-regional Strategy

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to inform local residents in

Buckinghamshire of the results of the examination in public of the draft Milton Keynes and South Midlands sub-regional strategy. [172163]

Yvette Cooper: Once the Public Examination Panel report is completed it will be made available to all participants and posted on the web. Following this there will be a wide consultation for eight weeks, including the Aylesbury area, on any proposed alterations to Regional Planning Guidance as a result of the sub-regional strategy.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the Government's policy is on the relationship between Aylesbury South area and the villages of *(a)* Stoke Mandeville, *(b)* Weston Turville, *(c)* Wendover and *(d)* Aston Clinton in the context of the draft Milton Keynes and South Midlands sub-regional strategy. [172164]

Yvette Cooper: This relationship between Aylesbury and nearby villages is one of a number of issues currently being considered by the independent panel that was appointed to undertake a public examination of the sub-regional strategy. The Government await the outcome of the panel's report before making any decisions.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to paragraph 15 of the Cross-Government Statement (matters 5b and c) on the draft Milton Keynes and South Midlands sub-regional strategy, how many dwellings the Government offices believe should be transferred from the post-2016 to the pre-2016 period. [172165]

Yvette Cooper: The Government made this suggestion as a possible way of assisting with the sustainability of Aylesbury. Precise figures were not specified because this whole matter is for the independent panel to consider and to provide recommendations from all the representations made and the evidence at the public examination.

Vacant/Derelict Land (London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much previously developed land was *(a)* vacant and *(b)* derelict in each Greater London borough, in each year since 1997. [173295]

Keith Hill: The available figures are from borough responses to the National Land Use Database of Previously Developed Land in 1998, 2001 and 2002, tabled as follows. Figures for 2003 will be published later in the summer. Response to the survey is voluntary and not all local authorities make a response every year.

Previously developed vacant land and derelict land and buildings

Hectares

	1998		*2001*		*2002*	
London boroughs	*Vacant land*	*Derelict land and buildings*	*Vacant land*	*Derelict land and buildings*	*Vacant land*	*Derelict land and buildings*
Barking and Dagenham	2	19	43	89	43	86
Barnet	13	40	13	41	12	40
Bexley	10	10	1	10	5	10
Brent	13	11	n/a	n/a	9	10
Bromley	1	[1]—	n/a	n/a	[1]—	[1]—
Camden	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
City of London	1	1	1	1	n/a	n/a
City of Westminster	13	3	n/a	n/a	8	[1]—
Croydon	n/a	n/a	15	16	10	13
Ealing	[1]—	[1]—	n/a	n/a	[1]—	[1]—
Enfield	18	40	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Greenwich	46	155	60	107	59	126
Hackney	1	[1]—	[1]—	3	[1]—	3
Hammersmith and Fulham	2	32	16	n/a	14	[1]—
Haringey	7	[1]—	7	n/a	6	[1]—
Harrow	3	[1]—	17	[1]—	2	[1]—
Havering	40	34	37	15	48	15
Hillingdon	2	[1]—	1	3	1	5
Hounslow	30	[1]—	7	5	n/a	n/a
Islington	3	[1]—	4	[1]—	n/a	n/a
Kensington and Chelsea	1	4	n/a	n/a	[1]—	4
Kingston-upon-Thames	7	[1]—	1	n/a	n/a	n/a
Lambeth	7	[1]—	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Lewisham	5	2	9	1	8	1
Merton	[1]—	[1]—	n/a	n/a	2	5
Newham	95	32	77	31	46	4
Redbridge	n/a	n/a	[1]—	5	[1]—	5
Richmond-upon-Thames	2	1	n/a	n/a	13	2
Southwark	n/a	n/a	[1]—	1	1	4
Sutton	10	7	n/a	n/a	2	1
Tower Hamlets	n/a	n/a	14	7	4	4
Waltham Forest	18	2	8	2	7	1
Wandsworth	4	2	4	31	4	26

[1] Nil or less than 0.5 hectares

n/a not available

PRIME MINISTER

Regulatory Reform

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Prime Minister on how many occasions, and on what dates, he has chaired meetings on regulatory reform since 1997. [173261]

The Prime Minister: I have regular meetings and discussions with ministerial colleagues and others on a wide range of subjects, including on regulatory reform. As with previous Administrations it is not my practice to provide details of all such meetings under exemption 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Iraq

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister whether any coalition partners in Iraq have disapplied the Geneva Convention in respect of detainees held there; and if he will make a statement. [173006]

The Prime Minister: No. All Coalition partners have consistently stated that they regard themselves as bound by the Geneva Convention in their conduct in Iraq.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 17 May 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Departmental Computers

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to update computer *(a)* hardware and *(b)* software standard packages used in her Department. [166363]

Alun Michael: The wide range of Defra's responsibilities and its geographic spread result in a variety of computer hardware and software being employed. These are constantly reviewed and updated where necessary in order to ensure they continue to meet business requirements, offer value for money and are fully supportable.

The supply of computer hardware and software standard packages to Defra is currently subject to an outsourcing procurement exercise.

Food Labelling

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the use of the red tractor logo on food produced in the UK. [172451]

Alun Michael: The Red Tractor logo is privately owned and its use on food is licensed by a private company, Assured Food Standards (AFS). The logo denotes foods which comply with standards of production set by AFS or by schemes that AFS has recognised as being equivalent. The Government plays no part in setting those standards nor in validating its operations.

Greenhouse Gases

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she will take during 2004 *(a)* to increase awareness of the dangers of global climate change and *(b)* to promote education about ways in which (i) citizens, (ii) businesses, (iii) public services and (iv) the media can help the Government to reach its target for cutting greenhouse gas emissions. [171228]

Mr. Morley: The Department provides funding to two key bodies which as part of their activities run programmes to promote energy efficiency and climate change, including advertising schemes, events, marketing, and awards.

The Energy Saving Trust encourages the sustainable use of energy in the domestic and small business sectors. Work includes an Energy Efficiency campaign to encourage domestic consumers to take up energy efficiency measures.

The Carbon Trust aims to enable UK business and public sectors to move towards a sustainable, low carbon economy while maintaining business competitiveness. Their recent "Lifeblood" campaign has had wide coverage.

"Energy Efficiency: the Government's Plan for Action" published on 26 April confirms the Government's commitment to raising awareness on climate change and its links to energy use. As stated in the Action Plan, the Government are exploring the scope for a new climate change information campaign.

The UK has also signed up to Article 6 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), through which Parties to the Convention have a legally binding commitment to carry out activities on education, public awareness, public access to information, public participation and international co-operation.

At the Eighth Conference of the Parties to the Convention (COPS) in New Delhi, in October-November 2002, the Parties adopted a five-year non-binding Article 6 work programme, known as the New Delhi Work Programme to steer Parties towards implementation of Article 6. As part of this, UK officials are currently involved in the planning stage of a web-based internet clearing house that will act as hub for public users to find out information on Article 6 related activities carried out by different countries.

Milk (Lancashire)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many milk processing companies in Lancashire are available for farmers in Lancashire to sell the milk they produce. [172072]

Alun Michael: There are 112 milk processing establishments in Lancashire, approved under the Dairy Products (Hygiene) Regulations 1995. However, producers are not restricted to delivering their milk to purchasers or processors within their county. Farmers in Lancashire can therefore deliver their milk to milk processing companies outside Lancashire.

Orchards

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what advice her Department gives on how many years should elapse before apple trees can be replanted in the same field. [168144]

Alun Michael: Defra has not issued advice on this subject.

Parish Councils

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* parish and *(b)* town councils have been awarded Quality status in (i) Lancashire and (ii) Chorley. [172071]

Alun Michael: To date no applications for Quality status has been received from parish councils or town councils in Lancashire or Chorley. However, the Lancashire and Mersey County Training Partnership

(CTP) has received 14 registrations from clerks who are working towards the Certificate in Local Council Administration. So far one clerk has passed the qualification that was developed in line with the Quality Council Scheme launched in August 2003.

Websites

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total annual cost of her Department's websites, including those of its agencies, was in the most recent year for which figures are available. [159514]

Alun Michael: The use of websites is now a mainstream of communication for any organisation in the public sector or the private sector and for business units throughout any large organisation. Direct operating costs for the main Defra website (www.defra.gov.uk)—including technical and staff costs associated with hosting of the site, and staff costs for the central team with lead responsibility for updating and maintaining the content of the site—are estimated at around £294,000 for the financial year 2003–04.

Additional costs arise from the activities of a large number of staff in business units across the Department, contributing to the content of the website as part of their communications activities, but an overall cost for this could not be accurately estimated without incurring disproportionate cost.

A number of other websites are operated by the Department and its agencies, for which costs are either covered by the budgets for specific programmes (and not separately identified), or included within the above figures. Detailed information is not held centrally for other websites managed by the Department, its agencies and non-departmental public bodies, and could not be obtained without incurring disproportionate cost.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Community Sports

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the effects of Government expenditure policy on community sports since 1994. [173478]

Mr. Caborn: The Government has invested over £3 billion Exchequer and lottery funding in sport since 1997. Government policy is to marry mass participation with sporting excellence, as illustrated by the 45 County Sports Partnerships, comprising local authorities, schools, governing bodies of sport and the voluntary sector, established to generate competitive and grass roots sport. Community sport has also benefited from unprecedented investment in facilities, improving community access. To complement this, the Government is investing in coaching and volunteering to deliver community activities. For children and young people the Government is investing almost £120 million this year to deliver the entitlement to high quality PE and School Sport.

Licensing Act

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what consultations were held with the police about the effects of binge drinking on local alcohol and violence problems before the introduction of the Licensing Act 2003; and what consultations are going on now about its implementation. [173665]

Mr. Caborn: Prior to the publication of the White Paper on licensing reform in April 2000 (Cm 4696), the Association of Chief Police Officers ("ACPO") were thoroughly consulted on the related development of the policy. Following the publication of the White Paper, ACPO, the Association of Police Superintendents' Association and the Police Federation engaged in the public consultation, as well as several individual police forces. In developing the legal instructions for the Licensing Bill, ACPO provided advice to officials in weekly meetings. In July 2002, a Licensing Bill Advisory Group was formed which included a wide range of stakeholders, including ACPO, and assisted the Government in preparing the Bill. The Group met on a weekly basis and continued to meet regularly throughout the Bill's parliamentary stages. Since Royal Assent in July 2003, this Group has continued to meet on a monthly basis to discuss issues relating to the implementation of the Licensing Act 2003. In addition, during the House of Commons stages of the Licensing Bill, my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State also met ACPO to discuss underage drinking and the way in which the Bill dealt with children and the then Minister responsible, the hon. Member for Pontypridd (Dr. Howells), also met ACPO to discuss other general licensing issues. More recently, I have met the police in a Working Group which is examining issues relating to alcohol related violent crime.

Ministerial Visits

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list visits made by each minister in the Department between December 2003 and April 2004, broken down by *(a)* date, *(b)* constituency visited and *(c)* cost. [171560]

Tessa Jowell: I have listed visits made by each Minister in my Department, specifying date and constituency visited. The cost of each visit could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Date of visit	*Constituency*
Tessa Jowell	
3 December	Cities of London and Westminster
4 December	Hackney, South and Shoreditch
6 December	North Southwark and Bermondsey
7 December	Cities of London and Westminster
15 December	Holborn and St. Pancras
22 December	Stratford-upon-Avon
10 January	Islington, North
	Cities of London and Westminster
13 January	Oxford, West and Abingdon
16 January	Cities of London and Westminster
27 January	Cities of London and Westminster
1 February	Brent, South
3 February	Cities of London and Westminster
9 February	Cities of London and Westminster
10 February	Bradford, West
	Pudsey
	Shipley
	Hammersmith and Fulham

Date of visit	Constituency
25 February	Cities of London and Westminster
26 February	Cities of London and Westminster
3 March	Cities of London and Westminster
4 March	Telford
	North Southwark and Bermondsey
	Cities of London and Westminster
6 March	Twickenham
8 March	Cities of London and Westminster
9 March	Birmingham, Ladywood
	Leicester, South
	Harborough
11 March	Harrow, West
21 March	Dulwich and West Norwood
23 March	Leeds, Central
	Leeds, East
	City of York
24 March	Holborn and St. Pancras
25 March	Vauxhall
28 March	Islington, North
29 March	Cities of London and Westminster
30 March	Nottingham, South
4 April	Bethnal Green and Bow
6 April	Regents Park and Kensington, North
18 April	Greenwich and Woolwich
20 April	Belfast, East
21 April	Holborn and St. Pancras
22 April	Cities of London and Westminster
29 April	Regents Park and Kensington, North
Estelle Morris	
8 December	Hackney, South and Shoreditch
	Cities of London and Westminster
9 December	Vauxhall
10 December	Holborn and St. Pancras
11 December	Holborn and St. Pancras
15 December	Cities of London and Westminster
17 December	Cities of London and Westminster
18 December	Cities of London and Westminster
6 January	Bethnal Green and Bow
8 January	Holborn and St. Pancras
9 January	Birmingham Ladywood
	Stoke-on-Trent, Central
11–13 January	Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Central
	Tyne Bridge
14 January	Vauxhall
15 January	Holborn and St. Pancras
19 January	Cities of London and Westminster
22 January	Wolverhampton, South-west
29–30 January	Cambridge
30 January	South Cambridgeshire
2 February	Vauxhall
3 February	Cities of London and Westminster
6 February	Birmingham Edgbaston
9 February	Croydon, North
	Cities of London and Westminster
10 February	Brighton Pavilion
	Kensington and Chelsea
15 February	Cities of London and Westminster
16 February	Bristol, West
17 February	Kensington and Chelsea
18 February	Cities of London and Westminster
3 March	Cities of London and Westminster
4 March	Vauxhall
7 March	Cities of London and Westminster
9 March	Folkestone and Hythe
12 March	Sunderland, South
	Sunderland, North
	Tyne Bridge
	Houghton and Washington, East
16 March	Cities of London and Westminster
16–17 March	Liverpool Riverside
18 March	Cities of London and Westminster
20 March	Birmingham Ladywood
22 March	West Ham
	Cities of London and Westminster
23 March	Cities of London and Westminster
24 March	Cities of London and Westminster
	Holborn and St. Pancras
25 March	Bournemouth, West
	Vauxhall
26 March	Cities of London and Westminster
	Greenwich and Woolwich
28 March	Cities of London and Westminster
29 March	Greenwich and Woolwich
31 March	Cities of London and Westminster
1 April	Cities of London and Westminster
6 April	Truro and St. Austell
	St. Ives
7 April	Holborn and St. Pancras
20 April	Cities of London and Westminster
21 April	Cities of London and Westminster
22 April	Manchester, Central
23 April	Enfield Southgate
25 April	Stratford-on-Avon
26 April	Cities of London and Westminster
27 April	Hammersmith and Fulham
28 April	Beaconsfield
	Holborn and St. Pancras
29 April	Lewisham, West
	Cities of London and Westminster
	Vauxhall
Andrew McIntosh	
9 January2004	Cities of London and Westminster
23 January 2004	Oxford, West and Abingdon
	Abingdon
26 January 2004	Ealing, Acton and Shepherd's Bush
2 February 2004	Winchester
19 February 2004	Camberwell and Peckham
	Bethnal Green and Bow
4 March 2004	North Down
	Belfast, North
	Belfast, East
	Belfast, South
	Belfast, West
8 March 2004	Cities of London and Westminster
11 March 2004	Edinburgh, Central
	Glasgow Kelvin
	Glasgow Maryhill
15 March 2004	Cardiff Central
	Cardiff, North
	Cardiff, South and Penarth
	Cardiff, West
24 March 2004	Streatham
	Vauxhall
29 March 2004	Bournemouth, East
	Bournemouth, West
	Southampton Itchen
	Southampton Test
27 April 2004	Bethnal Green and Bow
Richard Caborn	
2 December 2003	Greenwich
9 December 2003	Edmonton
11 December 2003	Horsham
12 January 2004	Bethnal Green and Bow
14 January 2004	Bethnal Green and Bow
21 January 2004	Bournemouth, West
23 January 2004	Louth and Horncastle
29 January 2004	Cities of London and Westminster
2 February 2004	Brent, East
3 February 2004	Wimbledon
8 February 2004	Sunderland, North
10 February 2004	Barking and Dagenham
12 February 2004	Leeds, Central
13 February 2004	Huddersfield
18 February 2004	Winchester
20 February 2004	Haltemprice and Howden
21 February 2004	Warrington, North
24 February 2004	Bristol
25 February 2004	Hammersmith and Fulham
26 February 2004	Penrith
26 February 2004	Meriden
1 March 2004	Greenwich and Woolwich
3 March 2004	Meriden
4 March 2004	Telford

Date of visit	Constituency
5 March 2004	Meriden
16 March 2004	Cheltenham
30 March 2004	Liverpool Riverside
2 April 2004	Mansfield
19 April 2004	Belfast, East
25 April 2004	Sheffield, Central
26 April 2004	Meriden
28 April 2004	York City
30 April 2004	Doncaster, Central
30 April 2004	Sheffield, Central

Radio Services

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what consultations she has held with the commercial radio sector about the relationship between its activities and proposed commercially-funded community radio stations, with particular reference to *(a)* the protection of the economic viability of existing services, *(b)* the requirement to offer specific and quantifiable evidence of any harm to that viability, *(c)* the establishment of clear and transparent rules for withholding any licence on the basis of harm to viability and *(d)* the interaction of OFCOM and her Department in determining these issues. [172960]

Estelle Morris: A public consultation of the draft community radio Order finished on 20 April 2004. We are carefully considering all the issues raised, including those from the commercial radio sector. In addition, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, Ministers and officials have met, or will be meeting, representatives of the Commercial Radio Companies Association to discuss these issues before the Order is laid. Officials will also discuss these views with Ofcom.

Satellite Digital Television

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has held with broadcasters on the introduction of a free satellite digital television service; and if she will make a statement. [172884]

Estelle Morris: The Department is in ongoing discussions with broadcasters and with Ofcom about the further development of digital television services. Ofcom have indicated that they will consider whether regulatory intervention is needed to secure a viable free-to-view satellite proposition before switchover.

DEFENCE

BAE Systems

18. **Mr. Jack:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on his Department's relations with BAE Systems. [173166]

Mr. Hoon: The Ministry of Defence's relationship with BAE Systems is based on the need to purchase and maintain equipment to meet the requirements of the armed forces affordably and effectively.

BAE Systems is currently the largest defence supplier to the Ministry of Defence. The changing pattern of demand for defence equipment makes it important that the Ministry of Defence works closely with them and other defence suppliers, in keeping with the Government's Defence Industrial Policy.

Our relations with BAE Systems' work force continue to be excellent. I pay tribute to their dedication and commitment.

Defence Logistics

19. **Mr. Kidney:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what changes he has made to defence logistics operations in the light of lessons learned from Operation Telic. [173167]

Mr. Ingram: In light of the lessons learned from Operation Telic the Ministry of Defence has taken steps to address issues such as its holding of a range of desert equipments including body armour, clothing and boots. A package of improvements for logistics materiel management has been introduced which will greatly increase our visibility of logistic materiel in theatres of operations.

Future Rapid Effects System

20. **Angela Watkinson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the Future Rapid Effects System will enter service with the Army. [173168]

Mr. Ingram: The in-service date for Future Rapid Effects System will not be endorsed until the main investment decision, but on current plans, the intention is to introduce early variants into service around the end of the decade.

Iraq

22. **David Taylor:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans there are to change the *(a)* number and *(b)* composition of British troops serving in southern Iraq; and how regularly this is reviewed. [173170]

Mr. Hoon: We keep under continuous close review the level of forces we require in Iraq. We are currently considering, with other partners, the levels and dispositions of forces in the context of the forthcoming crucial period from the handover of authority to the Iraqi Interim Government on 30 June, through to the election of the Transitional Assembly and Government around the turn of the year.

Claire Ward: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the progress of investigations into allegations of abuse by the military in Iraq. [173169]

Mr. Hoon: Investigations by the Royal Military Police Special Investigations Branch into allegations of abuse continue and as I have already informed the House, I cannot put a precise timeframe on how long these might take. As I said, in my statement last week, it is essential that the integrity of the criminal justice process be maintained. This can involve detailed and lengthy processes, but these are crucial to allow the necessary impartial evaluation of the evidence. As I said last week, two cases have reached an advanced stage with decisions on prosecution pending.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the legal immunity granted to coalition forces in Iraq from prosecution under local law will continue after the handover of power to the Iraq Governing Council. [162665]

Mr. Ingram: Following the hand over of authority to the Iraqi Interim Government on 30 June 2004, currently we expect that coalition forces will continue to be granted immunity from prosecution under local law by virtue of an amended Coalition Provisional Authority Order 17. However, they will be subject to the jurisdiction of their home state.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the role of UK forces in protecting *(a)* tankers at ports and *(b)* oil terminals in Iraq. [171419]

Mr. Ingram: Currently coalition forces, including those from the United Kingdom, are working closely with the Iraqis to provide effective protection of both ports and offshore installations within Iraqi territorial waters.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements are in place for families of Iraqis detained by British forces to *(a)* have access to information about the detention and *(b)* visit those detained; and if he will make a statement. [172304]

Mr. Ingram: Following the detention of a suspect the individual is taken to the Divisional Temporary Detention Facility. Upon arrival at the detention facility the suspect is provided with a form setting out the reasons for their detention (this has been approved by the International Commission of the Red Cross) and is asked to provide details of a person who he wishes to notify of the detention. The military then inform the person nominated. Internees are entitled to three visits per week by members of their family.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will name the Iraqi individuals whose treatment by UK armed forces personnel has been the subject of a Special Investigation Branch inquiry, broken down by individuals for whom *(a)* investigations are ongoing, *(b)* the finding is that there is no case to answer and *(c)* a report has been submitted to the Army Prosecuting Authority. [172346]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 19 January, *Official Report*, column 917–18W. In addition the death of Tanik S Mahmud in April 2003 is the subject of an ongoing RAF Police investigation and the deaths of Mr. Zaher in March 2003 and Ghanim Gala'e Hacham Daghir Roomi in January 2004 are the subject of ongoing Royal Military Police investigations. However, it would be inappropriate to disclose the names of living individuals whose alleged treatment has been the subject of a Service Police investigation.

Of the 33 cases I referred to in the statement I made to the House on 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1213, 16 involve alleged ill treatment by members of the UK Armed Forces. Of these, eight are subject to ongoing Service Police investigations, four have been discontinued for lack of evidence and two have been referred to the Army Prosecuting Authority for consideration. In the remaining two cases the police investigation has concluded and legal advice is being sought in relation to what further action might be necessary.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the outcome was of the investigation into the deaths of the six Royal Military Police soldiers killed in Iraq on 24 June 2003; whether Her Majesty's Government received a response to it from the families of the men; whether he plans to make public the relevant communications log; and if he will make a statement. [173319]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 12 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1637W. Although extensive inquiries have been undertaken, the investigation is still ongoing and it remains unclear when it will conclude.

Aircraft Carriers

23. **Mr. Sarwar:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on progress with the aircraft carrier orders placed with BAE Systems. [173171]

Mr. Ingram: The Future Carrier (CVF) programme remains in the Assessment Phase. Ministers are currently considering proposals on the overall CVF programme, the Alliance strategy, and on when to proceed to the Demonstration and Manufacture phases.

Defence Exports

24. **Jim Knight:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the measures the Ministry of Defence is taking to promote defence exports. [173172]

Mr. Ingram: The Defence Export Services Organisation, within the Ministry of Defence, promotes legitimate defence exports by offering advice and assistance to the United Kingdom defence industry. The organisation invites and hosts foreign delegations at defence exhibitions in the United Kingdom, and provides military support teams in the promotion of military products and services. The Department continues to work for better market access for United Kingdom manufacturers to foreign defence markets.

Joint Strike Fighter

25. **Mr. David Stewart:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent discussions he has had with the US Administration on the implementation of the Joint Strike Fighter programme. [173173]

Mr. Ingram: The Joint Strike Fighter has been selected to meet our Joint Combat Aircraft requirement to replace our current Harrier aircraft. It will be flown from our new aircraft carriers and from land bases. It will also create thousands of jobs and help to boost our economy. Ministers and officials regularly discuss the progress of the programme with our US partners.

Afghanistan

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what *(a)* quantity and *(b)* type of observation equipment is deployed for British troops to use in Afghanistan. [153038]

Mr. Ingram: I am withholding information on observation equipment available to British Forces in Afghanistan under Exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Departmental Procurement

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what percentage of the *(a)* crockery, *(b)* cutlery and *(c)* glassware procured by his Department over the last five years is of British manufacture. [170797]

Mr. Ingram: For the last five years the Ministry of Defence's requirements for crockery, cutlery and glassware have been procured through the Office of Government Commerce (OGC).

The OGC have provided the following information covering the use of British Manufacture, in percentage terms, over the last five years:

British Manufacture

	Percentage
Crockery	100
Cutlery	100
Glassware	0

Eurofighter

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department will receive a discount on its order for the second tranche of Eurofighters similar to that achieved by the German Defence Ministry. [172318]

Mr. Ingram: Negotiations between partner nations and industry for the second Tranche of Eurofighters (Typhoons) are ongoing. We are working to ensure that the Tranche 2 contract is affordable and soundly based to deliver the required capability.

Flakjackets

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what further investigations his Department has undertaken into the *(a)* reasons and *(b)* those responsible for the flakjackets missing since 1999; what conclusions he has reached; and if he will make a statement. [173318]

Mr. Ingram: I have assumed that my hon. Friend has in mind the National Audit Office Report on Operation Telic, which reported that approximately 200,000 sets of Enhanced Combat Body Armour had been issued since the Kosovo campaign in 1999, but seemed to have disappeared.

I should explain that the figure quoted in the NAO report was an estimate provided for the NAO inquiry of the equivalent number of sets of body armour that would have been issued since 1999. However, the body armour ensemble is not usually issued as a complete set. Instead, units request the number of components required to make up the sets they need (covers, fillers and ceramic plates). The fillers and covers are accounted for as items of consumable stock and are, therefore, usually disposed of locally when they wear out, although items may be returned to stock and re-issued if undamaged. Due to their value, the plates, when surplus to unit requirements and serviceable, are returned to stock for re-issue as the need arises.

In light of the concern raised about the supply of body armour, the Defence Logistics Organisation conducted an audit of Enhanced Combat Body Armour The audit has provided a picture of our current holdings. It shows that current stock holdings account for 66 per cent. of the total number of Enhanced Combat Body Armour components procured since 1992. The remainder will have been consumed over this period as a result of wear and tear, and operational loss.

Future Aircraft Carrier

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the prime contractor for the Future Aircraft Carrier programme. [170330]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 5 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1514W, to my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne East (Mr. Brown).

Kosovo

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he has studied the Amnesty International Report published on 6 May 2004, Protecting the Human Rights of Women and Girls Trafficked for Forced Prostitution in Kosovo; what assessment *(a)* he and *(b)* his Department have made of the Report's claims that the international community, including United Kingdom members of KFOR and the UN, make up a significant concentration of these women's clientele; and if he will make a statement. [173235]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence has studied the Amnesty International report 'So does it mean that we have the rights?—Protecting the Human Rights of Women and Girls Trafficked for Forced Prostitution in Kosovo'. The report's findings are a matter of grave concern. The Government condemns the exploitation of vulnerable people, and expects UK military personnel to adhere to the rules for conduct on operations. Military personnel breaking these rules are dealt with under the relevant military disciplinary procedures and, depending on the offence, UK criminal law. With the exception of two cases where, as the report recognises disciplinary measures were taken, we are not aware of any involvement of UK military personnel in the activities the report describes.

Nimrod MRA4

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 5 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1523W, on the Nimrod MRA4, what plans he has to ensure that, in the event of an eventual favourable decision to continue production of the Nimrod MRA4 aircraft, a workforce with the sufficient skills and product knowledge will be available at Woodford. [172415]

Mr. Ingram: BAE Systems is clearly best placed to manage their workforce to provide the skills and knowledge to meet current obligations and likely future business requirements.

Acceptable design maturity and price are needed before a full production order can be placed. The Ministry of Defence, however, has been approving low risk production activities when it makes sense to do so, where these help maintain essential skills and product knowledge as well as preserve schedule.

Prison Warder Duties

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what qualifications armed forces personnel have in prison warder duties; whether the training they receive for such duties leads to a recognised qualification; and if he will make a statement. [171586]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence does not run prisons. However, members of the Adjutant General's Corps Military Provost Staff (AGC(MPS)) receive the relevant training to run the Military Corrective Training Centre (MCTC) in Colchester.

The MCTC is subject to independent inspection and is a National Vocational Qualifications Award accredited custodial care assessment centre. Individual qualifications are not awarded; however close liaison with Her Majesty's Prison Service is undertaken in order that best practice is maintained.

AGC(MPS) also run the Regimental Police course at MCTC. This course prepares soldiers to run the unit guardroom and to provide them with the skills necessary to handle soldiers serving short-term periods of detention in the unit guardroom. The course covers all legal, administrative and welfare aspects of detention and provides a City and guilds Qualification.

Radioactive Material

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the occasions since 1 May 1997 when radioactive material has been unaccounted for, broken down by *(a)* location, *(b)* volume and *(c)* radioactivity level of the material; and whether the material remains missing in each case. [173142]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

RAF (Medical Personnel)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the strength of the RAF Medical Services is, broken down by *(a)* service, *(b)* rank, *(c)* specialisation and *(d)* establishment. [169996]

Mr. Caplin: Tables 1 and 2 show the strength of personnel in the RAF Medical Services, by rank and specialisation. Table 3 details the number of RAF medical personnel by Ministry of Defence establishment. These figures do not include dental officers and other ranks.

Those deployed on operations are not shown separately but are recorded at their home unit.

All figures are correct as at 1 April 2004.

Table 1: Officer ranks

	Specialism			
Rank	*Medical officer*	*Medical support*	*Princess Mary Royal Air Force Nursing Service*	*Total*
Air Vice Marshall	1	—	—	1
Air Commodore	7	—	—	7
Group Captain	20	1	1	22
Wing Commander	62	11	11	84
Squadron Leader	59	18	46	123
Flight Lieutenant	51	30	57	138
Flight Officer	12	10	4	26
Pilot Officer/Acting Pilot Officer/Officer Cadet	33	3	—	36
Total	245	73	119	437

Table 2: Other ranks

Specialism	*Warrant Officer*	*Flight Sergeant*	*Chief Technician*	*Sergeant*	*Corporal*	*Junior Technician*	*Senior Aircraftsman*	*Leading Aircraftsman/ Aircraftsman*	*Total*
Pharmaceutical technicians	1	2	—	5	5	1	1	5	20
Laboratory technicians	1	7	—	10	4	2	—	—	24
Radiographers	—	3	—	6	3	1	1	1	15
Staff nurse (Registered Mental Nurse)	—	5	—	13	7	—	—	—	25
Operational theatre	1	5	—	12	1	6	2	3	30
Environmental health technician	1	6	—	7	2	14	7	5	42
Medical administration	23	43	2	130	111	—	2	—	377
Medical assistant	—	—	—	—	5	—	265	137	407
Staff nurse (Registered General Nurse)	4	21	—	123	96	3	56	30	333
Total	31	92	2	306	300	27	334	181	1,273

Table 3: Locations of officer and other ranks

Location	*Numbers of personnel: Officer ranks*	*Numbers of personnel: Other ranks*	*Total*
Aldergrove Northern Ireland	2	14	16
Aldershot Duller Barracks	1	—	1
Aldershot DMSTC (Keogh Barracks)	4	106	110
Armed Forces Careers Office, Belfast	—	1	1
Armed Forces Careers Office, Newcastle	—	1	1
Armed Forces Careers Office, Nottingham	—	1	1
Defence Academy Shrivenham	—	1	1
Defence College of Aeronautical Engineering Cosford	1	18	19

Table 3: Locations of officer and other ranks

Location	Numbers of personnel: Officer ranks	Numbers of personnel: Other ranks	Total
Defence Community Psychiatry Catterick	—	2	2
Defence Dental Agency HQ Halton	2	—	2
Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre Headly Court	5	15	20
Defence Medical Services HQ London	27	1	28
Defence School of Transport Leconfield	—	2	2
Department Community Psychiatry Shrewsbury	1	2	3
DMETA, Gosport	4	4	8
External Training	52	9	61
Gosport Fort Blockhouse Defence Medical College	—	55	55
HQ DISC Support Unit, Chicksands	—	1	1
Joint Personnel Administration Worthy Down	—	1	1
Joint Services Command and Staff College Defence Academy Shrivenham	2	—	2
JSU RMC	—	2	2
Lossiemouth	3	14	17
MDHU Derriford Plymouth	6	—	6
MDHU Frimley Park	3	—	3
MDHU Haslar, Portsmouth	23	84	107
MDHU Peterborough	41	92	133
Medical Supply Agency Ludgeshall	3	1	4
MoD Fire Centre Manston	—	3	3
Northolt	—	10	10
Overseas not deployed	26	76	102
Permanent Joint Headquarters Northwood	1	—	1
RAF Benson	3	19	22
RAF Bentley Priory SHU	—	2	2
RAF Boulmer	—	9	9
RAF Brampton	—	22	22
RAF Brize Norton	6	41	47
RAF Buchan	1	4	5
RAF Coltishall	3	14	17
RAF Conningsby	1	12	13
RAF Corsham	—	5	5
RAF Cosford	—	2	2
RAF Cottesmore	2	17	19
RAF Digby	—	7	7
RAF Fylingdales	—	2	2
RAF Halton	4	87	91
RAF Henlow	59	26	85
RAF High Wycombe	6	17	23
RAF Honington	2	17	19
RAF Innsworth	46	42	88
RAF Kinloss	2	19	21
RAF Leeming	2	16	18
RAF Leuchars	2	19	21
RAF Linton on Ouse	2	19	21
RAF Lyneham	26	85	111
RAF Marham	4	28	32
RAF Odiham	2	20	22
RAF Saxa Vord	—	1	1
RAF Scaland Support Unit	—	9	9
RAF Shawbury	1	13	14
RAF Spadeadam	—	2	2
RAF St. Athan Support Unit	—	14	14
RAF St. Mawgan	—	6	6
RAF Stafford	—	8	8
RAF Uxbridge	—	7	7
RAF Valley	1	11	12
RAF Waddington	2	16	18
RAF Wittering	2	15	17
RAF/RAFC Cranwell	23	41	64
RAFSU Boscombe Down	—	3	3
Royal Centre of Defence Medicine Selly Oak	28	58	86
Royal Military College of Science Shrivenham	—	1	1
St Thomas' Hospital London	—	1	1
Totals	437	1,273	1,710

RAF Bases

Mr. Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what proportion of the savings projected from the transfer of functions from RAF Boulmer to RAF Scampton are assumed to derive from savings in *(a)* personnel costs, *(b)* maintenance and infrastucture running costs and *(c)* depreciation and capital charges. [172987]

Mr. Ingram: The Prime Minister's letter of 21 April to the right hon. Member explained that the estimated net running cost saving from the transfer of functions from RAF Boulmer to RAF Scampton is £13 million a year. Some three fifths of this is attributable to personnel costs and one fifth to maintenance and infrastructure running costs. In accordance with standard accounting practice, depreciation and capital charges were not included in the Investment Appraisal.

Special Service Medal (Nuclear Testing)

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which members and former members of the UK's armed forces will be entitled to qualify for the Special Service Medal (Nuclear Testing) approved by Royal Warrant SR2002/224; and if he will make a statement. [173529]

Mr. Caplin: None. The Special Service Medal (Nuclear Testing) was instituted by the Government of New Zealand in 2002. Retrospective awards instituted by Commonwealth countries with the permission of Her Majesty The Queen are the sole responsibility of the countries concerned.

Watchkeeper Programme

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on progress with the Watchkeeper programme. [173372]

Mr. Ingram: The Watchkeeper programme will deliver, incrementally, an intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance (ISTAR) capability using tactical Unmanned Aerial Vehicles. Proposals for the demonstration and manufacture phase of the Watchkeeper project were received from Northrop Grumman and Thales on 18 March 2004 and are currently being assessed. The main investment decision is due later this year.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

British Citizens (Deaths Abroad)

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many British citizens were *(a)* killed and *(b)* murdered while living in or visiting another country in each of the last three years, broken down by the country in which the deaths occurred. [171255]

Mr. Mullin *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* The Foreign and Commonwealth Office collected data on how British citizens died overseas on an informal basis until the end of the 2001–02 Financial Year period. Our records show that the total number of British citizens reported as killed overseas in 1999–2000 was 200, in 2000–01 was 308 and in 2001–02 was 216. Our records show that the total number of British citizens reported as murdered overseas in 1999–2000 was 27, in 2000–01 was 43 and in 2001–02 was 95.

Climate Change

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what guidance he has issued to British embassies and high commissions in respect of encouraging international dialogue about the future of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. [171230]

Mr. Rammell: We remain committed to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its overall aim to stabilise emissions at a level that will prevent dangerous climate change. We are working hard to ensure that ambitious action is taken under its auspices. Our immediate focus is to bring the Kyoto Protocol into force and we are working hard to achieve that. Discussions on further action to follow the Kyoto Protocol commitment period 2008–2012 are not due to start until 2005. However, we regularly brief our posts on the full range of the UK's climate change priorities and are exchanging views informally with other countries on how to promote further effective action on climate change.

Colombia

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received concerning *(a)* threats to and *(b)* abuses of human rights of native tribes in Colombia by (i) paramilitary groups and (ii) drugs lords; and if he will make a statement. [173367]

Mr. Rammell: It is often difficult to distinguish in the field between paramilitary, guerrilla or criminal drug trafficking organisations. Our embassy in Bogota has regular contact with representatives of indigenous groups. In recent months they have met such groups from Amazonas, Choco, the Sierra Nevada de Santa Maria and La Guajira. The meetings covered such groups' treatment by paramilitary and guerrilla groups. Embassy staff have also discussed the situation of indigenous people with representatives of the key UN agencies, the Catholic Church and civil society, and with the Colombian Government.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions *(a)* he, *(b)* senior members of his Department, *(c)* the UK Government's representatives in Colombia, *(d)* the Government's representatives in New York and *(e)* his ministerial colleagues in London have (i) had, (ii) agreed to have and (iii) sought to have with (A) Jan Egeland, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Co-ordinator, (B) other officials of the Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs, (C) members and representatives of the Government of Colombia and (D) non-governmental organisations, in the UK and Colombia, following Jan Egeland's statement of 10 May 2004; and if he will make a statement. [173370]

Mr. Rammell: Our ambassador had three separate meetings with Mr. Egeland during his visit to Colombia, including dinner and a private conversation with him on 8 May. He subsequently met the UN Co-ordinator on 11 May. EU Heads of Mission have a private meeting arranged with the Colombian Foreign Minister on 17 May, and ambassadors from the countries represented at the July 2003 London Meeting on Colombia (the G24) will meet the Colombian Defence Minister on 18 May. Our Ambassador spoke to representatives of British NGOs in Colombia following Mr. Egeland's visit on 10 May. A further meeting with NGOs is planned for later in the month. The foregoing is the extent of our engagement with the UN to date; we are considering our next steps.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when his Department last assessed the security and humanitarian situation in the Chocó Department in Colombia; and if he will make a statement. [173436]

Mr. Rammell: British embassy officials visited Chocó in February to assess the situation there. During their visit they met a cross-section of society. In addition the ambassador visited the region twice in 2003. He also had a meeting in Bogota to discuss the region's problems with the Bishop of Chocó in March 2004. We are very concerned about the severe social problems the people of Chocó face, including high levels of poverty, illegal drug activity, the presence of illegal armed groups and a vulnerable population. We have raised these with the Colombian authorities. In partnership with UNHCR, we support a project aimed at helping displaced communities there.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of Colombia's *(a)* economic and *(b)* humanitarian situation; and when this was last updated. [173459]

Mr. Rammell: Our embassy in Bogota provides regular reporting on economic and humanitarian issues, drawing its information from a wide range of governmental and non-governmental sources. The latter includes the Church, local and international NGOs, the business community, academic circles and others. They also supplement their knowledge by travelling around the country to see the situation firsthand. Such reporting is vital as it helps us ensure that our policy towards Colombia is based on the most up to date information and analysis.

Cyprus

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make it his policy to seek a new settlement plan for the EU for the Cyprus problem which does not involve the indefinite presence in Cyprus of foreign troops. [173224]

Mr. MacShane: We will continue to work with all sides with a view to realising the ultimate objective of achieving a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement so that we can see a reunited Cyprus within the EU.

We believe the UN Secretary General's comprehensive plan established the best possible basis for achieving a settlement. We welcomed the fact that the settlement would have seen a reduction in Greek and Turkish troop numbers to a purely symbolic level. It is now time for reflection on the deal that was rejected and a considered examination of where we go from here.

We look forward to the UN Secretary General's report on the settlement talks as an important first step in that process. In the meantime there is no prospect of a renegotiation of the UNSG's plan, including the provision for a limited number of Greek and Turkish troops to remain. Any change in this would have to be by mutual agreement of the parties concerned.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make it his policy to seek a solution to the Cyprus problem on the basis that refugees should, in reasonable time, be allowed the right to return to their homes. [173225]

Mr. MacShane: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him today (UIN 173224).

The UN Secretary General's comprehensive settlement proposals would have enabled a large number of Greek and Turkish Cypriots the right to return to their former homes. Furthermore, every dispossessed owner was entitled to a guaranteed proportion of all their former property under a regime designed to deliver material benefits to all.

We will continue to work with all sides in pursuit of a just and lasting settlement. We continue to believe that the UNSG's plan offers the best possible basis.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make it his policy to seek a solution to the Cyprus problem on the basis that Cyprus has control of future migration across its sovereign borders. [173226]

Mr. MacShane: I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave him today (UINs 173224 and 173225).

An effective migration regime, agreed by the parties and in line with EU principles would be one important element of any future settlement.

European Convention on Human Rights

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions have taken place between the UK Government and *(a)* other European Governments and *(b)* institutions of the European Union regarding the application of the European Convention on Human Rights in Iraq; what the results were; and if he will make a statement. [171553]

Mr. Straw: The Government have not had discussions with other European Governments nor with the institutions of the European Union regarding the application of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) in Iraq. As the Government have said in relation to the current High Court cases brought by the families of 13 Iraqi civilians, the Government's position is that ECHR rights have no application in Iraq.

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what areas of Iraq are under the jurisdiction of the UK for the purposes of *(a)* section 1 of the European Convention

on Human Rights, *(b)* the Geneva Convention and *(c)* UN Security Council Resolution 1511; and if he will make a statement. [171555]

Mr. Straw: The question of whether any areas of Iraq are within the jurisdiction of the UK for the purposes of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) are matters in issue in the current cases before the High Court brought by the families of 13 Iraqi civilians. The Government's position in those cases is that ECHR rights have no application in Iraq. The applicability of the Geneva Conventions and of UN Security Council Resolution 1511 are not matters that turn upon whether jurisdiction is being exercised. Resolution 1511 is a binding Security Council resolution and therefore binds the UK and all other UN member states. The mandate given to the multi-national force to contribute to the maintenance of security and stability in Iraq in resolution 1511 applies to UK forces in those areas where they are operating. The UK accepts that the Geneva Conventions apply to the conduct of UK forces engaged in an armed conflict and that in some areas of southern Iraq, UK forces are exercising sufficient control as an occupying force for the purpose of the application of the Geneva Convention IV.

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether UK officials are bound by the European Convention on Human Rights wherever they discharge their duties; and if he will make a statement. [171557]

Mr. Straw: Whether the European Convention on Human Rights applies extra-territorially to the actions of UK officials turns upon whether the United Kingdom can be said to be exercising jurisdiction over an individual in the particular circumstances for the purposes of Article 1 of the Convention in accordance with the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights.

Gibraltar

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what representations he has made to the Spanish Government concerning cruise liners which have previously docked at Gibraltar being prevented from entering Spanish ports; [171965]

(2) if he will make a statement on the decision by the Spanish Government to refuse entry to the cruise liner Norwegian Dream to the port of Barcelona. [171966]

Mr. MacShane *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* On the instructions of my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary, the British ambassador in Madrid delivered a message to the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Friday 30 April and complained again over the weekend of 1–2 May. He complained once more, to the Spanish State Secretary for Europe and the Americas, on 12 May, and to a senior Spanish official on 13 May. He expressed HMG's disappointment and surprise at the Spanish action and stressed how seriously HMG views such hindrance to legitimate business by cruise liners. HMG is in close touch with the Spanish Authorities with a view to achieving an early solution to this problem. I will also raise the issue in meetings with Spanish officials this week.

Honours

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much time his Department spent dealing with honours in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by Civil Service grade. [173039]

Mr. Straw: Five staff in my Department are employed full-time on honours work: one × D6 (Principal), two × C4 (Higher Executive Officer), one × A2 (Administrative Officer), one × A1 (Administrative Assistant).

In addition, members of the Senior Management Structure (Senior Civil Service) spend a total of approximately six to seven person-weeks in aggregate a year on honours.

Iraq

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what areas of Iraq are under the effective control of the UK. [171554]

Mr. Straw: The UK commands Multinational Division South East (MND SE) which comprises all Coalition military forces in the provinces of Basra, Muthanna, Maysan and Dhi Qar. Troops from 10 states operate in the MND SE Area of Responsibility.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his latest estimate is of the amount owed by Iraq in reparations. [171982]

Mr. Rammell: The United Nations Compensation Commission has assessed 98 per cent. of the claims submitted to it for direct losses arising as a result of Iraq's illegal invasion and occupation of Kuwait in 1990. The total amount awarded so far amounts to US$ 48,170,438,256 of which US$ 18,389,089,070.86 has been paid. An amount of US$ 29,781,349,185.20 remains to be paid. Work on assessing the remaining claims is ongoing.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what payments his Department has made to private military companies working in Iraq. [172695]

Mr. Rammell: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not employ any private military companies. It does employ two private security companies to provide armed protection for its staff and assets in Iraq. Payments under these contracts to 31 March 2004 have amounted to approximately £15 million.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his policy is on encouraging the development of secular political parties in Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [173008]

Mr. Rammell: We fully support the vital role of the UN in helping Iraq prepare for elections in early 2005 to a Transitional National Assembly, as requested by the Iraqi Governing Council. As part of that process, the UN are helping the Iraqis to produce a political parties law which will provide the legal basis for the activities of Iraqi political parties. This and the Transitional Administrative Law will provide the framework in which Iraqis will be free to form political parties and to

compete in elections. The Department for International Development have created a Political Participation Fund for Iraq to increase the opportunities for Iraqi citizens to participate in the democratic process. It is now for the Iraqis to decide what sort of political parties they wish to develop within the legal framework being established.

Official Vehicles

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what percentage of official vehicles used by his Department are run on *(a)* petrol, *(b)* diesel, *(c)* liquid petroleum gas and *(d)* compressed natural gas. [172766]

Mr. Rammell: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) runs two distinct fleets of vehicles. The first is the home fleet run by FCO Services and managed by the Supply Chain Service Delivery Group. Vehicles are situated in London (based at King Charles Street) and at Hanslope Park. London vehicles are used to run the London Messenger and London Car Service; the Hanslope fleet is a diplomatic freight/mail delivery service covering the UK and Europe. The required breakdown of this fleet of vehicles is:

	Percentage
Total number of vehicles (London and Hanslope combined)	36
Petrol	13
Diesel	67
LPG	20

Our vehicle replacement programme for the home fleet pays particular attention to the provision of LPG vehicles in London; this is part of our commitments under the FCO's environmental 'green issues' policy.

The second FCO vehicle fleet is that run by overseas missions in pursuit of diplomatic business, the details we have available on this fleet are as follows:

	Percentage
Total number of vehicles in the FCO Overseas Fleet	1,352
Petrol	45.8
Diesel	33.8
LPG/Hybrid	0.3
Unknown[1]	20.1

[1] Overseas Missions have the option to procure pool vehicles locally.

Productivity

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action he is taking to *(a)* increase the productivity and *(b)* cut the costs of his Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies. [171881]

Mr. Rammell: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to him by my honourable Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Ruth Kelly) on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 149W.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will mount an independent investigation with the UN and EU into the role of, and support for, the Janjaweed militias operating in the Darfur region of the Sudan, with specific reference to human rights abuses. [173488]

Mr. Mullin: The Government of Sudan has announced the creation of a national independent human rights committee to investigate alleged human rights abuses in Darfur, with particular focus on the activities of the Janjaweed armed militias. The UK's Special Representative for Sudan is currently in Sudan where he will meet with the head of this committee and senior Government officials to discuss the situation in Darfur.

We are in close contact with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) about Darfur. We are considering the best way to take forward recommendations made following their recent mission to Sudan. We are also working to ensure that the Independent Expert, mandated by 23 April UN Commission on Human Rights decision on Sudan, is appointed as soon as possible. We and our EU partners have made clear that alleged abuses should be thoroughly investigated, and we will continue both to monitor the situation closely and to press the OHCHR to follow up effectively.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with representatives of *(a)* the Sudanese Liberation Army and *(b)* the Justice and Equality Movement about bringing peace to Darfur, Sudan. [173784]

Mr. Mullin: Through our embassy in Khartoum we have been in regular contact with both the Sudanese Liberation Army and the Justice and Equality Movement in the run up to the ceasefire talks in Chad, during the talks, and subsequently. We are urging both groups, and the Sudanese Government, to fully implement the ceasefire agreement, and to ensure unhindered humanitarian access and the protection of civilians, in order to find a sustainable solution to the problems in Darfur in the long-term.

Targeted Assassinations

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 10 May 2004, on targeted assassinations, question reference 169853, on what basis the Government has determined that the policy of targeted assassinations by the Government of Israel is illegal. [173000]

Mr. Rammell: We recognise Israel's right to defend itself against terrorism but it must act in accordance with the applicable law. We do not consider that Israel's policy of targeted killings is in conformity with its obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention and international human rights law. In particular, the policy does not appear to meet the conditions required for a killing to be justified as self-defence.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Equal Pay

Mr. Denham: To ask the Minister for Women what recent representations she has received from *(a)* trade unions, *(b)* employers and *(c)* other bodies concerning the pay gap between men and women in Hampshire. [171642]

Ms Hewitt: I have had no specific representations concerning the pay gap between men and women in Hampshire. However I have ongoing dialogue with trade unions, employers and others including the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) and Opportunity Now concerning action to tackle the gender pay gap. For example, last week I met with over 40 trade union women from across the country to discuss this issue and identify action which builds on what we have already achieved. We have made it easier for employers to pay fairly through EOC toolkits, which have been well received. Recent EOC research shows a significant increase in the number of large organisations undertaking pay reviews which suggest we are on track to meet our Public Service Agreement target of 35 per cent. by April 2006. 41 per cent. of those that had carried out a pay review or were planning to do one said that government policy and publicity had influenced them.

Mr. Denham: To ask the Minister for Women pursuant to the answer of 26 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 486W, on equal pay, what methodology was used to conclude that the gender pay gap in the South East is the second biggest in Great Britain. [171710]

Ms Hewitt: The figure I reported on 26 February 2004 was based on April 2002 figures. Using April 2003 figures shows that the South East had the third largest pay gap of regions in Great Britain. The figures in both cases were taken from the New Earnings Survey (NES), conducted by the Office for National Statistics.

Average earnings are estimated for full-time employees on adult rates of pay whose pay was unaffected by absence during the pay period, by their place of work. This is the standard definition used for NES tables. The gender pay gap for each region is derived from the male and female estimates for those regions.

Working Hours

Helen Jones: To ask the Minister for Women what research she has commissioned into the effect of a long working hours culture on women's employment and promotion prospects; and if she will make a statement. [172845]

Ms Hewitt: I have commissioned no specific research into the impact of a long working hours culture on women's employment and promotion prospects, however last year my Department published "Working Long Hours: a review of the evidence" which was commissioned from the Institute for Employment Studies. It is available on the internet at hppt:// www.dti.gov.uk/er/emar.

Its main findings are that 11 per cent. of employees in the UK work long hours (over 48 hours per week). There are clear gender differences with men more likely to work long hours than women. Two thirds of women who work long hours are in managerial and professional occupations (23 per cent. and 40 per cent. respectively).

Through the Work-Life Balance Campaign and the introduction of the right to request flexible working, my Department has sought to demonstrate the benefits of alternative work patterns. Employers who pursue family friendly policies and provide their employees with choice about how they work, report greater motivation and productivity and a reduction in recruitment and retention costs.

In April my Department published research complied by the Office for National Statistics on the first year of the flexible working law. It showed that overall the new flexible working law is proving to have been a huge success. Many more flexible working requests (86 per cent.) are being either fully or partly accepted by employers compared to the rate immediately prior to the new law (77 per cent.). The study can be found at the website mentioned above. 11 per cent. of flexible working requests made since April 2003 were declined, which represents a near halving of the rate of refusal by employers compared with the previous two years. And it suggests the new law has significantly increased employers' willingness to consider employee requests.

The Second Work-Life Balance Baseline Survey of Employers published in 2003 showed that more than nine out of 10 employers agree that people will work best when they can strike a healthy balance between work and the rest of their lives. The report is also available at the website mentioned above. The report also revealed an increase in the provision of flexible working time practices by employers. Significantly this increase was not confined to workplaces of a particular size or in a particular sector or industry.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Child Pornography

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps her Department has taken to export the UK model of co-operation between Government, police and industry to tackle child pornography on the internet. [173047]

Mr. Timms: The Department of Trade and Industry attaches great importance to protecting children from illegal or harmful material on the internet. The Government are primarily addressing it through the Home Secretary's Task Force on Child Protection on the Internet. The Department takes part in the activities of the Task Force, and in particular, supports cooperation between Government, law enforcement, industry and other stakeholders to develop self-regulatory responses to problems arising, in order to strengthen the take-up of the internet and the growth of e-commerce. We strongly support the work of the industry-led Internet Watch Foundation.

Child protection on the internet is a common challenge in the UK, Europe and the rest of the world. The UK's approach has served as the model for the EU's main programme to tackle it, the Safer Internet Programme. Since 1999, Safer Internet has funded

over 130 projects across Europe bringing together Government, industry, law enforcement and child protection agencies in the following streams of activity:

hotlines: Safer Internet supports at least one hotline along the lines of the UK's Internet Watch Foundation in each of 17 countries in Europe, allowing users to report internet content they regard as illegal or harmful. INHOPE, based in the UK, is the European hotline coordinating body, responsible for monitoring standards and spreading best practice for these hotlines.

rating and filtering technology: the programme encourages the development of software that empowers users to filter or otherwise limit the amount of unwanted material they receive, as well as ways to measure and benchmark its performance.

promoting cooperation: it has created European-level forums to drive consensus on the challenges and solutions among experts from industry, law enforcement, government, educators, consumer groups, child welfare and other NGOs.

raising awareness: support is offered to initiatives at country, regional or other levels to inform parents and educators of means to use the internet more safely, using techniques based largely on practice developed by members of the Home Office Task Force on Child Protection on the Internet.

UK companies and NGOs are very well represented among the participants in the various projects, and some of them act as coordinators at European level (e.g. for best practice for ways of promoting awareness of self-help techniques).

In March 2004, the European Commission adopted a proposal for Safer Internet Plus, a programme to continue these activities for the next four years. It will increase the international reach of the UK's model approach because it will particularly encourage hotlines and awareness activity in the 10 new member states, and provide resources for the EU to pursue effective cooperation and solutions in international forums and with third countries, especially those which are the origins of a large proportion of illegal, harmful or unwanted material, such as child pornography and spam.

The Government also take opportunities to raise the profile of a cooperative approach to online child protection in international discussions: for example, at the conclusion of the first phase of the United Nations sponsored World Summit on the Information Society in December 2003, the UK, working with its EU partners, strongly supported a statement to the effect that

"all actors in the Information Society should take appropriate actions and preventive measures, as determined by law, against abusive uses of ICTs, such as ... all forms of child abuse, including paedophilia and child pornography..." (Declaration of Principles, para. 59).

As part of its strategy to promote a globally competitive environment for electronic communications businesses, the Department has developed a number of dialogues with other countries' regulators, officials and industry representatives. These discussions have frequently covered the implications of offensive or harmful online material. The Internet Watch Foundation and other leading UK players take part to give a first hand account of the UK's cooperative approach, and also actively pursue their own extensive international contacts, supported wherever possible by the Department of Trade and Industry and other Departments. In addition, meetings recently arranged or to take place within the framework of dialogues with the United States, Japan and Australia will address cooperative solutions to the issue of unsolicited messages (or "spam"), some of which can be linked to child pornography.

Energy Generation

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the relative efficiency of energy generation by wind power in relation to *(a)* wave power, *(b)* nuclear, *(c)* gas and *(d)* coal generation. [173632]

Mr. Timms: Comparing the efficiency of renewable and non-renewable technologies is difficult. Fuel costs for the majority of renewables are zero, so obtaining the highest level of efficiency is less of a priority than reducing the overall cost of each unit of energy generated. The Department has published estimates of the cost of electricity generation from a variety of technologies by 2020. These come from the 2001 PIU energy review, 2002 Interdepartmental Analysts Group report, and the 2004 Renewables Innovation Review. The following ranges are based upon the lowest and highest estimates from each of these reports:

	p/kWh
Onshore wind	2.0–3.2
Offshore wind	2.0–4.6
Gas	2.0–2.9
Nuclear	2.6–4.0
Marine	4.0–6.2

Equal Pay

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the pay gap between men and women employed by her Department and its agencies in *(a)* Southampton, *(b)* Eastleigh, *(c)* Winchester and *(d)* Romsey constituencies. [171643]

Ms Hewitt: My Department, including the Small Business Service Executive Agency, currently employs no staff in Southampton, Eastleigh, Winchester and Romsey constituencies.

Agency Chief Executives will be replying on behalf of their organisations where they employ staff within the constituencies mentioned. These are Employment Tribunal Service and The Insolvency Service.

Letter from Desmond Flynn to Mr. John Denham, dated 17 May 2004:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply to directly on behalf of The Insolvency Service in respect to your question (2003/2875) asking what assessment have been made of the pay gap between men and women employed by her Department and its agencies in *(a)* Southampton, *(b)* Eastleigh, *(c)* Winchester and *(d)* Romsey constituencies.

In March 2003, The Insolvency Service carried out an Equal Pay audit on a national basis. The Audit along with The Service's action plans setting out proposals for future reviews are available in the House of Commons and published on The Service's website www.insolvency.gov.uk.

Letter from Roger Heathcote to Mr. John Denham, dated 17 May 2004:

You asked the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the pay gap between men and women employed by her Department and its agencies in *(a)* Southampton, *(b)* Eastleigh, *(c)* Winchester and *(d)* Ramsey. I have been asked to reply on behalf of the Employment Tribunals Service (ETS).

ETS undertook an Equal Pay Review in 2003. The Review was undertaken separately for all those staff on London and National pay scales and did not cover the situation in individual offices. The results for staff on our National pay scales, which would include those staff in our Southampton office, showed a differential in favour of males of 5.2% (only 0.2% above the Equal Opportunities Commission benchmark).

Identity Theft

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps her Department is taking to reduce identity theft in areas within the remit of her Department and its agencies. [173052]

Ms Hewitt: The DTI will work closely with—particularly small business—trade unions and others so that a system to combat identify theft maximise the benefits and minimise the compliance costs to law-abiding business and to develop an effective enforcement system that will deal with illegal workers and the majority of businesses that deliberately flout the law.

Effective recruitment procedures are in place to deter identity fraud being used to gain employment within the Department itself.

Imperial Measurements

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many prosecutions have been carried out against shopkeepers selling goods in imperial measurements in *(a)* the East Riding of Yorkshire and *(b)* England. [172759]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Department does not hold comprehensive information on prosecutions carried out by trading standards departments. However, we are aware of five prosecutions of traders selling goods in imperial measurements: one each in Sunderland, Hackney and Sutton and two in Cornwall.

East Riding Trading Standards Department inform us that it has carried out no such prosecutions.

Large Combustion Plants Directive

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the likely impact on the UK coal industry of the Large Combustion Plants Directive. [173388]

Mr. Timms: This Department commissioned independent research into the likely impact of the two options for implementing the Large Combustion Plants Directive, by a national plan or by emissions limit values. The results of this study will inform the implementation decision, which has not yet been made. The research report will be published in due course.

Ministerial Visits

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1404W, on ministerial meetings/visits, which people and organisations in Japan the Minister of State for Energy, e-Commerce and Postal Services plans to meet or visit; and what matters are to be discussed. [173398]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* I hope to be able to meet a number of Ministers, senior Government officials and senior representatives from utility power companies responsible for energy, e-commerce and telecommunications issues, including the following;

Mr. Fuji, Chairman of Federation of Electric Power, Mr. Nakagawa, Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), Mr. Kusaka, Director General, Agency of Natural Resources and Energy, part of the Ministry of Economy and Industry, Mr. Aso, Minister and Mr. Nabekura, Vice-Minister for Policy Co-ordination (International Affairs), Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications, Mr. Abe Senior Vice-Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

I also hope to meet representatives of British companies operating in Japan.

I shall be having wide-ranging discussions on telecommunications and energy issues, including nuclear and BNFL related issues. I shall also be explaining the changes to the UK nuclear industry described in the Energy Bill and hope to hear an update on Japan's plans for its nuclear energy programme.

Post Office

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will instruct Post Office Ltd. not to withhold information requested by hon. Members on closures of local post offices. [172068]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* Under the public consultation process, Post Office Ltd. supplies extensive information to assist stakeholders and other interested parties in their consideration of post office closure proposals, but detailed financial information is, necessarily, commercially confidential.

David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what advertising is taking place to promote *(a)* Post Office card accounts and *(b)* the use of post offices for the collection of pensions. [172323]

Mr. Timms: The DWP Direct Payment information campaign raises awareness of all the account options for Direct Payment, including bank and building society and Post Office accounts and also accounts that can be accessed through Post Office branches. It is for customers themselves to decide which account will best meet their needs and circumstances.

Post Office Ltd. is responsible for advertising its own services and has undertaken a number of advertising campaigns promoting the banking services which are available at post offices. The current campaign recently launched nationally advertises the banking services of the High Street Banks and the Post Office card account available at post offices.

Post Office Modernisation Fund

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much of the Government's Post Office

Modernisation Fund has been spent in Brent since the fund was initiated; and how much has been spent *(a)* to keep post offices open and *(b)* to encourage closures. [172821]

Mr. Timms: Rationalisation is necessary in urban areas where there are too many post offices for all of them to survive on the current levels of business available. Parliament has approved funding of up to £210 million to support Post Office Ltd.'s programme to restructure the urban post office network comprising £180 million to compensate sub-postmasters exiting the business and £30 million for investment in modernising offices.

The administration of the restructuring programme is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. and I have asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member on how much has been utilised in Brent.

Post Offices (Government Funding)

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much Government funding was made available for post offices in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04, broken down by local authority; and what spending is planned for 2005–06, broken down by local authority. [172921]

Mr. Timms: The Government's on-going nationwide package of funding for Post Office Ltd. and the post office network amounts to some £2 billion in total since 1999. This funding is not allocated on the basis of local authority boundaries.

Wind Farms

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the visual impact of wind farms currently in operation. [173633]

Mr. Timms: The Department has made assessments of the visual impact of wind farms currently in operation. Applications for consent to construct wind farms are accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment statement, which includes details of visual impact.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what vote was recorded by the UK director of the International Finance Corporation at the 4 November 2004 meeting on the approval for a commercial loan for the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline. [172504]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: A decision to support the approval of a loan for the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline was reached by consensus by the shareholders of the International Finance Corporation at the 4 November 2004 Board meeting. No vote was taken. The UK supported the proposed investment in the BTC pipeline as it was felt that both the IFC and EBRD had fully complied with their polices and procedures. DFID also supported the project due to the potential developmental benefits that it will bring to Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey.

Although DFID supported the provision of loans for this pipeline, DFID recognises that complex, large-scale projects of this nature raise difficult issues and present risks, including the weak governance environment and the potential social and environmental impacts of the pipeline, which will need to be carefully managed. It is important that both the International Financial Institutions (IFI)s and the international community remain engaged with the implementation of the project going forward so that we can ensure that commitments are delivered. DFID therefore expects the International Finance Corporation (IFC) management to ensure regular independent consultation on monitoring the implementation of the project; encourage enhanced transparency of revenue management; and demonstrate how IFC has learnt from the project.

Departmental Annual Report

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much the production of his Department's latest annual report cost; how many copies were printed; how many copies of it were sold at its cover price; to whom copies of the report have been provided free of charge; and how many copies were provided free of charge. [171147]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Department for International Development (DFID)'s 2004 Annual Report cost approximately £45,000 (estimated figure, not all final invoices have been received) for a print run of 3,050 copies.

600 copies were provided to The Stationary Office Ltd. (TSO) for sale, of which 128 copies have been sold to date at the cover price of £27.00.

As of May 11 2004, 1,478 copies had been distributed free of charge to staff, and external contacts such as other donors, parliamentary and ministerial contacts, NGOs, embassies and high commissions, as well as multilateral organisations such as the UN. This leaves 972 copies to cope with any future demand.

The report is also available to download free of charge from the DFID website www.dfid.gov.uk.

HIPC Initiative

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the countries which have now reached decision point in the highly indebted poor countries initiative. [172464]

Hilary Benn: 27 countries have reached Decision Point under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative. These countries are Benin, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, The Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Niger, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. Of these countries, 13 have reached Completion Point. These are: Benin, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Guyana, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Niger, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda.

Nuba Mountains

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what aid is being provided to projects to assist the people of the Nuba Mountains. [173652]

Hilary Benn: Since 2003 the Department for International Development has committed more than £3 million through the UN system and international NGOs, in support of projects to assist the people of the Nuba Mountains. Projects supported include joint monitoring of the Nuba Mountains Cease-Fire Agreement, local peace building initiatives and support to basic education.

Productivity

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what action he is taking to *(a)* increase the productivity and *(b)* cut the costs of his Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies. [171878]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: I refer the hon. Member for Castle Point to the written answer given by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, the right hon. Member for Brent, South (Paul Boateng) on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 149W.

Statistical Methodologies

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what the changes are to survey methods and the revisions to statistical estimates in relation to the poverty reduction target for South Asia referred to on page 186 of the 2004 departmental report; [171711]

(2) what the changes in statistical methodologies are which make it impossible to measure firm progress on the target for sustainable poverty reduction in East Asia and the Pacific. [171704]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The 2000 poverty data are not directly comparable with the 1998 baseline data in these two regions because of significant changes to the raw data used to estimate the poverty figures. This, combined with the inherent uncertainty associated with the data and the small time period being considered, means the available data does not allow an accurate assessment of progress. However, the data does point to a reduction in poverty. More details are provided in the following paragraphs.

Progress towards these poverty reduction targets is measured using the proportion of the population living in absolute poverty (defined as less than an international $1 a day). The data comes from the World Bank, which publishes estimates in their annual Global Economic Prospects report. Each year the World Bank provides the data for the latest year (currently 2000), and revises the data for 1990.

Estimates for past years can change because additional or updated data is included in the analysis, or the estimation methodology is updated. Usually this results in a relatively small change to the data for previous years. However, this year there were substantial changes to the China and India data. These populous countries have a large impact on the East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia regional figures.

In China, data on household expenditure instead of income was used for the first time (this has not been available before). Expenditure data is considered more reliable than income data for poverty analysis as expenditure tends to be more accurately reported by households than income. In India, data from an additional household survey was included in the analysis. This additional data, and other more minor methodological changes, resulted in a significant reduction to the poverty figures in East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia for both 1990 and the latest year when compared with the estimates available last year.

The World Bank does not currently update figures for the years between the latest year and 1990. Hence we do not have 1998 poverty figures that have been estimated using the additional data sets. This means the 1998 baseline data is not directly comparable with the 2000 data published in the Departmental Report.

There are many problems with the accuracy and reliability of this data. However, it is still the best internationally comparable measure of absolute poverty currently available. DFID is working with the World Bank to improve the quality of this data.

More information on the methodology is available in Chapter 1 of the World Bank's 2004 Global Economic Prospects: http://www.worldbank.org/prospects/gep2004/chapter1.pdf.

Vietnam

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on development in Vietnam. [172694]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Government of Vietnam has made rapid progress in reducing poverty in recent years and in maintaining a high rate of economic growth. The number of people living in poverty halved from 58 per cent. in 1993 to 29 per cent. in 2002 and economic growth has averaged at approximately 7 per cent. over the last 10 years. Despite this, approximately 23 million people still live below the poverty line and an estimated 8.8 million live in hunger. However, health and education indicators are at similar levels to those normally seen in a country with a per capita income two or three times higher than Vietnam's.

This progress is a result of the Government of Vietnam's sustained commitment to development and poverty reduction. Recognising this, DFID has rapidly increased it's programme in Vietnam from £19 million in 2002–03 to an expected spend of up to £60 million by 2005–06. The programme supports the Government of Vietnam's own poverty reduction and growth strategy, and DFID works very closely with the Government and other donors to ensure that we achieve the maximum impact of our resources. Copies of DFID's new Country Assistance Plan for Vietnam have been placed in the House Library.

DFID also supports poverty reduction in Vietnam through our contributions to the European Commission development budget (currently approximately 18 per cent. of the total budget). The EC spent 22.7 million Euros in Vietnam in 2002 (UK contribution: 4.1 million Euros), and is likely to spend 101 million Euros between 2002 and 2004 (UK contribution: 18.2 million Euros).

NORTHERN IRELAND

Academy for Irish Cultural Heritages

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the role of the Academy for Irish Cultural Heritages; and how it is funded. [173196]

Mr. Gardiner: The Academy for Irish Cultural Heritages at the Magee campus of the University of Ulster is one of the centres of research excellence funded under round one of the Support Programme for University Research. The Department for Employment and Learning provides 50 per cent. of the total cost over the period of the programme, the other half being provided by the charitable organisation, Atlantic Philanthropies.

The role of the project is to conduct research of international excellence in the fields of History, Celtic Studies and English.

Alcohol-Related Illness

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will break down the funding allocated to treat alcohol-related illness by *(a)* main budget head and *(b)* recipients. [173594]

Angela Smith: The information is not available in this format.

Autism Services

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what action he is taking to improve services for children with autism in the Northern Board area. [173616]

Angela Smith: In the forthcoming year the Northern Health and Social Services Board proposes to improve diagnostic and assessment services by investing £77,000 to strengthen the existing service in Homefirst Trust with additional speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and clerical support.

£50,000 is also being provided to increase paediatrician and speech and language therapy input, in addition to clerical support, to begin to establish a local service.

£7,000 has been made available for staff training related to Autistic Spectrum Disorders.

Essential Skills

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to extend educational policy on essential skills beyond numeracy and literacy; and if he will make a statement. [173212]

Mr. Gardiner: The Department for Employment and Learning is currently considering its position on the introduction of Information and Communications Technology as a third essential skill along with literacy and numeracy.

Parliamentary Questions

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) how many *(a)* ordinary written and *(b)* named day questions his Department received in (i) the 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary session up to the most recent date for which figures are available, broken down by month; [170766]

(2) what proportion of *(a)* ordinary written questions to his Department were answered within five sitting days of tabling and *(b)* questions for a named day received a substantive answer on that day in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) the current parliamentary session up to the most recent date for which figures are available, broken down by month. [170767]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The following table sets out the total number of ordinary written question and named day questions asked of my department by hon. Members in 2003 and up to 31 April 2004, broken down by month.

	2003	*2004 (up to 31 April)*
Ordinary written		
January	233	324
February	163	263
March	198	327
April	125	248
May	208	—
June	354	—
July	214	—
August	0	—
September	172	—
October	147	—
November	105	—
December	143	—
Total	2,062	1,162
Named day		
January	15	22
February	34	31
March	32	49
April	33	27
May	9	—
June	19	—
July	16	—
August	0	—
September	10	—
October	17	—
November	10	—
December	28	—
Total	223	129

The other information sought is not available in the form requested, but the following may be of use. From 1 January 2003 to 31 December 2003, a total of 3,134 parliamentary questions, including those asked by Members in Another Place, were tabled for answer by ministers in my Department, or on their behalf.

From 1 May 2003 to 31 December 2003, the 11 Departments of the NI administration for which I currently have responsibility answered 986 ordinary

written questions, of which 79 per cent. were responded to within a working week of the question being tabled. of the 65 named day questions tabled in the same period 80 per cent. were answered by the specified date. The corresponding information in respect of the Northern Ireland Office itself is not currently available.

Productivity

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his policy is for *(a)* increasing the productivity and *(b)* cutting the costs of (i) his Department and (ii) its agencies and non-departmental public bodies. [172179]

Mr. Pearson: The NIO is committed to delivering the Government's policy on efficiencies of 2.5per cent. a year over the SR2004 period. This policy is applicable to the core Department, its agencies and non-departmental public bodies.

The same focus on promoting efficiency will apply to the 11 Departments of the Northern Ireland Administration, with a target for annual efficiency gains of at least 2.5 per cent. applying to Departments, and other public bodies funded by them, over the SR 2004 period. This will be a central theme to the Northern Ireland Priorities and Budget process, which will conclude with the publication in December 2004 of the Government's spending and efficiency plans. As a starting point, the departments have been asked to draw up plans for efficiency gains, with measures to include a combination of productivity gains and cost reductions that will free up resources to be redeployed to priority front line public services.

Recycled Paper

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of printing in Government Departments in Northern Ireland in 2003–04 was on recycled paper. [168932]

Mr. Pearson: The percentage spend on recycled paper, compared with new paper, during the period April 2003 to 31 March 2004 is 5.63 per cent.

This answer is based on the value of orders placed electronically by Departments for the purchase of paper used for printing and reprographic purposes "in house" and paper purchased by the Central Print Unit, Department of Finance and Personnel. Data on all printed matter produced in-house by Departments and purchased from commercial printers is not readily available and could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost.

Following the adoption of guidance to integrate environmental considerations into procurement practices, as approved by the Procurement Board on 6 April 2004, Departments are required to move to the use of recycled paper. CPD is now implementing this decision.

Rheumatoid Arthritis

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many rheumatoid arthritis sufferers *(a)* have commenced treatment since 1 January 2004 with, *(b)* are prescribed and *(c)* remain on the waiting list for (i) Embrel and (ii) Remicade. [171756]

Angela Smith: Information is not available in the form requested. However, data collected by Health and Social Services Trusts suggest that there are around 230 people who have received or are currently receiving biologic therapies using Embrel and Remicade, and around 450 people on the waiting lists for such treatment.

Statins

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the availability of statins in the NHS. [173609]

Angela Smith: A range of medicines classified as 'statins' are available to patients on health service prescription, and will remain so.

In addition, it was announced on 12 May 2004 that Ministers had accepted the advice of the expert Committee on Safety of Medicines, that one particular brand of simvastatin in a 10 mg dose, Zocor Heart-Pro, should become available to people with a specific risk of heart disease, without prescription and supplied under pharmacist supervision. This will happen here from July 2004.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Careers Guidance

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many practising qualified teachers *(a)* were qualified careers advisers and *(b)* provided careers guidance in schools in each year since 1997. [172627]

Mr. Miliband: Information on the numbers of qualified teachers who are also qualified careers advisers is only available in respect of those who teach careers as a specific subject. This information was published in table 24 of the School Workforce in England Volume 2003 edition and is available from the House of Commons Library or downloaded from the following internet link: www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DBA/OL/v000443/index.shtml.

This information is not collected on an annual basis.

Careers advice in schools may also take place within other contexts such as during the provision of Personal Social and Health Education. Information is not available in respect of this provision.

Child Care Regulation

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent changes he has made to the regulation of child care; and if he will make a statement. [172854]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* We have made two sets of significant changes to the regulation of child care since the national standards for under 8s day care and childminding came into force in the summer of 2001. First, in April 2003, we introduced regulations enabling the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), the national registration authority for child care in England, to suspend a provider's

registration in certain circumstances, for example, where there were concerns about their suitability to look after children. Second, the national standards and associated regulations were revised in September 2003, following a public consultation. Amongst the changes were new rules allowing childminders to care for more babies and preventing them from smacking or smoking in front of the children in their care. At this time we also extended the registration requirements to child care provided by schools, which had previously been exempt.

Further changes to improve the regulation of child care are under consultation at present and are planned for introduction in September 2004.

Connexions

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many one-stop-shops are operated by the Connexions Service in England. [170022]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 30 April 2004]:* A survey in December 2003 showed there were nearly 300 one-stop shops already open, operated by Connexions Partnerships. This number is set to increase with a further 100 one-stop-shops planned to open in the next 18 months.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what his Department's preferred model of delivery is for Connexions partnerships. [172661]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 12 May 2004]:* There is no preferred model, and it is for each Connexions Partnership to decide on a structure which they believe will be the most efficient in delivering the Connexions service in their sub-region.

Early Years Education

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps he is taking to promote the appropriate training of workers engaged in multi-agency work with early years children. [172343]

Margaret Hodge: The Sure Start Unit has allocated £129.9 million to local authorities for the training and development of early years and child care workers for 2004–06 to meet the requirements of the national standards for under 8s day care and childminding. This will include training and development of those working in multi-agency settings such as Children's Centres.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many new recruits he estimates will be needed over the next three years in the nursery and child care sector to ensure the workforce is at full strength. [171370]

Margaret Hodge: Allowing for the expected growth of child care places and continuing staff turnover, we estimate that up to around 180,000 new recruits may be needed in the early years, child care and play work sector over the three-year period April 2003 to March 2006.

This is a broad estimate, which depends on a range of assumptions, and we will continue to keep it under review in the light of further information about child care growth and staff turnover levels.

Education Act Powers

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many times he has used the power under section 71 of the Education Act 2002 to direct a local education authority to exercise its powers to secure provision for an additional number of pupils. [173783]

Mr. Miliband: It has not yet been necessary to exercise this power under section 71 of the Education Act 2002. It was introduced as a complement to the powers of Section 70 of the Act, which require competitions for additional secondary schools. Effectively, it extends the powers of Schedule 7 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to allow LEAs to respond to a direction to provide for an additional number of pupils by either holding a competition for a new school, or using their other powers for the reorganisation of schools.

LEAs are responsible for the provision of sufficient school places in their area, and these powers were always intended as reserve powers in exceptional circumstances.

Education Funding

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* free nursery and *(b)* pre-school places were available for (i) 3 and (ii) 4-year-olds in Oldham, West and Royton in each of the last seven years. [170912]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the form requested.

Figures on the number of free nursery education places taken up by 3 and 4-year-olds in Oldham local education authority area are shown in the table.

The latest figures on provision for 3 and 4-year-olds in England were published in a Statistical Bulletin 'Provision for children under 5 years of age in England—January 2003' which is available on the Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

From April 2004, six months ahead of our original target, all 3-year-olds in England whose parents want one, are eligible for a free, part-time early education place.

Number of free nursery education places [1,2] taken up by 3 and 4-year-old children in maintained nursery and primary schools and private, voluntary and independent providers—Oldham 1997–2003

Position in January each year	*3-year-olds*	*4-year-olds*
1997	1,500	3,100
1998	1,500	3,100
1999	1,600	3,000
2000	2,300	3,100
2001	2,500	3,100
2002	2,500	3,100
2003	2,600	3,000

[1] Part-time equivalent number of free nursery education places taken up by 3 and 4-year-old children.

[2] A free nursery education place comprises five 2½ hour sessions of early years education per week, for 33 weeks of the year, usually three terms of 11 weeks.

Education Services

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many child care places have been created in Blackpool, South since 1997. [173066]

Margaret Hodge: The Department is unable to provide details of child care places for Blackpool, South. However, from April 1999 to March 2004 Blackpool local authority created 3,060 new child care places helping some 5,505 children. This shows an increase in the stock of child care places, taking into account turnover, of 2,149 helping some 3,899 children.

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was spent on capital projects in schools in *(a)* the County of Essex in each year from 1980 to 1997 and *(b)* the County of Essex and the unitary authorities of Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock in each year from 1998 to 2003. [173322]

Mr. Miliband: The majority of capital funding is now allocated to local authorities and schools by needs-related formulae. Authorities invest according to priorities agreed in their asset management plans. The following table shows total capital allocations to Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock local education authorities (LEA) since 1996–97. We do not hold details of the capital allocation figures per authority for periods before 1996–97.

Capital allocations in £

	Essex LEA	Southend-on-Sea LEA	Thurrock LEA
1996–97	12,186,000	—	—
1997–98	11,477,000	—	—
1998–99	13,796,000	2,577,000	1,874,000
1999–2000	20,204,000	1,056,000	3,190,000
2000–01	53,120,000	6,547,000	6,014,000
2001–02	35,575,000	5,868,000	5,129,000

Capital allocations in £

	Essex LEA	Southend-on-Sea LEA	Thurrock LEA
2002–03	75,405,000	6,330,000	5,249,000
2003–04	63,462,000	9,907,000	11,007,000
2004–05	60,322,000	13,242,000	12,834,000

* Includes allocations to the voluntary aided sector.

Education Statistics (London)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching staff have taken early retirement in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in each London borough in each year since 1997; and what the average figures for a local education authority in England were in each year. [172805]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested has been placed in the Libraries.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching staff have left the profession as a result of stress or similar conditions in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in each London borough in each year since 1997; and what the average figures for a local education authority in England were in each year. [172806]

Mr. Miliband: This information is not collected centrally.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching posts there were in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in each London borough in each year since 1997; and what the average figures for a local education authority in England were in each year. [172807]

Mr. Miliband: The tables show the full-time equivalent number of regular teachers in local education authorities in London and the national average for all maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools in England, in January of each year.

Nursery and primary

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
City of London	10	20	20	20	20	20	20
Camden	580	560	550	560	550	580	610
Greenwich	1,020	990	980	990	1,000	960	980
Hackney	840	860	870	880	910	870	950
Hammersmith and Fulham	440	400	400	440	470	470	500
Islington	780	770	720	730	700	820	750
Kensington and Chelsea	360	350	360	340	360	380	400
Lambeth	1,010	1,020	980	940	970	1,030	1,020
Lewisham	960	970	940	1,030	1,050	1,080	1,100
Southwark	1,000	1,010	1,040	1,050	1,140	1,170	1,210
Tower Hamlets	1,180	1,090	1,200	1,170	1,140	1,160	1,130
Wandsworth	820	810	840	850	900	900	900
City of Westminster	560	530	530	530	610	630	620
Barking and Dagenham	710	690	690	700	750	740	750
Barnet	1,160	1,210	1,200	1,190	1,250	1,280	1,290
Bexley	880	860	900	880	930	930	890
Brent	1,100	1,090	1,090	1,020	1,050	1,080	1,120
Bromley	960	980	990	990	1,120	1,140	1,120
Croydon	1,400	1,390	1,370	1,430	1,570	1,490	1,510
Ealing	1,190	1,190	1,200	1,180	1,200	1,210	1,160
Enfield	1,070	1,090	1,080	1,260	1,180	1,300	1,270
Haringey	980	970	960	970	990	1,020	1,020
Harrow	930	880	860	770	900	900	910
Havering	880	880	890	910	910	940	940
Hillingdon	910	910	920	970	1,020	1,050	1,030

Nursery and primary

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Hounslow	900	870	880	860	900	890	840
Kingston upon Thames	460	460	460	470	500	510	520
Merton	670	640	660	650	700	710	660
Newham	1,010	1,000	1,060	1,160	1,260	1,290	1,330
Redbridge	850	870	900	940	1,020	1,010	1,030
Richmond upon Thames	520	530	530	520	560	530	580
Sutton	580	590	600	600	620	640	690
Waltham Forest	910	960	960	920	940	1,000	910
National average	1,240	1,230	1,240	1,250	1,300	1,320	1,320

Secondary

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
City of London	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Camden	780	790	770	650	780	850	680
Greenwich	880	860	870	880	900	970	1,020
Hackney	500	520	550	530	500	530	580
Hammersmith and Fulham	370	420	440	470	460	460	480
Islington	520	510	500	520	520	560	550
Kensington and Chelsea	260	250	260	250	260	260	280
Lambeth	500	510	500	520	490	530	520
Lewisham	750	740	740	750	820	850	810
Southwark	600	630	640	660	670	750	740
Tower Hamlets	930	920	940	920	910	940	1,060
Wandsworth	650	650	650	640	670	690	690
City of Westminster	530	550	560	570	600	640	660
Barking and Dagenham	680	660	680	690	690	730	780
Barnet	1,420	1,370	1,400	1,400	1,420	1,460	1,480
Bexley	910	930	950	940	960	1,090	1,070
Brent	940	970	950	960	950	980	1,150
Bromley	1,190	1,210	1,210	1,210	1,320	1,400	1,380
Croydon	1,030	1,070	1,050	1,210	1,140	1,170	1,200
Ealing	900	880	910	930	900	960	1,040
Enfield	1,260	1,310	1,350	1,300	1,310	1,250	1,430
Haringey	740	730	760	760	760	760	770
Harrow	570	550	570	540	560	570	590
Havering	920	930	940	910	990	1,050	1,070
Hillingdon	970	1,000	980	1,010	1,050	1,070	1,090
Hounslow	1,010	980	1,010	990	1,040	1,030	1,070
Kingston upon Thames	520	530	520	520	520	520	600
Merton	460	460	460	440	460	470	540
Newham	1,010	1,030	1,060	1,060	1,110	1,170	1,190
Redbridge	1,060	1,080	1,110	1,080	1,220	1,230	1,300
Richmond upon Thames	480	480	470	440	440	520	470
Sutton	730	760	780	810	850	880	970
Waltham Forest	840	860	880	920	840	880	890
National average	1,260	1,260	1,280	1,290	1,310	1,350	1,380

Source:
Annual survey of teachers in service and teacher vacancies.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* free nursery and *(b)* pre-school places were available for (i) three and (ii) four-year-olds in Bootle in each of the last seven years. [172785]

Margaret Hodge: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given on 29 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1257W.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many *(a)* Sure Start centres and *(b)* Early Excellence centres have been created in Bootle; [172786]

(2) how many new nurseries have been established in Bootle since 1997. [172783]

Margaret Hodge: I refer the hon. Member to the replies given on 6 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1775W and 6 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1776W.

Examination Results

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females achieved five A*–C grades at GCSE in each year since 1994; and how many (i) males and (ii) females achieved 5 A*–C grades at GCSE in the 10 per cent. (A) most and (B) least deprived wards in each year since 1994. [170113]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is shown in the following tables. Data for years prior to 1997 is not readily available and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Number of males and females achieving 5 A–C Grades at GCSE: 1997–2003*

	Male		Female	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
2003	133,462	46	158,525	56
2002	125,476	44	150,769	55
2001	119,862	43	145,645	53
2000	112,719	41	138,218	52
1999	109,564	40	134,307	51
1998	103,546	39	127,677	49
1997	102,894	38	125,761	48

Number of males and females achieving 5 A–C Grades at GCSE: 1997–2003*

	Male				Female			
	10 per cent. most deprived wards		10 per cent. least deprived wards		10 per cent. most deprived wards		10 per cent. least deprived wards	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
2003	9,005	32	19,136	60	11,349	42	21,969	71
2002	8,335	30	18,101	59	10,507	40	21,129	70
2001	7,883	29	17,320	57	9,855	37	20,982	69
2000	7,137	27	16,737	56	9,037	36	19,587	68
1999	6,892	25	16,243	55	8,711	34	19,223	67
1998	6,340	24	15,760	54	8,122	32	18,604	66
1997	6,368	24	15,319	52	7,904	30	18,359	64

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females achieved level 5 or above at Key Stage 3 in (i) English, (ii) mathematics and (iii) science in the 10 per cent. (A) most and (B) least deprived wards in each year since 1994. [170114]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is shown in the following table. Data for years prior to 1997 are not readily available and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Number of males and females achieving level 5 or above at Key Stage 3: 1997–2003

	Male				Female			
	10 per cent. most deprived wards		10 per cent. least deprived wards		10 per cent. most deprived wards		10 per cent. least deprived wards	
Subject/year	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
English								
2003	14,067	48	24,616	74	17,704	63	27,070	86
2002	13,486	44	23,270	71	18,180	63	27,134	86
2001	12,723	43	22,392	70	16,954	59	25,432	85
2000	12,053	40	21,883	69	16,184	58	25,135	84
1999	12,309	41	21,156	70	16,617	59	25,431	85
1998	11,605	41	20,727	69	15,755	58	23,652	84
1997	9,535	33	18,219	62	13,831	50	22,472	80
Maths								
2003	16,333	55	26,823	80	16,149	58	26,185	83
2002	15,465	51	25,621	78	15,078	52	25,209	80
2001	14,723	49	24,896	78	14,609	51	24,347	80
2000	13,951	47	24,347	77	13,232	47	23,393	78
1999	13,281	44	23,017	76	12,442	44	22,802	76
1998	11,823	41	21,433	72	10,808	40	20,491	73
1997	11,966	41	21,795	74	11,060	40	21,119	75
Science								
2003	15,177	51	26,880	80	14,528	52	25,811	82
2002	14,876	49	25,918	79	14,333	49	25,306	80
2001	14,318	48	25,245	79	13,619	47	24,316	80
2000	12,345	41	23,436	74	10,819	39	21,752	73
1999	10,909	36	21,366	70	10,254	36	21,182	71
1998	10,912	38	21,089	71	9,518	35	19,577	70
1997	11,808	41	22,167	75	10,922	40	21,083	75

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females achieved level 4 or above at Key Stage 2 in (i) English, (ii) mathematics and (iii) science in the 10 per cent. (A) most and (B) least deprived wards in each year since 1994. [170115]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is shown in the following table. Data for years prior to 1997 is not readily available and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Number of males and females achieving level 4 or above at Key Stage 2: 1997–2003

	Males				Females			
	10 per cent. most deprived wards		10 per cent. least deprived wards		10 per cent. most deprived wards		10 per cent. least deprived wards	
Subject/year	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
English								
2003	27,223	57	22,845	83	31,481	69	23,540	90
2002	27,323	57	22,431	83	30,921	67	23,536	89
2001	27,046	57	21,951	83	31,645	69	23,364	90
2000	26,863	57	21,894	83	30,534	67	22,464	90
1999	24,391	50	20,648	79	29,199	63	21,914	88
1998	20,083	42	18,192	73	27,415	59	20,547	86
1997	19,712	42	17,612	73	24,608	54	19,407	84
Maths								
2003	29,842	63	23,117	84	27,739	61	21,490	82
2002	30,053	63	22,571	83	28,898	63	21,933	83
2001	28,517	60	21,755	82	27,291	59	21,064	81
2000	28,451	61	21,824	83	26,955	59	20,504	82
1999	27,503	57	21,068	81	26,098	56	20,175	81
1998	21,174	44	18,722	75	19,831	43	17,567	74
1997	22,809	48	18,465	77	21,118	47	17,713	76
Science								
2003	36,763	77	25,807	94	35,392	78	24,528	94
2002	37,482	78	25,187	93	36,116	78	24,551	93
2001	37,529	79	24,895	94	36,700	80	24,511	94
2000	35,072	75	24,304	92	34,419	76	23,326	93
1999	32,126	66	23,261	89	30,837	66	22,315	89
1998	26,281	55	20,938	83	24,673	53	19,874	83
1997	25,573	54	19,732	82	24,830	55	19,301	83

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females achieved level 2 or above at Key Stage 1 in (i) English, (ii) mathematics and (iii) science in the 10 per cent. (A) most and (B) least deprived wards in each year since 1994. [170116]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is shown in the following table. Data for years prior to 1998 is not readily available and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Number of males and females achieving level 2 or above in the Key Stage 1 Test Tasks: 1998–2003

	Male				Female			
	10 per cent. most deprived wards		10 per cent. least deprived wards		10 per cent. most deprived wards		10 per cent. deprived wards	
Subject/year	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
English reading								
2003	33,082	71	23,558	89	36,194	81	23,981	94
2002	34,128	71	23,880	89	36,353	81	24,035	94
2001	34,186	71	24,667	89	37,230	80	24,439	94
2000	34,667	70	23,831	89	37,887	80	24,120	94
1999	35,212	68	24,179	87	38,511	78	24,307	93
1998	34,136	64	23,298	86	38,169	76	24,030	92
English writing								
2003	30,752	66	22,662	85	35,246	79	23,700	93
2002	34,653	72	24,163	90	37,535	83	24,434	95
2001	34,963	72	24,957	90	38,354	83	24,800	95
2000	34,992	71	24,004	89	38,728	82	24,371	95
1999	35,407	68	24,353	88	39,247	79	24,586	94
1998	34,552	65	23,587	87	39,010	77	24,257	93
Maths								
2003	38,662	83	25,064	94	38,477	86	24,397	95
2002	39,820	83	25,355	94	38,939	86	24,472	95
2001	40,680	84	26,234	95	40,165	87	24,990	96
2000	40,910	82	25,245	94	40,619	86	24,562	96
1999	40,774	78	25,598	93	40,156	81	24,532	94
1998	39,769	75	24,611	91	39,786	79	24,165	93

Failing Schools

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when the schools categorised as *(a)* subject to special measures, *(b)* having serious weaknesses, *(c)* underachieving and *(d)* having inadequate sixth forms as of 9 April were placed in those categories. [173139]

Mr. Miliband: This is a matter for Ofsted. HM Chief Inspector, David Bell, will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of his letter in the Library.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which schools Office for Standards in Education categorised as *(a)* subject to special measures, *(b)* having serious weaknesses, *(c)* underachieving and *(d)* having inadequate sixth forms between 1 January and 9 April. [173140]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* This is a matter for Ofsted. HM Chief Inspector, David Bell, will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of his letter in the Library.

Family Fund Trust

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many families have been provided with grants through the Family Fund Trust; what funding will be provided for the Trust over the next three years; and if he will make a statement. [170606]

Margaret Hodge: The Family Fund was set up by the Government in 1973 to give practical help to families with severely disabled and seriously ill children under the age of 16. Since 1998 the charity has received separate funds from the Governments of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales amounting to over £27million in 2003–4. The number of families assisted in England was £35,226 in 2002–3. England has allocated funding of £22.773 million. for 2004–5. The budgets for the years 2005–6 and 2006–7 are yet to be determined.

Family Support Grant

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many organisations have applied for funding from the family support grant in 2003–04; and how many were successful in their application. [172498]

Margaret Hodge: A total of 287 applications were received for the family support grant (FSG) 2003–04, of which 26 were successful. In addition, three organisations continued to receive core funding from FSG 2003–04, together with another 55 organisations who received on-going funding originally awarded in previous years. Total funding was £6.3 million.

I announced details of FSG 2004–05 projects on 10 May 2004.

Fostered Children

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children within the foster care system were born outside the UK. [172492]

Margaret Hodge: This information is not collected centrally.

Ministerial Visits

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list visits made by each Minister in the Department between December 2003 and April 2004, broken down by *(a)* date, *(b)* constituency visited and *(c)* cost. [171559]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: For domestic visits, the Department does not hold this detailed information centrally. To provide this information could only be done at disproportionate cost.

For overseas visits, the Government publishes on an annual basis the total costs of all ministerial overseas travel and a list of all visits by Cabinet Ministers costing in excess of £500. Information for 2003–4 is currently being collected and will be published as soon as it is ready.

Older People

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills for what *(a)* initiatives, *(b)* campaigns and *(c)* advisory bodies relating to older people his Department (i) is responsible and (ii) has provided funding since 2001; and what the cost in each year was for each one. [166237]

Alan Johnson: The tables set out the work the Department for Education and Skills has undertaken or funded since 2001 to promote learning for older people (50+). The main work is support for projects under *(a)* initiatives.

The Department has not been responsible for or funded any *(b)* campaigns. Likewise the Department has not established or funded any national advisory bodies for older people under *(c)*.

(a) Initiatives: 2001–02

Title	*Cost (£)*	*Organisation*
Supporting the Better Government for Older People Network	20,000	Better Government for Older People (BGOP)
Celebrating Older Learners	25,000	DfES
The Dark Horse Encourage Programme	15,000	The Dark Horse Venture
Financial Literacy and Older People	60,000	National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE)
Learning Support for Older People	50,000	NIACE
Peer tutors project	66,000	Community Education Development Centre
Senior Peer Physical Activity Motivator Programme	14,600	British Heart Foundation National Centre for Physical Activity and Health
Celebrating Older Learners sponsorship project	25,000	NIACE
Leicester LiveAge project	32,000	Leicester Adult Education College

(a) Initiatives: 2001–02

Title	Cost (£)	Organisation
4th Age Learning at home and in day care	33,000	NIACE
Senior Learner Awards	17,100	NIACE
Skills for Older People	50,000	NIACE
Drawn from Memory	20,000	Adult and Community Learning in Oxfordshire
Total funding	427,700	

2002–03

Title	Cost (£)	Organisation
DfES/BGOP conference	9,000	Better Government for Older People
Senior Peer Physical Activity Motivator Programme	9,700	British Heart Foundation National Centre for Physical Activity and Health
Peer Group Training for Older People	80,000	Community Education Development Centre
Days out! Days in!—4th age learning at home and in day care provision	33,000	NIACE
Fred Moore Institutional Award	21,300	NIACE
Why, Where, What and How Older People Learn	37,800	NIACE
Spotlight 2002	146,440	Meridian Broadcasting Charitable Trust
Senior Learner Awards	28,942	NIACE
USA Development Projects	26,680	The Third Age Trust
Learning Support for Older People	70,000	NIACE
Involving adults in learning through sport	3,000	Youth Sport Trust
LiveAge cd-rom	13,105	Leicester Adult Education College
e-Finance Project	2,000	Coventry City Council
Total Funding	480,967	

2003–04

Title	Cost (£)	Organisation
Senior Learner Awards	31,430	NIACE
Fred Moore Institutional Awards for 2004	21,300	NIACE
USA Development Projects	17,180	The Third Age Trust
Older and Bolder	71,750	NIACE
Total Funding	141,660	

Pre-schools

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the requirements are for pre-school assistants to be able to work in pre-schools; and if he will make a statement. [173382]

Margaret Hodge: The criteria supporting the national standards for under 8s day care and child minding indicate:

that all pre-school staff should be subject to checks to ensure that they are not disqualified from registration because of previous criminal convictions;

that they are suitable, both mentally and physically, to care for children; and

that they have the appropriate skills and ability to do their jobs.

Reading Disability

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps his Department is taking to improve the availability of reading material for those with reading disabilities. [171265]

Margaret Hodge: During the past three financial years £220 million has been made available to schools through the Schools Access Initiative; a further £100 million per annum is available for the current year and for 2005–06. This funding can be used to produce materials in alternative formats to enable access to the curriculum for pupils who have reading disabilities.

It is for schools and local education authorities (LEAs) to ensure that such materials are produced in good time, so that children with reading disabilities are not disadvantaged. Schools and LEAs can use the Department for Education and Skills' Special Educational Needs inclusion site to share information about materials that are required; in production; or already available in different formats.

Recycled Paper

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures he has put in place to ensure that his Department meets the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled of which a minimum of 75 per cent. is post-consumer waste content. [166792]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The "quick win targets" set by DEFRA were communicated widely within the Department, particularly to procurement sections, in October 2003. Due to a lack of re-contracting opportunities since that date it has not so far been possible to implement specific measures to ensure the Department meets the quick win targets. Procurement sections have undertaken to introduce these as soon as re-contracting opportunities arise.

School Sports (Preston)

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if he will make a statement on the effects on schools of changes since 1997 in the level of investment in school sports in Preston; [168138]

(2) how much money has been allocated to develop school sports in Preston since 1997. [168711]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: This information is not held in the format requested.

Within the context of the statutory National Curriculum, where Physical Education (PE) is compulsory for pupils aged 5–16, it is for individual schools to use their budgets as they judge appropriate.

The Government are investing more than £1 billion in England to transform PE, school sport and club links. The funding will help deliver an ambitious Public Service Agreement target, shared with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, to increase the percentage of 5–16 year olds who spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum to 75 per cent. by 2006.

The Department is providing just over £440,000 to support the delivery of a School Sport Partnership in Lancashire LEA area. The partnerships includes five secondary and 21 primary schools and provides enhanced sports opportunities for all young people to ensure that their pupils spend a minimum of two hours a week on high quality PE and School Sport. A key objective for all School Sport Partnerships is to ensure that the improvements and enhanced opportunities that they deliver are sustainable and embedded within schools to ensure a lasting legacy. The New Opportunities Fund has provided schools in the Lancashire LEA area with nearly 12 million specifically to enhance PE and school sport facilities.

Latest research, published by the Departments on 4 March 2004 shows that 68 per cent. of pupils in schools that have been in a Partnership for three years, are taking up the two hour entitlement, rising to 90 per cent. at Key Stage 3. Data has been collected from the remaining partnerships and will be published in April.

Schools (Capital Investment)

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many wave 1 approvals under Building Schools for the Future involved *(a)* local authorities other than in their capacity as local education authorities, *(b)* learning and skills councils, *(c)* primary care and other NHS trusts and *(d)* other public sector bodies. [172906]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows the number of local education authorities in wave 1 of Building Schools for the Future who made specific reference to the requested categories in their proposals.

Local education authorities	*Number*
Other local authority services	1
Learning and Skills Councils	12
Primary care and other NHS trusts	4
Other public sector bodies	9

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what criteria were used in issuing invitations to local education authorities to submit bids for consideration for wave one of Building Schools for the Future; and what criteria were used to assess the bids. [172959]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is contained in guidance to local authorities, issued in July 2004. A copy is in the House of Commons Library.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the local education authorities which applied to wave one of Building Schools for the Future; and what the reasons were for each unsuccessful bid. [172962]

Mr. Miliband: The following list shows those authorities which applied for wave one funding in the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme. Projects that were successful in wave one were those which best met our criteria for prioritisation. The criteria for prioritisation were fully set out in the guidance on applying for prioritisation in the BSF programme which we published last July.

We have discussed with all unsuccessful authorities the reasons why their proposals meet our criteria less well, usually in face to face meetings with my officials.

Birmingham
Haringey
Manchester
Bracknell Forest
Harrow
Newcastle upon Tyne
Cambridgeshire
Havering
Newham
Cheshire
Herefordshire
North Tyneside
Cornwall
Hertfordshire
Nottingham
Derbyshire
Islington
Nottinghamshire
Doncaster
Kingston upon Hull
Oldham
Dorset
Knowsley
Portsmouth
Dudley
Lambeth
Richmond upon Thames
Durham
Lancashire
East Riding of Yorkshire
Leeds
Rotherham
East Sussex
Leicester
Salford
Gateshead
Lewisham

Sandwell
Hackney
Liverpool
Solihull
Somerset
Telford and Wrekin
West Sussex
South Tyneside
Walsall
Westminster
Stoke-on-Trent
Waltham Forest
Wolverhampton
Sunderland
Wandsworth
Tameside
West Berkshire

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the performance of Pathfinder local education authorities in Building Schools for the Future. [172963]

Mr. Miliband: Partnerships for Schools is monitoring and supporting the pathfinder local authorities. By their nature as pathfinders, we are working with authorities to develop Building Schools for the Future, identifying and resolving issues along the way. The pathfinder projects are progressing well and will be submitting outline business cases shortly for formal assessment.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of each successful local education authority's secondary schools in wave one of Building Schools for the Future are covered by its bid. [172965]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows the proportion of schools in wave 1 of Building Schools for the Future as a percentage of each local authority's total number of secondary schools.

LEA	*Total schools in LEA*[1]	*Of which: included in BSF wave*	*Percentage*
Knowsley	11	11	100.0
Lancashire	134	26	19.4
Leeds	68	42	61.8
Leicester	26	26	100.0
Manchester	25	13	52.0
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	11	11	100.0
Newham	15	15	100.0
Solihull	23	9	39.1
South Tyneside	13	13	100.0
Stoke-on-Trent	23	23	100.0
Sunderland	18	9	50.0
Waltham Forest	19	9	47.4

[1] Total number of schools that have been included by the LEA in their submissions to Building Schools for the Future; this may include special, middle and other schools, or units such as pupil referral units, in addition to secondary schools.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many local education authorities participating in wave one of Building Schools for the Future have *(a)* identified city academies as an integral part of the plans and *(b)* included provision for 14–19 education. [172966]

Mr. Miliband: Six local education authorities (LEAs) participating in wave 1 of Building Schools for the Future mentioned planned or established Academies in their proposals. We now expect all projects to provide a proper evaluation of Academy options.

All proposals submitted included provision for 14–19 education.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the Department's financial commitment is for each successful bid in wave one of Building Schools for the Future, broken down by *(a)* private finance initiative credits and *(b)* cash grants. [172967]

Mr. Miliband: Total funding available for pathfinder and wave one Building Schools for the Future projects is over £2.2 billion. This includes PFI credits, capital grant and supported borrowings. Details of allocation will not be made until authorities have submitted satisfactory outline business cases, which is expected later this year.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many projects in wave one of Building Schools for the Future will use the exemplar building design. [172968]

Mr. Miliband: It is too early to say how many projects Wave 1 will use any one of the exemplar designs in their entirety. However, all authorities in Wave 1 have warmly welcomed all the exemplar designs and are actively using them in their deliberations with schools to develop their educational vision.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cost was of preparing the exemplar building designs in Building Schools for the Future. [172969]

Mr. Miliband: The cost of preparing 11 Exemplar Designs to RIBA Stage C—Scheme Design, including fees, securing copyright for the designs, publishing and dissemination was £3.45 million. We expect that through the stimulation of exemplar designs a number of standardised processes, including strategic partnerships, along the supply chain and off-site fabrication will develop to meet the demands of an increased building programme and secure savings on the costs of new schools of around 10 per cent.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which local education authorities have indicated that they wish to participate in wave 2 of the Building Schools for the Future programme. [172970]

Mr. Miliband: Local authorities were invited to submit a proposal for wave 1 and/or an expression of interest for the programme as a whole. All have done so. We will use this information to prioritise projects for the next waves of investment.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills who owns *(a)* new and *(b)* refurbished schools built under the Building Schools for the Future programme. [172971]

Mr. Miliband: Ownership of schools will not usually change when schools are built or refurbished in the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme. Exceptions to this are where investment is through a Private Finance Initiative contract, where ownership of the buildings will pass to the public sector provider for the length of the contract, and then fevert to the previous owner, and also where an Academy is created. In this case, the Academy Trust' will own the buildings for as long as the Academy remains in operation. If the Academy ceases to exist, ownership of the Academy land, and any buildings on it, will revert to the previous owner, which would be either the LEA or the voluntary aided sector body.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the pathfinders for Building Schools for the Future were originally private finance initiative schemes. [172972]

Mr. Miliband: An offer to all local education authorities in 2003 to submit projects which would access Private Finance Initiative (PFI) credits in 2004–05 also invited expressions of interest to be pathfinders in the Building Schools for the Future programme. Part, but not all, of the funding to support pathfinder Building Schools for the Future projects will be PFI credits.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what controls there are to ensure that a wave 1 Building Schools for the Future scheme develops plans for secondary schools, once accepted. [172973]

Mr. Miliband: The development of each local authority project will be monitored by Partnerships for Schools. The Department will also see their plans at two formal points, when the outline and final business cases for each project are submitted for approval. We are also encouraging local authorities to use the local government gateway review process.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when he expects to announce the results of the second round of the Building Schools for the Future initiative. [173005]

Mr. Miliband: We hope to announce the next waves of investment under Building Schools for the Future later in the year—probably in the autumn. We are working to provide this information as soon as possible, once the Secretary of State has decided how to allocate the spending review settlement.

Schools (Physical Exercise)

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps he is taking to *(a)* increase the percentage of pupils spending at least two hours a week on physical exercise and school sport and *(b)* increase the time children spend on exercise; and if he will make a statement. [171447]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Government are investing more than £1 billion in England to transform PE, school sport and club links. The funding will help deliver an ambitious Public Service Agreement target, shared with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, to increase the percentage of 5–16 year olds who spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum to 75 per cent. by 2006.

Spearheading action is the creation of a network of 400 specialist sports colleges and School Sport Partnerships. There are six other interlinked programmes within the strategy which are designed to help schools and their partners ensure pupils take up their PE and sports entitlement:

1. Professional Development
2. School/Club Links
3. Step Into Sport
4. Gifted and Talented
5. Swimming
6. The QCA PE and School Sport Investigation

Learning through PE and Sport provides a comprehensive guide to the strategy and a copy has been placed in the House Library.

Special Educational Needs

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of special educational needs co-ordinators. [171367]

Margaret Hodge: Special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs) play a vital role, in conjunction with head teachers and governing bodies, in co-ordinating schools' work on identifying, assessing and meeting the needs of children with special educational needs.

The Office for Standards in Education considers the effectiveness of schools in meeting the needs of all learners and this takes account of the contribution made by SENCOs. Ofsted is currently carrying out a thematic study of the implementation of the inclusion framework introduced through the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2001. The code of practice introduced changes to the school based elements of SEN provision, including measures designed to help reduce paper work for SENCOs.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps he is taking to ensure that teachers have appropriate training to identify and to respond to the special needs of children in school settings. [172342]

Margaret Hodge: New standards for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) came into effect in September 2002 and new induction standards came into force a year later. Both place a greater emphasis on special educational needs (SEN). The Department's guidance on induction also reflects the duties of head teachers and schools under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

In order to be awarded QTS, trainee teachers must demonstrate that they understand their responsibilities under the statutory SEN Code of Practice, know how to seek advice from specialists on less common types of SEN, can differentiate their teaching to meet the needs of pupils, including those with SEN, and can identify and support pupils who experience behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.

The standards for the Induction Support Programme for those awarded QTS require that newly qualified teachers can demonstrate that they can plan effectively to meet the needs of pupils in their classes with SEN, with or without a statement, and, in consultation with the SEN co-ordinator, contribute to the preparation and implementation of individual education plans or the equivalent.

Once qualified, teachers are expected to identify their developmental needs through performance management arrangements, and to address identified needs, including improving their teaching skills in the area of SEN, by undertaking appropriate professional development.

Our recently published SEN Strategy, "Removing Barriers to Achievement", recognises the importance of training. We are committed to working closely with the Teacher Training Agency, higher education institutions and other interested parties to ensure that effective arrangements are in place.

Teenage Pregnancy

Mr. Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures are being taken to reduce levels of teenage pregnancy in the UK. [172574]

Mr. Stephen Twigg *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* The Government have set a target to reduce under 18 conceptions by 50 per cent. by 2010. To achieve this, each local authority has developed a local 10 year strategy, with reduction targets of between 40 and 60 per cent. Based on the best available international research, local strategies adopt a multifaceted approach, which includes a range of measures: to help young people resist peer pressure to have early sex; to improve the quality of sex and relationship education and access to effective contraceptive services; and to involve parents and the wider community. Research published in February 2003 by the Health Development Agency further endorses this approach.

Mr. Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the effect of the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy on the number of teenage pregnancies in the UK. [172576]

Mr. Stephen Twigg *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* Provisional data for 2002 published on 26 February by the Office for National Statistics, shows that the conception rate among under 18-year-olds in England has fallen by 9.4 per cent. since 1998 (baseline year for Teenage Pregnancy Strategy).

Under-five Testing

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the Government's policy on testing for under fives. [172629]

Margaret Hodge: We do not test under fives. We do ask for a written summary of a child's progress and learning needs at the end of the Foundation Stage, based on teacher observation. Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. The Foundation Stage Profile summary ensures that every child is assessed on a consistent basis. The information helps teachers and parents to support each child's development and progress; at local and national level it ensures that support is targeted appropriately to improve classroom practice.

TRANSPORT

Civil Contingencies

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what measures are in place to cope with the immediate *(a)* physical and *(b)* economic effects of a floating bomb. [170059]

Mr. Jamieson: The Government regulates a comprehensive maritime security regime under the Aviation and Maritime Security Act 1990. From 1 July 2004 this will be augmented by the introduction of the International Maritime Organisation's "International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code". We have in addition measures that would enable us to respond proportionately to a range of scenarios.

The response to mitigate the economic effects would depend on the size and location of a particular incident.

Early Retirement

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many staff in his Department took early retirement, and at what total cost, in the last financial year. [171867]

Mr. McNulty: In the financial year 2003–04, 11 officials of the Department for Transport took early retirement, i.e. before they reached the age of 60, at a cost of £1.45 million.

Electric Cars

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what action his Department is taking to promote the use of electric cars. [173824]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department promotes the use of electric cars in a number of ways. The PowerShift programme provides grants towards the purchase of electric vehicles and the New Vehicle Technology Fund is currently supporting the demonstration of several electric vehicles. The Government also provides fiscal incentives. Electric vehicles are subject to zero vehicle excise duty, an enhanced capital allowance rate of 100 per cent. in the first year and lower personal benefit in kind tax liability. PowerShift approved electric vehicles are also exempt from the London Congestion Charge.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many electric cars have been in use in each of the last 10 years. [173905]

Mr. Jamieson: The following number of electric cars were licensed at the end of each of the last 10 years.

	Number
1994	93
1995	74
1996	94
1997	116
1998	151
1999	195
2000	221
2001	272
2002	326
2003	372

Source:
DVLA vehicle database.

Light Rail

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what steps his Department is taking to encourage the building of light rail systems; and if he will make a statement; [171956]

(2) what assessment he has made of whether the target for 25 light rail systems set out in the 10-Year Transport Plan will be met. [171957]

Mr. McNulty: The Department recognises that light rail can bring significant benefits in some places, but has always been concerned with what works best locally and represents value for money, this may or not be light rail; it is not in the business of promoting one mode over another. The 10-Year Plan for Transport stated that up to 25 new light rail lines might be affordable with the 10-Year Plan provision subject to passing the Department's value for money criteria.

MOTs

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the MOT computerisation system to be fully operational. [172136]

Mr. Jamieson: The computerised MOT service is due to go live on 29 November 2004. It will take approximately six months for Siemens Business Services to install computer terminals into all MOT testing stations and train station staff. Consequently, it will be June 2005 before all MOT testing is expected to be conducted using the new service. It will be a further year before there will be an electronic test record of every vehicle subject to test for re-licensing purposes.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how the monies raised from MOT garages as a result of increased MOT certificate fees have been used. [173891]

Mr. Jamieson: All monies raised from MOT certificate fees have been credited to the MOT Scheme account. The funds have been used to finance MOT administration and enforcement activities and the costs incurred on the MOT Computerisation Project.

Any surpluses on the MOT schemes are identified in our Annual Report and Accounts and it is the intention to balance the scheme on a year-by-year basis.

Nettleton Bottom/Brockworth

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what discussions he has had with the Highways Agency about the possibility of building a tunnel from Nettleton Bottom to the Brockworth Bypass, Gloucestershire; what advice he received from that body on this option; and if he will make a statement; [173791]

(2) what instructions he gave to the Highways Agency with regard to further investigations regarding improving the A417 between Nettleton Bottom and the Brockworth Bypass, Gloucestershire; and if he will make a statement; [173792]

(3) what assessment he has made of the environmental impact of *(a)* building a tunnel and *(b)* the current favoured option of the Highways Agency to improve the A417 between Nettleton Bottom and the Brockworth Bypass, Gloucestershire; and if he will make a statement; [173793]

(4) what estimate he has made of the cost of building a tunnel from Nettleton Bottom to the Brockworth Bypass, Gloucestershire; and if he will make a statement. [173794]

Mr. Jamieson: The interim findings of an environmental study, undertaken by the Highways Agency, to look at options for improving the length of A417 from Cowley to Brockworth were published in a pamphlet in March 2003. The tunnel option was discarded as a result of its high cost (at around £200 million), environmental impact and the implications for road safety. In the light of this the Highways Agency was asked to continue work on various surface options. This work is continuing in liaison with the statutory environmental bodies and other stakeholders. I expect to receive further advice on these options later this year. I will then consider the way forward and make an announcement.

Radioactive Materials

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether radioactive materials may be legally transported *(a)* on passenger ferries and *(b)* through the Channel Tunnel. [173476]

Mr. Jamieson: The information requested is as follows:

(a) Yes. The transport of radioactive material on passenger ferries is permissible subject to the safety requirements and restrictions of the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code, Amendment 31–02, as required by The Merchant Shipping (Dangerous Goods and Marine Pollutants) Regulations 1997 (SI 1997 No 2367); Merchant Shipping Notice No. M 1772(M), "The Carriage of Dangerous Goods and Marine Pollutants in Packaged Form—Amendment 31–02 to the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code" and, where applicable, The Merchant Shipping (Carriage of Packaged Irradiated Nuclear Fuel etc.) (INF Code) Regulations 2000 (SI 2000 No 3216).

(b) Yes. Transport through the Channel Tunnel of limited amounts of radioactive material complying with RID[1]/ADR[2] is permissible only as authorised through Eurotunnel Freight by prior agreement between the manufacturer/producer and Eurotunnel. Radioactive

material other than that in/as Excepted Packages is further restricted to new manufactured goods in their original packaging.

[1] Convention concerning International Carriage by Rail (COTIF) Appendix B. Uniform Rules concerning the Contract for International Carriage of Goods by Rail (CIM) Annex 1 Regulations concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Rail (RID) 2001 Edition.

[2] European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR) 2001 Edition.

Road Schemes

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the occasions on which his Department has asked regional assemblies to choose between alternative road schemes, broken down by region; and on what date assembly meetings were held to consider such alternatives. [173483]

Mr. Jamieson: The choice between alternative road scheme options is made by Ministers, not regional assemblies. However, through the regional planning process, the programme of multi-modal and road based studies, and the Highways Agency's consultation processes, we have obtained the views of regional assemblies on all trunk road and motorway schemes considered for entry to the Targeted Programme of Improvements, including, where relevant, their views on the choice between alternative scheme options. Given the number of schemes that have been subject to these processes since the establishment of the Targeted Programme of Improvements, it is not practicable to list all of the occasions on which the views of the regional assemblies have been sought or the dates of assembly meetings at which scheme proposals and alternative scheme options have been considered.

Port Security

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport who is responsible for vetting the histories of applicants to become *(a)* port facility security officers and *(b)* airport security officers; and what the vetting process is. [169960]

Mr. Jamieson: Both port facility security officers and airport security officers are required to undergo appropriate vetting procedures. This is carried out by the vetting section of my Department's Transport Security Directorate (TRANSEC) in conjunction with other Government Agencies.

No Government clearance will be issued until we are satisfied the person in question does not pose a security threat. The vetting process includes stringent reference checks over a number of years, and a verification process to ensure no inexplicable gaps.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how much time it takes to train *(a)* port facility security officers and *(b)* airport security officers. [169961];

(2) whether the level of training given to port facility security officers will have to be reviewed for the UK to be compliant with the International Ship and Port Facility Code to be implemented by the UK on 1 July. [170066]

Mr. Jamieson: My Department's Transport Security Directorate (TRANSEC) is responsible for developing the required training standards and course criteria for Port and Airport Security Officers.

In order to comply with the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS) Code, all Port Facility Security Officers (PFSOs) must have completed a TRANSEC approved PFSO course.

Under the UK National Aviation Security Programme all staff carrying out listed security activities at UK airports have to receive mandatory training modules applicable to their duties.

TRANSEC carries out regular audits of training providers to ensure high standards and compliance with legal requirements.

Ship Searches

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what percentage of cargo ships over 500 tonnes that docked in Britain in 2003 were boarded and searched by border security personnel. [170065]

Mr. Jamieson: Ships calling at UK ports may be boarded for a variety of reasons and such operations are conducted by different Government bodies and agencies; including the Police, Immigration, Customs and Excise, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), and my own Department's Transport Security Directorate (TRANSEC) inspectors. This information is not collated centrally.

Trinity House Lighthouse Service

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will place in the Library a copy of the report of the Business Process Review of Trinity House Lighthouse Service. [167359]

Mr. Jamieson: It is not within the remit of this Department to place a copy of the Report of the Review in the Library of the House, however, it has now been issued to staff and the Trade Unions who have accepted the Report's findings.

Under the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act 1995, the Secretary of State is required to sanction expenditure by the General Lighthouse Authorities and any proposal to establish new aids to navigation. He has no powers of direction over GLA internal operational matters. The Business Process Review was an internal exercise commissioned by Trinity House Lighthouse Service (THLS) to examine their business processes and update these to take account of best practice and future needs of the lighthouse service.

In terms of granting access to official information, THLS as a non-departmental public body falls under the jurisdiction of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration. It therefore has its own commitment under the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information to extend access to official information and to respond to reasonable requests for information except where disclosure would not be in the public interest in accordance with statutory requirements and the exemptions set out in Part II of the Code. There is no commitment to provide access to documents as distinct

from information. Nor does the Code require Government Departments to acquire information that they do not possess.

Vehicle Activated Signs

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many vehicle activated signs are in operation in England. [171895]

Mr. Jamieson: This information is not held centrally. Local highway authorities are solely responsible for the installation of any traffic signs and all traffic calming measures including vehicle activated signs. The Highways Agency uses vehicle activated signs in special situations where standard signing has failed to resolve a speed related accident problem.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will estimate the *(a)* installation cost and *(b)* annual maintenance and running costs of vehicle activated signs. [171896]

Mr. Jamieson: This information is not held centrally. Local highway authorities are solely responsible for the purchase, installation and maintenance of any traffic calming measure, including vehicle activated signs. Variable Message Signs on motorways have an annual maintenance and running cost of £5,550 per sign per year.

Vehicle and Operator Services Agency

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the Traffic Area Network's financial position was at the point of merger with the former Vehicle Inspectorate; and whether balances were transferred to the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency. [173888]

Mr. Jamieson: The financial position of the Traffic Area Network at the point of merger was contained within the Trading Fund Order which brought the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency into being—the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency Trading Order 2003 (SI 2003 No. 942). The balances transferred into the newly-formed VOSA, based on estimated valuations at that time, were as follows:

	£ million
Net Assets	58.2
Net Liabilities	42.6

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent on the SchlumbergerSema contract in the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency, broken down by main expenditure category. [173892]

Mr. Jamieson: The SchlumbergerSema IT Business has been purchased by Atos Origin. The original contract came into effect on 1 January 2003. The expenditure for the financial year 2002–03 was £3.4 million and the estimated expenditure for the financial year 2003–04 is £14.2 million.

The detailed analysis of this cost is commercial in confidence.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what impact on *(a)* services and *(b)* procedures of the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency the award of the contract to SchlumbergerSema has had. [173893]

Mr. Jamieson: The strategic partnership contract between Atos Origin (formerly SchlumbergerSema) and VOSA commenced in January 2003.

The 10-year relationship involves design, build and implementation of a series of integrated business solutions that will have a significant impact on VOSA's business and the quality of services it provides to its customers.

Early stages include enhancements to project and programme management and significant enhancement to the quality of the IT platform. This will allow development of better, more timely data for VOSA examiners and enable the introduction of new EU initiatives such as Digital Tachographs. This will in turn improve the targeting of likely offenders allowing law-abiding Operators to go about their business with less interference.

Future plans include developments of a commercial customer portal bringing together current DVO e-services for commercial customer along with a range of new 'e' enabled services, including e-test bookings and e-payments.

CABINET OFFICE

Contingency Planning

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office whether he has created a working group to consider how to issue advice to individual households within the UK. [170054]

Mr. Alexander: A number of working groups have been established to develop the regulations and guidance which will accompany the Civil Contingencies Bill. These working groups are convened by the Cabinet Office, and include members from across the civil protection community. One of these working groups is considering those parts of the legislation covering awareness, warning and informing the public. Full details of these working groups were outlined in the Civil Contingencies Bill update letter to key stakeholders on 2 April 2004, a copy of which has been placed in the Library. A copy of the letter is also available at www.ukresilience.info

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what plans he has to issue advice to households in the UK detailing how to plan for and cope with a terrorist attack. [170127]

Mr. Alexander: As part of a deliberate strategy by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary, an increasing amount of information and advice has been and will continue to be made available to the public about what to do in an emergency, including a terrorist attack.

Public safety is our first priority in all decisions about public information or warnings. If a warning is necessary to protect public safety in the face of a specific

and credible threat, we will issue one without hesitation, as well as giving out any further information that will help the public respond effectively.

The Government and the emergency services will provide immediate information and advice in the event of a discernible threat or a specific incident.

There is a wide range of advice and information on the terrorism section of the Home Office website at www.homeoffice.gov.uk/terrorism, at www.ukresilience.gov.uk and on the MI5 website at www.mi5.gov.uk

Government continue to review the best way to keep the public informed and consider alternatives as part of our wider package of information to the public accordingly.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Immigration Appeals

Mr. Malins: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many caseworkers in the London office of the Legal Services Commission will deal with applications by publicly-funded providers of immigration services for extensions to the number of hours permitted for advice and appeal preparation; and what their *(a)* legal qualifications and *(b)* experience of immigration work are. [172150]

Mr. Lammy: There are 22 caseworkers in the London Office of the Legal Services Commission dealing with these applications. Seven of the caseworkers have been working on Legal Help, Controlled Legal Representation and certificated immigration and asylum work for over nine months, and three for over three years.

The London team has six solicitors, each of whom has a minimum of three years' immigration experience and acts as a coach and mentor for the more junior members of staff. The team can draw on support from a further three immigration solicitors, all with a minimum of three years' experience of immigration in private practice, and a team of eight consultants, all of whom are currently working in private practice.

The head of the London team has 19 years' experience in civil litigation and 15 years' experience in relation to immigration and asylum work specifically.

Public Defenders

Mr. Drew: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on the implementation of the Public Defender System. [172992]

Mr. Lammy: In order to assess better the performance of the Public Defender Service (PDS) the Legal Services Commission (LSC), with the agreement of Ministers, increased the number of PDS offices from six to eight in 2003. Ministers will make a decision on the future of the PDS in the light of the research at the end of 2005. There are no current plans to open further offices but the Government and the LSC have always said that the PDS provides a flexible option to deliver criminal defence services where existing provision is low, or of poor quality.

Criminal Defence Service

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what action is being taken by the Legal Services Commission to ensure that the Criminal Defence Service works effectively with other parts of the criminal justice system in order to meet the needs of the community as a whole. [172320]

Mr. Lammy: The Legal Services Commission is heavily engaged with other agencies to improve the performance of the Criminal Justice System as a whole. The Commission is represented on key standing co-ordination and management groups, such as the National Criminal Justice Board and the Criminal Justice Council. It is playing an integral part in key reform initiatives, such as the Effective Trial Management Programme. In addition, it has a wide range of direct contacts with other agencies aimed at improving particular aspects of the system.

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the Legal Services Commission is doing to improve the quality of defence services in terms of delays caused in the administration of justice. [172321]

Mr. Lammy: The Legal Services Commission is working with other agencies within the Effective Trial Management Programme to reduce delays in court proceedings and in the number of ineffective trials.

Criminal Justice System

David Taylor: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what discussions his Department has had with the *(a)* Home Office and *(b)* Department for Transport on reform of the criminal justice system. [172787]

Mr. Leslie: My Department and the Home Office are in continuous dialogue on reform of the criminal justice system. We also hold discussions with the Department of Transport when necessary.

Personal Injury Litigation

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many personal injury cases were commenced *(a)* in the High Court and *(b)* in the county court in each of the last 10 years; and in relation to *(b)* how many were (i) in the fast track and (ii) in the multi-track since their introduction; and if he will make a statement on trends in the volume of personal injury litigation. [173564]

Mr. Lammy: Figures on personal injury claims commenced in the High Court are set out in the table. Reliable figures on the number of claims to the county court and on how many were dealt with in the fast track and the multi-track are not available, and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

	Claims issued
1994	1,474
1995	1,224
1996	1,543
1997	1,464
1998	1,754
1999	1,187
2000	1,024
2001	1,019
2002	827
2003	570

Solicitors

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans he has to introduce regulations in Northern Ireland to make provision for solicitors to offer their services on a no-win-no-fee basis. [173423]

Mr. Leslie: The Access to Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 provides for the introduction of conditional fee agreements, commonly called no-win-no-fee agreements, and litigation funding agreements. The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission is currently considering the full implementation of the Access to Justice (Northern Ireland) Order, including the introduction of conditional fee agreements and litigation funding agreements. Decisions on this issue will be taken in the context of the Commission's recommendations on implementation of the Order.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Planning

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what restrictions are placed on local councillors in respect of *(a)* receiving representations from residents in respect of planning applications when they are (i) a member of the planning committee and (ii) any other councillor and *(b)* the ability of these councillors then to speak in debate on such representations. [173082]

Keith Hill: There are no restrictions in land use planning legislation on councillors or members of planning committees receiving representations from residents on planning applications. However, where any councillor has a personal 'and' prejudicial interest in any issue to be discussed by a local authority (whether or not in a planning committee), he or she should consider whether the provisions in the relevant authority's Code of Conduct affect their ability to speak in debate on such representations and require them to withdraw from that committee. In making their decision, they may wish to take the advice of their authorities' monitoring officers or the Standards Board for England. In the case of planning committees, they may also wish to consider the Local Government Association's Guidance Note to local planning authorities on preparing Codes of Conduct for councillors and officers specifically involved in planning matters, "Probity in Planning (Update): the role of councillors and officers". This Guidance Note recognises the importance of expressing local concerns in the planning system, while not calling into question the impartiality and integrity of councillors, and ensuring that planning applications are seen to be processed and determined in an open and fair manner.

Brighton and Hove Council

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what meetings have taken place, and on what date, between representatives of Brighton and Hove council and *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in the last two years. [173143]

Keith Hill: My right hon. Friend the Member for Greenwich and Woolwich (Mr. Raynsford) met representatives of Brighton and Hove council on 14 January 2003 and 16 February 2004.

Cllr Ken Bodfish is a member of the Central Local Partnership on the Future of Europe which is chaired by my hon. Friend the Member for Corby (Phil Hope). The Partnership has met four times in the last two years. My hon. Friend the Member for Corby also went to a New Statesman Round Table event on eGovernment attended by Cllr Bodfish on 11 May 2004.

The information requested about officials' meetings is not held centrally and could only provided only at disproportionate cost. However Government Office South East officials regularly meet with local authorities to discuss a range of issues for which the Government Office has responsibility.

Departmental Procurement

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of the *(a)* crockery, *(b)* cutlery and *(c)* glassware procured by his Department over the last five years is of British manufacture. [170795]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was established in May 2002, since this time we have procured replacement crockery through the Office of Government Commerce's pre-tendered, EU compliant contracts.

European Charter on Regional Self-Government

Adam Price: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what amendments the Government has tabled since 1998 to the Draft European Charter on Regional Self-Government. [172286]

Mr. Raynsford: In 1997 the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe recommended that member states of the Council of Europe adopt a European Charter on Regional Self Government and proposed a draft text for states to consider. Within the Council of Europe, member states' governments are continuing to consider the appropriateness of a charter or other legal instrument on regional self government. Within these discussions the United Kingdom, along with a number of other states, continues to oppose the adoption of a Charter, believing that, given the diversity of States' regional arrangements, a binding charter would be inappropriate.

Housing

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* affordable housing units and *(b)* housing units have been built in (i) England and (ii) each English region in each year since 1980. [172878]

Keith Hill: The national and regional figures that are available are published in Housing Statistics 2003 (Tables 2.2 and 2.5c). These tables each include a breakdown for those new dwellings built by local authorities and registered social landlords for social renting. A copy of this publication is available in the Library of the House.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many affordable homes were empty for *(a)* less than 12 months and *(b)* more than 12 months in (i) England and (ii) each English region in each year since 1980. [172880]

Keith Hill: No data is available for empty affordable homes. However, a table with data on empty local authority dwellings from 1983 and empty registered social landlord (RSL) dwellings from 1990 has been made available in the Library of the House.

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the local authorities in Essex which *(a)* retain control of housing stocks and *(b)* have made representations to him about large scale voluntary transfer of their housing stocks. [173085]

Keith Hill: In Essex those local authorities which retain direct control of their housing stock are: Basildon, Braintree, Brentwood, Castle Point, Epping Forest, Harlow, Rochford, Tenering, Thurrock and Uttlesford.

Both Maldon and Chelmsford have transferred their stock to registered social landlords under the Large Scale Voluntary Transfer programme (LSVT). To date no other authorities in Essex have formally applied for LSVT.

Colchester has established an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) for its stock. The housing stock in Colchester is still owned by the local authority but is managed by the ALMO.

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will take steps to discourage migration within the UK from areas of sufficient housing supply to those where it is in deficit. [173112]

Keith Hill: It is not the policy of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to discourage, or prevent, movement within the UK. To do so would be to undermine the flexibility of our labour market and, with it, economic growth. Statistical returns do not suggest that large scale migration is taking place between English regions.

Constraining growth in the more successful regions would not necessarily benefit the less successful ones, but the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is committed to improving the performance of all the regions and to reducing the disparities in growth between them through targets in our Regional Economic Performance Public Service Agreement.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is also working to regenerate those areas worst hit by population loss through our market renewal pathfinders. The programme aims to tackle the low demand and abandonment in these areas and create a balanced and sustainable housing market for the future.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will publish the provisional findings of 2002–03 data from the English House Condition Survey; how many *(a)* council and *(b)* registered social landlord properties that were classified in the survey as non-decent; and what the total cost of the repair backlog on these properties is. [173413]

Keith Hill: There are no provisional figures for 2002 from the continuous English House Condition Survey (EHCS).

The continuous survey was designed to provide estimates combining data from two years which could then be rolled forward annually.

The first results from the continuous EHCS, updating the published 2001 baseline and based on the 2002–03 and 2003–04 financial years, will be available before the end of 2004.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will announce a target for the provision of additional social housing to address long-term need. [173414]

Keith Hill: The Government have accepted that there is a case for increased investment in social housing and will begin to address this in the 2004 Spending Review. There are currently no plans to announce a long-term target for the overall provision of additional social housing.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the Government expect to meet its target of 100,000 affordable homes by 2004; and what the state of progress was on 1 April. [173415]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is on course to achieve our target to provide 100,000 new or improved homes for low cost renting or owning in the three years to 1 April 2004. Provisional figures indicate that 103,000 homes have been provided.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) whether the Government are on track to achieve their target of elimination of non-decent stock by 2010; and what proportion of stock remained non-decent on 1 April; [173416]

(2) whether the Government achieved their target of cutting the number of non-decent local authority homes by a third by April; and how many local authority homes were classed non-decent on 1 April; [173417]

(3) whether the Government achieved their target of cutting the number of non-decent housing association homes by a third by April; and how many housing association homes were classed as non-decent on 1 April. [173418]

Keith Hill: The target of eliminating non-decent social sector stock in 2010 is challenging but the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is making good progress, reducing the number of non-decents by 1 million since

1997. The increase in resources to £3.6 billion per year by 2005–06 together with the package announced on 5 May put us on track.

The milestone of one third reduction applies to the whole social sector not the sectors individually. Our estimates of the position at 1 April 2004, based on local authority and housing association outturn up to March 2003 and their plans to March 2004 shows a 26 per cent. reduction across both sectors. We expect to meet the one third reduction during 2004. From the same data source we estimate the proportion of non-decent homes remaining at 1 April 2004 is 28 per cent.

For the local authority sector the estimated reduction by 1 April 2004 is 32 per cent. with 810,000 non-decents remaining. For housing association it is 6 per cent. with 360,000 non-decents remaining. These figures take into account the impact of the transfer of stock from local authorities to housing associations.

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how the change in the level of council funding for housing has affected the residents of Blackpool, South since 1997. [173072]

Keith Hill: Since 1997 allocations of capital funding to local authorities for housing purposes have risen consistently by about 15 per cent. per annum on average. This includes the Major Repairs Allowance introduced in 2001–02 specifically for the improvement of local authority stock, alongside the Decent Homes standard which sets out minimum standards to be met by 2010. Blackpool's allocations in the period 1997 to 2003–04 have risen by 109 per cent. In addition to this welcome increase there is support through the Community Housing Task Force and Government Office for the North West to help the local authority and its tenants to choose the best strategy for long-term improvement.

Housing Renewal Programme

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what funds and on what basis are paid to Pathfinder housing renewal programmes; how this changes the finance available for *(a)* registered social landlords and *(b)* finance councils; and what the effects are of such changes in each region. [173559]

Keith Hill: A Market Renewal Fund has been created which will provide an additional £500 million across the nine pathfinder areas over the three year period 2003–04 to 2005–06.

Funding will be performance related throughout and agreed in negotiation with each pathfinder on the basis of their strategic schemes. The schemes are subject to Independent Scrutiny by the Audit Commission.

Funding will be used for the additional housing action needed to address the most acute areas of low demand. Projects will include demolitions, new building and refurbishment and will be chosen or commissioned by the pathfinder on the basis that they support the strategic objectives for their area. This may include projects delivered by RSLs, LAs and other delivery partners.

The Market Renewal Fund is in addition to other finance available to registered social landlords and local authorities from existing funding streams.

The effect of this funding is to support the additional costs of tackling the most acute areas of low demand. These areas could not be tackled at the scale and pace necessary within the constraints of existing funding streams.

Local Authority Statutory Officers

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) whether a local authority has the power to suspend one of the authority's statutory officers before the appointment of a designated independent person under The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001, if the authority has received an independent report from an external consultant of the serious effect of bullying and harassment by the statutory officer on the physical and mental well-being of other officers of the authority; [173348]

(2) whether a local authority has the power to suspend one of the authority's statutory officers before the appointment of a designated independent person under The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001, if the authority has received more than one allegation of bullying and harassment by the statutory officer; and if he will make a statement. [173349]

Mr. Raynsford: Arrangements for councils to handle allegations of misconduct by their head of paid service, monitoring officer or chief finance officer are set out in the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001. The Regulations provide that the authority may suspend the officer for up to two months in order to allow investigation of the allegation. This period may begin before the appointment under the Regulations of an independent person to investigate the allegation and who, once appointed, may extend the period of suspension. Apart from this, no disciplinary action may be taken by an authority in respect of the officer concerned other than in accordance with a recommendation of a report made by the independent person. It is for the authority to decide whether it appears to them that an allegation requires investigation and to ensure that the decisions it makes are within the powers available to it.

Productivity

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what action he is taking to *(a)* increase the productivity and *(b)* cut the costs of his Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies. [171883]

Yvette Cooper: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, the hon. Member for Bolton, West (Ruth Kelly) on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 148–49W.

Regional Assemblies

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will publish the texts of his speeches, and those of his colleagues, made as part of the regional hearings on elected regional assemblies. [169260]

Mr. Raynsford: Formal speeches used at the regional hearings can be found on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website: www.odpm.gov.uk.

However, at some hearings Ministers did not use a scripted speech; therefore speeches are not available in all cases.

Regional Government

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the location was of the regional hearings on elected regional assemblies held in Halifax and Sheffield; and how many *(a)* members of the public and *(b)* invitees attended. [172757]

Mr. Raynsford: The Sheffield hearing was held in the Pennine Theatre at Sheffield Hallam University. It is estimated that there were 135 members of the public who attended, including 67 invitees.

The Halifax hearing was held at the Viaduct theatre at Dean Clough. It is estimated that there were 210 members of the public who attended, including 84 invitees.

Social Housing

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his estimate is of the average monthly rent and charges falling on the average property in *(a)* housing associations and *(b)* council housing in Yorkshire and Humberside. [173560]

Keith Hill: The latest available rental figures for social housing within Yorkshire and The Humber are as follows:-

£ per month

	Housing Associations	*Council Housing*
Reference period	end-March 2003	2003–04
Average Net Rent (excluding service charges)	210.90	184.47
Average Gross Rent (including service charges)	227.72	n/a

Note:
Reliable information on average service charges for council housing is not available at the present time.

Sources:
(a) Housing Corporation, Regulatory and Statistical Return, 2003.
(b) Local authorities, second advance subsidy claim forms.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Adviser Discretion Fund

Sir Archy Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to *(a)* increase the Adviser Discretion Fund levels for lone parents and *(b)* allow for multiple Adviser Discretion Fund awards to those with multiple barriers to finding employment. [170041]

Jane Kennedy: We have no plans to increase the Adviser Discretion Fund levels for lone parents as we believe that the current levels are sufficient. The maximum amount from the ADF that a lone parent can access in a 12 month period is £300. However, the average amount awarded by the fund is £91. These levels are kept under review.

In exceptional circumstances where lone parents need assistance totalling more than £300, the award of a higher amount from the ADF may be authorised.

There is no limit to the number of elements in an award, provided these total less than £300.

Personal Advisers can already make more than one award to a lone parent from the Adviser Discretion Fund. Each time a lone parent requests assistance from the ADF their Personal Adviser will check that they are eligible for help and that using the fund is removing a barrier to employment.

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average payment from the Adviser's Discretionary Fund was in each of the last five years; how many people have been given payments from the fund in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [171589]

Jane Kennedy: The information is in the table.

Adviser Discretion Fund[1]

	Number of awards	*Average value of award*
July 2001 to March 2002	104,388	60
April 2002 to March 2003	138,370	76
April 2003 to March 2004[2]	345,189	97

[1] The Adviser Discretion Fund was introduced in July 2001.
[2] Latest available figures.

Source:
Department for Work and Pensions Provision and Adviser Division.

Benefit Claimants (Over-50s)

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what proportion of incapacity benefit claimants between the age of 50 and state pension age are in each decile of overall income distribution; and if he will make a statement. [172536]

Maria Eagle: The information is in the tables. It is presented both before housing costs (BHC) and after housing costs (AHC) have been taken into account.

The number of incapacity benefit claimants between the age of 50 and state pension age in each decile of the equivalised income distribution

Decile	*BHC*	*AHC*
1	130,000	120,000
2	130,000	150,000
3	130,000	110,000
4	110,000	130,000
5	120,000	100,000
6	100,000	90,000
7	70,000	70,000
8	40,000	50,000
9 and 10	50,000	60,000

The proportion of incapacity benefit claimants between the age of 50 and state pension age in each decile of the equivalised income distribution

Percentage

Decile	*BHC*	*AHC*
1	15	13
2	15	17
3	15	12
4	13	15
5	13	12
6	11	10
7	8	8
8	4	6
9 and 10	6	6

Notes:
1. Figures are for the financial year 2002–03, the latest date for which data are available.
2. Estimates are for Great Britain.
3. Estimates relate to the status of individuals at the time they were interviewed for the FRS.
4. The estimates are based on sample counts, which have been adjusted for non-response using multipurpose grossing factors that control for tenure, council tax band and a number of other variables. Estimates are subject to sampling error, and to remaining variability in non-response which is not corrected by the grossing regime.
5. The income measure used is weekly net (disposable) equivalised household income
(that is to say income that is adjusted to reflect the composition of the household).
6. The Households Below Average Income series presents analysis of income of two bases: Before Housing Costs (BHC) and After Housing Costs (AHC). This is principally to take into account variations in housing costs that themselves do not correspond to comparable variations in the quality of housing.
7. Proportions are presented to the nearest per cent, and numbers to the nearest 10,000. Rounding numbers in this way means that compared to other rounding conventions, the distribution is smoother at this level of rounding for the small subset of the population.
8. Deciles nine and 10 have been combined as individually, these deciles contained too few households to provide robust estimates.
Source:
Family Resources Survey (FRS).

Benefit Fraud

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will place in the Library a breakdown by local authority of the *(a)* financial rewards received under the Security Against Fraud and Error Scheme, *(b)* benefit expenditure and *(c)* financial rewards received under the Security Against Fraud and Error Scheme as a percentage benefit expenditure for the most recent year available. [172980]

Mr. Pond *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* The information has been placed in the Library.

Child Support

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether those in receipt of incapacity benefit are registered by ethnic background; and if he will make a statement. [172856]

Maria Eagle: Those in receipt of incapacity benefit are not registered by ethnic background. However, Jobcentre Plus has started to collect information, on a voluntary basis, in areas where customers are required to have a work-focused interview in connection with claims for working-age benefits. This will be extended to other areas as Jobcentre Plus offices, and the necessary information management systems, are rolled out nationally over the next few years.

Departmental Expenditure (Entertainment)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the amount spent by his Department on official entertainment in each year from 1996–97 to 2004–05. [169001]

Jane Kennedy: All expenditure on official hospitality is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on the principles set out in Government Accounting. It is typically incurred by the various DWP Businesses to mark the launch of significant initiatives—for example: the introduction of New Deal 50+; the national introduction of New Deal for Partners; launching call centres for jobseekers; implementation of Employment Zones; and launch of ONE pilots in conjunction with local authorities and the private and voluntary sectors.

The information is not available in the format requested. It is not possible to provide expenditure information back to 1996–97 for the Department for Work and Pensions, which has existed only since 1 April 2001. The figures for 2001–02 onwards, therefore, are the only expenditure figures relating to the Department for Work and Pensions. Figures for 2004–05 will not be available until the spring of 2005.

In order to provide figures which are reasonably comparable, information for the earlier years has been provided by combining expenditure on "official hospitality" by the former Department of Social Security (DSS), and on "official entertainment" by the former Employment Service (ES) which, together with relatively small numbers of staff from the Employment Policy Divisions of the former Department for Education and Employment (DFEE), combined to form the new Department for Work and Pensions. However, the expenditure incurred by the Employment Policy Divisions of DFEE is not separately identifiable.

Estimated expenditure[1] on official hospitality on this basis is as follows:

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest £000.

	£	
1996–97	147,000	DSS + ES
1997–98	46,000	DSS + ES
1998–99	86,000	DSS + ES
1999–2000	327,000	DSS + ES
2000–01	127,000	DSS + ES
2001–02	155,000	DWP
2002–03	250,000	DWP
2003–04[1]	400,000	DWP

[1] Expenditure figures for 2003–04 are provisional and may be subject to adjustment.

Disability Benefits

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of women were claiming disability benefits in each year since 1997, broken down by *(a)* benefit and *(b)* age; how long the average claim was in each case; and if he will make a statement. [171588]

Maria Eagle: The information, which is available for all years other than for industrial injuries disablement benefit in 2003, has been placed in the Library.

Health and Safety Inspectors

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many Health and Safety Executive health and safety inspectors were working in the field at *(a)* 1 June 2000 and *(b)* 1 March 2004. [167498]

Jane Kennedy: We do not have precise figures for the dates requested due to the way HSE collects data on this subject.

Inspectors in the field	*Total*
1 April 2000	1,306
1 April 2004	1,501

Notes:
1. The figures for 1 April 2000 are actual. Those for 1 April 2004 are estimated or subject to confirmation.
2. As far as possible inspector staff undertaking more generalised HQ functions have been eliminated from these figures.
3. All figures are for full-time equivalent staff.
4. Inspectors at senior grades, or working in other parts of HSE are not included.

Mr. Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many inspectors were employed by the Health and Safety Executive *(a)* in the Factory Inspectorate, *(b)* in the Nuclear Inspectorate and *(c)* on other duties in each of the last 10 years, broken down by grade; and if he will make a statement. [170669]

Jane Kennedy: The following table contains the information on the number of inspectors employed by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) on 1 April for the years 1995 to 2004.

The information requested for the period between 1995–96 and 2003–04 is not maintained within HSE in the format requested by this question, i.e. by grade. This information is only held from the period 2000–01 and is not linked to discipline, and can only be extracted at a disproportionate cost to HSE. The Health and Safety Executive's policy is to retain personnel data for six years in line with the requirements of Treasury. However, we have been able to extract the figures from our Annual Reports and from available archived data within the Directorates in question.

The available information is in the table.

Number of inspectors employed by HSE

As at 1 April	*FOD*	*NSD*	*Other*	*Total*
1995	—	—	—	[1]1,478
1996	—	—	—	[1]1,466
1997	[2]780	153	509	1,442
1998	783	147	507	1,437
1999	853	144	500	1,497
2000	[3]898	156	453	1,507
2001	[4]954	152	428	1,534
2002	[5]955	156	514	1,625
2003	962	167	522	1,651
2004	[6]901	167	537	1,605

[1] Analysis by Directorate for the years 1995–96 and 1996–97 is not readily available within the timescale for this parliamentary question.
[2] During 1996–97 there were transfers of posts between Safety Policy Directorate, Chemical and Hazardous Installations Divisions, Field Operations Directorate, Nuclear Safety Directorate and Offshore Safety Division following the Review of Senior Management.
[3] Reorganisation of HSE 1 April 2000
[4] Field Operations Directorate and HM Railway Inspectorate brigaded May 2000.
[5] Field Operations Directorate and HM Railway Inspectorate de-brigaded April 2002.
[6] During 2003–04 there were transfers of posts between Field Operations Directorate, Hazardous Installations Division and Technology Division due to re-organisation.

Incapacity Benefit

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans there are to review the success of work focused interviews for partners of incapacity benefit recipients in finding them employment. [170195]

Jane Kennedy: Work Focused Interviews for Partners (WFIP) were implemented on 12 April 2004. They will be fully evaluated along with the enhanced New Deal for Partners (NDP). WFIP and NDP are separate but complementary policy initiatives aimed at broadly the same client group (partners of those receiving jobseeker's allowance, incapacity benefit, income support, severe disablement allowance or carer's allowance). The evaluation will look at the effect of WFIP and NDP on individuals and households.

It will provide us with information to improve the delivery of these initiatives, where necessary, and also to inform future policy decisions—including partners of incapacity benefit recipients.

The first phase of the evaluation findings is expected to be published in summer 2005.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have found *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time work as a result of attendance at work focused interviews for partners of incapacity benefit recipients since the scheme was introduced. [170196]

Jane Kennedy: Work Focused Interviews for Partners (WFIP) were introduced in Jobcentre Plus areas on 12 April 2004. It is too soon to provide information about job placings.

The Work Focused Interview provides an important platform for us to talk to partners about opportunities to work and about sources of help and advice. We expect most job outcomes will be achieved as a result of participation in New Deal for Partners, following the Work Focused Interview.

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many incapacity benefits claimants there are in *(a)* each region and *(b)* each of the 30 areas with the poorest labour market position; and if he will make a statement. [172533]

Maria Eagle: The information has been placed in the Library.

New Deal (Lone Parents)

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents in South Ribble have gained work through the New Deal programme. [172140]

Jane Kennedy: 320 lone parents in South Ribble have gained work through the New Deal for Lone Parents since the start of the programme in October 1998. Figures for lone parents who have gained work through other New Deal Programmes are not available.

Pensioner Benefits

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the total Government expenditure on pensioner benefits *(a)* in pounds, *(b)* in real terms and *(c)* as a percentage of gross domestic product was in each year since 1992; [172490]

(2) what the predicted total Government expenditure on pensioner benefits *(a)* in pounds, *(b)* in real terms and *(c)* as a percentage of gross domestic product is over the next three years. [172491]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is in the table.

Expenditure on pensioner benefits 1992–93 to 2006–07

		Cash terms (£ million)	Real terms (£ million, 2004–05 prices)	Percentage of Gross Domestic Product
1992–93	Outturn	35,387	47,810	5.8
1993–94	Outturn	37,811	49,731	5.8
1994–95	Outturn	38,723	50,189	5.6
1995–96	Outturn	39,919	50,276	5.5
1996–97	Outturn	41,829	50,923	5.4
1997–98	Outturn	43,426	51,560	5.3
1998–99	Outturn	45,165	52,122	5.2
1999–2000	Outturn	47,934	54,120	5.2
2000–01	Outturn	50,580	56,377	5.2
2001–02	Outturn	54,493	59,192	5.4
2002–03	Outturn	57,404	60,367	5.4
2003–04	Estimated outturn	60,347	61,739	5.4
2004–05	Forecast	64,728	64,728	5.5
2005–06	Forecast	67,735	66,070	5.4
2006–07	Forecast	71,352	67,735	5.5

Notes:

1. Figures include basic State Pension (contributory and non-contributory), severe disablement allowance, widow's-bereavement benefits and invalidity-incapacity benefit paid to pensioners, additional State Pension (State Second Pension-SERPS), Graduated retirement benefit, Christmas bonus, winter fuel payment, 80 plus payment, one-off 70 plus payment (for 2004–05), free TV licences for over 75s, pensions compensation board, income support for people over 60-minimum income guarantee-pension credit, housing benefit and council tax benefit.
2. Forecast figures for 2003–04 to 2005–06 are consistent with Budget 2004 medium-term forecasts; forecast figures for 2006–07 are consistent with Budget 2004 long-term projections.

Source:

(Benefit expenditure Tables consistent with the Budget 2004, and long term projections for 2006–07.

Pensioner Incomes

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the *(a)* median and *(b)* average income of pensioners was in each year since 1997. [171580]

Malcolm Wicks: The following table gives the median and mean average weekly incomes of pensioners between 1996–97 and 2002–03. Information is given in 2002–03 prices and rounded to the nearest pound.

The mean and median income of pensioners since 1996–97

	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	Growth 1996–97 to 2002–03 (Percentage)
Pensioner units								
Median net BHC income	156	159	161	169	173	183	189	21
Mean net BHC income	199	202	208	216	225	233	237	19
Pensioner couples								
Median net BHC income	226	227	231	237	248	253	262	16
Mean net BHC income	287	289	294	301	316	329	327	14
Single pensioners								
Median net BHC income	125	126	128	135	140	148	153	23
Mean net BHC income	145	147	153	160	167	170	177	22

Pensioner units, pensioner couples and single pensioners have seen significant real terms growth in both mean and median net weekly incomes (before housing costs) between 1996–97 and 2002–03. Annual estimates are based on survey data and are subject to sampling error—strong conclusions should not therefore be drawn about year-on-year changes in pensioner incomes.

Pensions (Compensation)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the estimated cost is of compensating, on the same formula that the Pension Protection Fund will use, all those pensioners who will have lost all or part of their occupational pension prior to the commencement of the Pension Protection Fund. [173486]

Malcolm Wicks: We do not have the information available to answer this question. This would require detailed information on individual schemes including breakdowns of membership distribution and annual accrual rates.

We are currently working with trustees to gather data about defined benefit schemes that are winding up under funded. Using this data we will establish firm estimates of the extent of the problem.

Poverty

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the level of persistent poverty. [169971]

Mr. Pond: Indicators of persistent low income for children, working age adults and older people are included in the fifth annual Opportunity for all report (Cm 5956), which is available in the Library.

We are determined to tackle poverty, from childhood through to old age. The nature of measuring persistent low income means that it will take longer for the impact of tax credits, increases in employment and pension credit for example to be reflected in the data. The progress we have made, for instance, in reducing the number of children with low incomes in a given year have yet to show up in these figures. However, there are now over half a million fewer children in low-income households (below 60 per cent. median income) than in 1997.

Trade Mark Schemes

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of whether trade mark schemes can help to reduce the cost of employers' liability compulsory insurance. [172468]

Jane Kennedy: The Department is aware of a range of trade mark schemes that are designed to help to reduce the cost of employers' liability compulsory insurance. These include the Association of British Insurers' (ABI's) initiative 'Making the Market Work'. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him on 23 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 740W.

The National Federation of Roofing Contractors (NFRC) has set up with the Electrical Contractors' Insurance Company their own insurance via a captive cell fund exclusively for NFRC members to offer insurance roughly 10 per cent. below current market rates and with longer notice periods and more certainty of gaining cover.

As with the evaluation of the 'Making the Market Work' initiative by the ABI, if the NFRC undertakes an evaluation of the scheme the Government will take a close interest in the outcome.

Weekly Benefit Savings Scheme

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will place in the Library a breakdown by local authority of *(a)* savings achieved under the Weekly Benefit Savings scheme, *(b)* benefit expenditure and *(c)* weekly benefit savings as a percentage of benefit expenditure for (i) 2000–01 and (ii) 2001–02. [172979]

Mr. Pond *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* The information has been placed in the Library.

For local authorities, the Weekly Benefit Saving (WBS) scheme was replaced by the Security Against Fraud and Error (SAFE) scheme on 1 April 2002. The WBS scheme was specifically for fraud and was a measurement of prevention whereas the SAFE scheme is for fraud and claimant error and rewards detection.

TREASURY

Ammonium Nitrate

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tonnes of ammonium nitrate fertiliser were discovered by Customs and Excise being imported into the United Kingdom in each year since 2000. [172748]

John Healey: The number of tonnes of ammonium nitrate fertilizer imported into the UK between 2000 and 2002 is shown in the following table. There were no import control restrictions in place between 2000 and 2003. However, regulations were introduced on 1 May 2003 requiring ammonium nitrate fertilizer with high nitrogen content to have satisfied a Detonation Resistance Test (DRT). Import figures for 2003 are not yet available.

Imports into the UK of ammonium nitrate fertilizer

	Tonnes
2000	1,242,471.9
2001	1,143,713.6
2002	813,923.3

Source:
Overseas Trade Statistics, HM Customs and Excise

Carers

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate his Department has made of the number of carers in the United Kingdom, broken down by the number of hours of care provided per week. [172752]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Gordon Marsden, dated 17 May 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning the estimate of the number of carers in the United Kingdom, broken down by the number of hours of care provided per week. (172752)

Figures from the "Census 2001 Key Statistics for local authorities in England and Wales" indicate that there were 5,884,450 people in the United Kingdom providing unpaid care.

The information below has been extracted from the CD supplement to the "Census 2001 Key Statistics for local authorities in England and Wales", which is available in the House of Commons Library. The table shows the distribution of these carers according to the number of hours of care provided per week.

Number of people providing unpaid care in the United Kingdom

United Kingdom		*Provision of unpaid care*		*All Carers*
Area	*All Carers*	*Provides care: 1 to 19 hours*	*Provides care: 20 to 49 hours*	*Provides care: 50 or more hours*
United Kingdom	5,884,450	3,971,829	661,952	1,250,669

Source :
Table KS08 Census 2001 Key Statistics for local authorities in England and Wales

Child Tax Credits

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in Liverpool, West Derby have received child tax credits. [173671]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to my answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Burton (Mrs. Dean) on 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 98W.

Council Tax

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average council tax was as a percentage of gross income for *(a)* pensioner and *(b)* non-pensioner households in all quintile groups in each financial year since 1997–98. [172877]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Edward Davey, dated 17 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent question asking what the average council tax was as a percentage of gross income for *(a)* pensioner and *(b)* non-pensioner households in all quintile groups in each financial year since 1997–98.1 am replying in his absence. (172877)

Estimates have been produced from the Office for National Statistics' analysis "The effects of taxes and benefits on household income" published on the National Statistics website on 6 May 2004 at http://www.statistics.gov.uk/taxesbenefits. The analysis includes measures of income inequality for the United Kingdom as a whole based on data from the Expenditure and Food Survey.

The current analysis presents data for the category 'Council tax and Northern Ireland rates', as opposed to the category 'Local taxes' used in previous analyses. This is because, from this year, charges made by water authorities for water, environmental and sewerage services have been excluded. This treatment conforms to the National Accounts classification and definition of taxes where water rates and related charges are considered a charge for services rather than a tax. They have therefore been excluded from the calculation of disposable income. This reply is based on the new methodology.

Pensioner households have been defined as those where the Household Reference Person is retired or unoccupied and aged 65 or more and male, or 60 years of age or more and female, and economically inactive. All other households are defined as non-pensioner households. The Household Reference Person is identified during the interview and is defined as the member of the household who:

a. owns the household accommodation, or

b. is legally responsible for the rent of the accommodation, or

c. has the household accommodation as an emolument or perquisite, or

d. has the household accommodation by virtue of some relationship to the owner who is not a member of the household.

If there are joint householders, the Household Reference Person will be the householder with the highest income, If the income is the same, then the eldest householder is taken.

The following table shows the estimated gross and net council tax for pensioner households, non-pensioner households and all households in Great Britain for each income quintile where households are ranked by equivalised disposable income. The net council tax figures are gross council tax less benefits and discounts. The table also shows the equivalised disposable income quintile point boundaries, which have been calculated separately for each group of households.

Council tax as a percentage of gross income for pensioner[1] and non-pensioner households

Great Britain[2]	Households	Quintile groups of all households ranked by equivalised disposable income: Bottom	2nd	3rd	4th	Top	All households
Quintile points[3] (equivalised disposable income, per year)							
1997–98	Pensioner	7,701	9,503	11,707	15,393		
	Non-pensioner	9,177	13,623	18,449	25,508		
	All households	8,564	11,936	16,442	23,588		
1998–99	Pensioner	8,031	9,765	12,298	16,742		
	Non-pensioner	9,509	14,328	19,400	26,804		
	All households	8,832	12,582	17,281	24,384		
1999–00	Pensioner	8,475	10,316	13,008	17,213		
	Non-pensioner	9,909	15,215	20,401	28,596		
	All households	9,193	13,221	18,324	26,295		
2000–01	Pensioner	8,492	10,621	13,259	17,951		
	Non-pensioner	10,807	15,832	21,349	29,712		
	All households	9,821	13,893	19,134	27,296		
2001–02	Pensioner	9,459	11,742	14,244	18,703		
	Non-pensioner	11,647	17,133	22,784	31,396		
	All households	10,647	14,943	20,231	28,840		
2002–03	Pensioner	10,096	12,524	15,285	20,203		
	Non-pensioner	11,910	17,591	23,526	32,707		
	All households	11,242	15,541	20,977	29,745		
Gross council tax as a percentage of gross income							
1997–98	Pensioner	8.5	6.4	5.2	3.9	2.8	4.4
	Non-pensioner	5.4	3.1	2.3	1.8	1.3	2.1
	All households	6.3	4.1	2.8	2.1	1.4	2.4
1998–99	Pensioner	8.8	6.5	5.4	4.2	2.8	4.5
	Non-pensioner	5.5	3.2	2.4	1.9	1.3	2.1
	All households	6.5	4.3	2.9	2.2	1.4	2.4
1999–00	Pensioner	9.9	7.2	5.6	4.3	2.9	4.8
	Non-pensioner	6.2	3.4	2.5	2.0	1.3	2.2
	All households	7.3	4.5	3.0	2.3	1.4	2.6
2000–01	Pensioner	10.4	7.1	5.6	4.6	2.9	4.9
	Non-pensioner	5.6	3.2	2.5	2.0	1.4	2.2
	All households	7.0	4.3	2.9	2.2	1.5	2.6
2001–02	Pensioner	9.8	7.0	5.9	4.6	3.0	5.0
	Non-pensioner	6.0	3.3	2.5	2.0	1.3	2.2
	All households	7.2	4.4	3.1	2.3	1.4	2.6
2002–03	Pensioner	9.8	7.0	5.7	4.6	3.1	5.0
	Non-pensioner	6.0	3.5	2.7	2.1	1.4	2.4
	All households	7.1	4.6	3.2	2.4	1.6	2.7
Net council tax[4] as a percentage of gross income							
1997–98	Pensioner	5.2	4.0	3.8	3.0	2.6	3.3
	Non-pensioner	2.6	2.5	2.2	1.8	1.3	1.8
	All households	3.3	2.9	2.5	2.0	1.4	2.0
1998–99	Pensioner	6.3	4.4	3.8	3.3	2.5	3.5
	Non-pensioner	3.0	2.6	2.3	1.9	1.3	1.9
	All households	3.9	3.1	2.6	2.1	1.4	2.1
1999–00	Pensioner	6.9	4.8	4.1	3.4	2.7	3.7
	Non-pensioner	3.2	2.9	2.4	2.0	1.3	2.0
	All households	4.2	3.4	2.7	2.2	1.4	2.2
2000–01	Pensioner	7.1	4.9	4.3	3.7	2.7	3.9
	Non-pensioner	3.1	2.8	2.4	2.0	1.4	2.0
	All households	4.2	3.3	2.7	2.2	1.5	2.2
2001–02	Pensioner	7.0	5.0	4.2	3.8	2.8	4.0
	Non-pensioner	3.7	2.9	2.4	2.0	1.3	2.0
	All households	4.7	3.3	2.8	2.3	1.4	2.2
2002–03	Pensioner	7.1	4.6	3.9	3.6	3.0	3.9
	Non-pensioner	3.7	3.0	2.6	2.1	1.4	2.1
	All households	4.6	3.4	2.9	2.4	1.6	2.4

[1] Household reference person is economically inactive and over minimum state pension age.

[2] Council tax is not paid in Northern Ireland.

[3] Equivalised disposable income at the boundary point between two quintile groups.

[4] Net council taxes after deducting benefits and discounts.

Source:

Office for National Statistics, based on the analysis "The effects of taxes and benefits on household income", published on the National Statistics website.

Departmental Annual Report

Norman Lamb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the production of his Department's latest annual report cost; how many copies were printed; how many copies of it were sold at its cover price; to whom copies of the report have been provided free of charge; and how many copies were provided free of charge. [171143]

Ruth Kelly: Publication of HM Treasury's Departmental Report (Cm 6222) was handled by the Stationery Office Ltd. (TSO). Printing and other production costs were paid for by TSO as the publisher and the document was designed in-house by members of the Treasury's publishing unit. TSO have printed 740 copies of the report with 200 copies purchased by the Treasury for internal purposes, 203 copies supplied to Parliament and, to date, an additional 131 copies have been sold by TSO.

Financial Services Authority

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many regulatory impact assessments have been *(a)* conducted and *(b)* published by the Financial Services Authority in each of the last five years; and what percentage of new regulatory measures this represents. [172903]

Ruth Kelly: The matters raised in this question are the responsibility of the Financial Services Authority (FSA), whose day-to-day operations are independent from government control and influence. The following figures have been provided by the FSA. They are for the number of cost-benefit analyses (CBAs) conducted and published by the FSA over the past five years. The proportion of new measures these represent is given in brackets. In 2003, 42 (93 per cent.); 2002, 41 (93 per cent.); 2001, 27 (71 per cent.); 2000, 29 (71); and in 1999, 8 (42 per cent.).

Fuel Tax

Mr. Burns: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will abandon the implementation of fuel tax increases in September; and if he will make a statement. [173060]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Budget Statement of 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 329.

Gershon Review

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions he has had with Sir Peter Gershon regarding the total savings in public sector employment within the Department for Trade and Industry as a result of his efficiency review. [173375]

Mr. Boateng: Treasury Ministers meet frequently with Department for Trade and Industry Ministers who are working closely with Sir Peter Gershon to identify efficiencies within the Department. These will release further resources for frontline public services.

Gold Reserves

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the value of the gold held in UK reserves was at the afternoon fix on 11 May. [173350]

Ruth Kelly: At the afternoon fix on 11 May 2004 the value of the gold held in the UK reserves was approximately $3,775 million.

Housing

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the average build cost of a new home in the *(a)* social housing sector and *(b)* private housing sector in the last year for which figures are available. [172875]

Keith Hill: I have been asked to reply.

The average cost of a new build dwelling for social rent in England, in 2003/04, is £116,000. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not keep comparable information for the private sector.

Income Tax

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many senior citizens in Liverpool, West Derby constituency qualified for the 10 pence rate of income tax in each year since its introduction. [173674]

Dawn Primarolo: A reliable answer cannot be given. This is because the sample size of pensioners living in the Liverpool West Derby constituency is relatively small compared to other constituencies in the Survey of Personal Incomes.

Inheritance Tax

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much he estimates was lost to the public purse as a result of the exemption from inheritance tax of the estate of the late Queen Mother. [171538]

Mr. Gordon Brown *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* Further to my answer of 13 May 2002, *Official Report*, column 437W, the amounts involved in the estate of any taxpayer are subject to the Inland Revenue's normal rules of confidentiality.

International Aid

Lynne Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the effects of providing resources for the world's poorest countries *(a)* through the International Finance Facility and *(b)* through direct aid. [173059]

John Healey: Since this Government came to power, UK official development assistance has increased by 97 per cent. in real terms, and our aid ratio as a proportion of national income is set to reach 0.4 per cent. in 2005–06. But it has been estimated that the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals will require an extra US$50 billion more in aid every year until 2015. That is why the UK has proposed the IFF to deliver the funds that are needed now, when they will have the most impact on reducing poverty. The IFF would raise the significant additional resources necessary to make progress on meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

The IFF would not be a new disbursement agency but a facility designed to deliver additional funds for development that would then be delivered through existing mechanisms, both through bilateral assistance and multilateral organisations.

Job Vacancies

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many job vacancies there were in Liverpool, West Derby constituency in *(a)* 1989, *(b)* 1997 and *(c)* 2003. [173673]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Wareing dated 17 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been alked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about job vacancies in Liverpool, West Derby. (173673)

According to Jobcentre Plus administrative records the numbers of unfilled vacancies in the Liverpool travel-to-work area on average for the year 1989 was 2,967 and in 1997 it was 4,330. These figures represent only a proportion of all the vacancies available, as not all vacancies are notified to Jobcentres.

Figures are not available for Liverpool, West Derby alone because the vacancies are allocated to local Jobcentres, not according to constituency boundaries, and because of the practice of notifying some vacancies centrally with one Jobcentre taking vacancies for others in the same district.

Jobcentre vacancy statistics were withdrawn from National Statistics in September 2001 as a result of distortions to the data, which occurred following the introduction of new administrative procedures by Jobcentre Plus. Comparable figures for vacancies in 2003 are therefore unavailable.

Results from the ONS Vacancy Survey were released as National Statistics from July 2003, but are not available for local areas.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many new jobs have been created in Bootle since 1997; [173146]

(2) what the *(a)* change and *(b)* percentage change was in full-time permanent jobs in Bootle from 1997 to 31 December 2003. [173147]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Benton dated 17 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about full-time jobs and jobs created in Bootle. I am replying in his absence. (173146, 173147)

While statistics of jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes in numbers of jobs from year to year.

The attached table shows the information requested, relating to all jobs and full-time jobs in Bootle for 1997 and 2002, which is the latest year for which figures are available.

Information is not available about whether the jobs were permanent.

Number of full-time employees and total number of employees[1] in Bootle Parliamentary Constituency: 1997 and 2002

Percentage

	Full-Time	*Total*
Number of employees		
1997	22,200	29,666
2002	28,196	39,017
Change from 1997 to 2002		
Absolute	5,996	9,351
Percentage	27.0	31.5

[1] Employee jobs only, not self-employed jobs

Source:
1997; Annual Employment Survey, rescaled 2002; Annual Business Inquiry (ABI)

Public Sector Employment

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the impact of job growth in the private sector over the past seven years upon employment figures in the public service. [171242]

Mr. Boateng: As a result of the macroeconomic stability and labour market reforms delivered by this Government, employment in the public and private sectors has grown by 1.9 million since 1997, of which over 70 per cent. was in the private sector, and the total number of people in work in the UK is now the highest since records began. While jobs have risen and fallen in a number of areas, jobs in construction are up by 335,000; jobs in finance and business services up by 856,000; transport and communications up by 170,000; and distribution and hotels up by 424,000.

Teenage Pregnancies

Mr. Burns: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many girls aged 18 years and under, broken down by age, have *(a)* become pregnant and *(b)* had an abortion in each of the last three years. [172866]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Simon Burns, dated 17 May 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many girls aged 18 years and under, broken down by age, have *(a)* become pregnant, and *(b)* had an abortion, in each of the last 3 years. (172866)

Numbers of conceptions are estimated from registrations of births and notifications of abortions. Miscarriages before the 24th week of gestation are not included.

Numbers of conceptions, and those leading to an abortion, at ages 18 years and under are given in the attached table, broken down by age.

Number of conceptions to women aged 18 years and under, by outcome and age of woman (single years) at conception—England and Wales, 1999 to 2002

	Total conceptions	*Number terminated by abortion*
Under 14		
1999[1]	406	232
2000[1]	397	236
2001[2]	398	219
2002[3]	359	—

Number of conceptions to women aged 18 years and under, by outcome and age of woman (single years) at conception—England and Wales, 1999 to 2002

	Total conceptions	Number terminated by abortion
Age 14		
1999[1]	1,866	1,081
2000[1]	1,890	1,100
2001[2]	1,883	1,154
2002[3]	1,652	—
Age 15		
1999[1]	5,673	2,870
2000[1]	5,827	3,048
2001[2]	5,610	3,025
2002[3]	5,111	—
Age 16		
1999[1]	13,334	5,845
2000[1]	13,153	5,854
2001[2]	13,103	5,993
2002[3]	12,376	—
Age 17		
1999[1]	20,749	8,063
2000[1]	20,081	8,020
2001[2]	19,972	8,323
2002[3]	19,117	—
Age 18		
1999[1]	26,627	9,637
2000[1]	26,180	9,651
2001[2]	25,731	9,666
2002[3]	24,239	—

[1] *Source:*
Table 12.2, Birth Statistics, Series FM1, No. 30, Office for National Statistics.

[2] Provisional figures.

[3] Provisional estimates are based on incomplete abortion data, therefore the number terminated by abortion is not provided.

Tonnage Tax

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the progress of the review of the tonnage tax. [173675]

Dawn Primarolo: The tonnage tax review is currently considering a number of representations from professional advisors, industry bodies, companies and Unions. These cover diverse areas of the regime, including the range of vessels covered by the regime, the training link, and numerous technical points. The impact of the regime on British shipping is being assessed. Certainly there has been a very positive effect on the registration of ships under the UK flag.

In particular, the review is also addressing the impact of revisions to the EU State Aid guidelines for maritime transport that were issued in January 2004. Discussions, primarily on the changes that will be necessary as a result of the changes to the guidelines continue between officials at the Inland Revenue and Department for Transport with industry bodies.

I expect that a number of proposals for revision of the scheme will be put forward in due course, but at this stage it is not possible to give a firm date by which the review will be completed.

PRIME MINISTER

Government Buildings

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 28 April, *Official Report*, column 1087W, on Government buildings (party use), for what reasons he has not identified the amount of income received. [173484]

The Prime Minister: As I made clear in my earlier answer, the costs of such events are met directly by the Labour Party.

Honours List

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Prime Minister if he will place in the Library a consolidated list of recipients of honours since 1997. [173174]

The Prime Minister: Details of all honours are published in the *London Gazette*, copies of which are available in the Library of the House.

Iraq

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Prime Minister if he will call upon the Coalition Provisional Authority urgently to review the present policy on Iraqi prisons and prisoners. [172315]

The Prime Minister: The Iraqi Corrections Service and the Coalition Provisional Authority are currently working on a comprehensive set of policies and procedures for the entire Iraqi Corrections Service. These will be approved by the CPA Senior Adviser for Prisons and the Director of the Iraqi Corrections Service headed by an Iraqi national. The office of the UK Special Representative for Iraq stays in close touch with CPA prisons advisers, and policy and progress is kept under regular review.

The CPA has a senior adviser for prisons and there are currently 60 CPA trainers and advisers working with the Iraqis. There are currently three senior UK prison advisers working in the UK area of operations.

The UK will be sending additional UK prison officers to assist the Iraqis in administering prisons and to monitor progress in the current UK area of operations following the transition of sovereignty on 30 June.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Prime Minister if he will place in the Library details of the policy agreed by the Coalition Provisional Authority on the *(a)* administration of Iraqi prisons and *(b)* the oversight and maintenance of prisoners and their welfare. [172316]

The Prime Minister: In June 2003, Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) Orders 7 and 10 and "Implementing Memorandum number 2 (Management of Detention and Prison Facilities)" set in place detailed guidance for the administration and maintenance of Iraqi prisons and prisoners which are already publicly available on the CPA website. Copies have been placed in the Library of the House.

All Iraqi corrections officers and Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) advisers are required to follow a code of conduct that requires the humane treatment of prisoners. Coalition soldiers involved in

looking after the administration and maintenance of Iraqi prisons and prisoners are governed by the Geneva Convention.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Prime Minister who, within the Coalition Provisional Authority, has responsibility for prisons policy in Iraq, in relation to *(a)* administration of personnel and *(b)* the welfare of prisoners. [172317]

The Prime Minister: The Senior Adviser for Prisons and his staff have primary responsibility within the Coalition Provisional Authority for prison policies in Iraq. They work closely with the Iraqi Ministry of Justice and the Iraqi Corrections Service on administration of personnel and welfare of prisoners. The Ministry of Human Rights already have access to criminal detainees whenever they wish.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Prime Minister (1) when he received a copy of the International Committee of the Red Cross report of February 2004 into allegations of abuse by Coalition forces of Iraqi detainees; [173200]

(2) on what date he was first informed of the existence of the Report by the International Committee of the Red Cross on the treatment by the Coalition forces of prisoners of war and other persons protected by the Geneva Conventions in Iraq during arrest, internment and interrogation, dated February 2004; and on what date he read it; [173341]

(3) when the International Committee of the Red Cross Report on the treatment by coalition forces of prisoners of war in Iraq was received in Number 10 Downing Street; and what action was taken. [173425]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave to the right hon. Member for Folkestone and Hythe (Mr. Howard) at Prime Ministers Questions on 12 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 347 to 349.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Prime Minister whether he has undertaken a *(a)* comparison and *(b)* reconciliation with the results of the Iraq Survey Team of information supplied by Iraq in response to UNSC Resolution 1441. [173837]

The Prime Minister: The work of the Iraq Survey Group is continuing and a final report has yet to be produced.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Prime Minister on what date the International Committee of the Red Cross report on the treatment by Coalition forces of prisoners of war and other persons protected by the Geneva conventions during arrest, internment and interrogation in Iraq was received by his Office. [173902]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave to the right hon. Member for Folkestone and Hythe (Mr. Howard) at Prime Ministers Questions on 12 May, *Official Report*, columns 347 to 349.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Prime Minister whether he has read the Amnesty International report, Iraq—Killings of Civilians in Basra and al-Amaia, published on 11 May; and what response he has made to it. [174332]

The Prime Minister: As I said at Prime Minister's Questions on 12 May, Official Report, column 348, Amnesty International has passed eight cases to us, seven of which are already known to us. The one that is not known to us is being investigated.

Nuclear Non-proliferation

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister what matters regarding nuclear non-proliferation were discussed with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao on 10 May. [173859]

The Prime Minister: I discussed a wide range of issues with the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao during his recent visit to the UK, including nuclear non-proliferation. I refer my hon. Friend to the joint statement released by the United Kingdom and China on 10 May 2004, which is available on the No. 10 website.

Special Advisers

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Prime Minister how many complaints have been made by civil servants to the Civil Service Commissioners regarding the conduct of *(a)* special advisers and *(b)* unpaid advisers in each year since 1996–97. [174190]

The Prime Minister: Information relating to complaints made by civil servants to the Civil Service Commissioners is set out in the Civil Service Commissioners' annual report.

Copies of the reports since 1996–97 are available in the Library of the House and can also be found on the Civil Service Commissioners website. The report for 2003–04 will be published shortly.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Asylum and Immigration

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which air and sea ports in the United Kingdom have previously had routine staffing by the Immigration Service but currently do not; when such staffing ceased; what checks are made on persons arriving at such ports; and how many illegal immigrants were refused entry at such ports in each year from 1996 to 2003. [169249]

Mr. Browne: Port staffing levels in the United Kingdom are determined by a number of Factors:

Current and projected numbers of passenger arrivals;

For seaports the number of freight vehicles that will require searching;

An assessment of the casework generated from the arriving passenger traffic;

Projected numbers of asylum seekers that will require interview on arrival.

It is only at ports where passenger services have ceased that immigration coverage has been withdrawn. At smaller ports resources are deployed to meet arriving traffic and in addition powers under the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999 are used flexibly to clear passengers where appropriate. Passengers subject to control will be examined to ascertain whether they qualify for entry to the UK. This examination will include checks against the Immigration Service database.

A breakdown of persons refused entry and removed by port is not currently published and would be available only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the discretionary amnesty to asylum seekers with children will be extended to asylum seekers from EU accession countries who are in the UK on 1 May. [168695]

Mr. Browne: Applicants from EU accession countries who come within the terms of this exercise will continue to qualify for indefinite leave to remain after 1 May. We have no plans to extend the exercise to cover all asylum seekers from these countries.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what new measures his Department plans to improve the initial asylum decision-making process. [170523]

Mr. Browne: We have put a strategy in place to deliver further improvements in the quality of initial asylum decisions. It is comprehensive and builds on mechanisms already in place as well as including additional measures recently identified to help drive up decision quality.

In broad terms our aim is to:

invest in recruitment, learning and development so that caseworkers are even better equipped to take high quality decisions;

enhance our quality assurance systems by better targeting of checks on problem areas;

improve country information, instructions and processes so that caseworkers always have the right tools to support high quality decision-making;

increase the contribution by external organisations to the delivery and accreditation of our quality mechanisms.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what new measures his Department plans to improve the asylum removal system, to ensure that a failed claim leads to a swift removal. [170524]

Mr. Browne: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by my right hon. Friend, the Member for Stretford and Urmston (Beverley Hughes) on 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 338W.

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 6 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 242W, on overseas posts (performance targets), for what reason there are no targets set by his Department for the processing of entry clearance appeals once they are received by the Appeals Processing Centre; how many appeals papers are deemed to require further action from the overseas post; and what plans the Government have for setting such targets. [157004]

Mr. Browne: The Immigration Appellate Authority's capacity to receive no more than 7,100 appeals per month, when taken together with the priority given to asylum, has influenced the speed at which entry clearance and other non-asylum appeals can be processed through the Appeals Processing Centre (APC). As a result, specific timescale targets have not yet been set for APC's entry clearance team. Targets will be set during the next financial year. Up to 20 per cent. of entry clearance appeals received by APC per month require further contact with posts overseas.

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* immigrants and *(b)* asylum seekers were living in each county in England and Wales in each year since 1997. [168014]

Mr. Browne: The information is not available in the form requested. Data on how many immigrants live in each county in England and Wales is not available and could only be produced at a disproportionate cost.

Information on the number of asylum seekers supported by The National Asylum Support Services is published quarterly. The next publication covering the first quarter of 2004 (January to March) will be available on 25 May on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html. Data for earlier quarters is published in earlier editions of the publication and is also available on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many refused asylum seekers have been repatriated. [166983]

Mr. Browne: We have taken repatriation here to mean removal. The number of persons who had claimed asylum at some stage and have been removed from the United Kingdom in each year between 1993 and 2003 is given in the table.

Information on the number of asylum applicants removed from the United Kingdom is published quarterly on the Home Office website: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Removals and voluntary[1] departures of asylum applicants 1993 to 2003[2]

	Principal applicants	*Dependants*	*Total*
1993	1,820	n/a	n/a
1994	2,220	n/a	n/a
1995	3,170	n/a	n/a
1996	4,820	n/a	n/a
1997	7,165	n/a	n/a
1998	6,990	n/a	n/a
1999	7,665	n/a	n/a
2000	8,980	n/a	n/a
2001	9,285	1,495	10,780
2002[3]	10,740	3,170	13,910
2003[3]	2003	4,550	17,040

n/a = not available.

[1] Includes persons departing "voluntarily" after enforcement action had been initiated against them, persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programmes run by the International Organisation for Migration, and removals on safe third country grounds.

[2] Data on dependants of asylum seekers removed have only been collected since April 2001.

[3] Provisional figures.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what steps were taken to inform hon. Members of changes to support provision for asylum seekers from EU accession countries after 1 May; [167326]

(2) what provision will be available to support asylum seekers from EU accession countries whose applications are outstanding after 1 May. [167328]

Mr. Browne: From 1 May 2004 nationals of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Cyprus and Malta, will no longer be eligible for National Asylum Support Service (NASS) support or for support from a local authority under the Asylum Support (Interim Provisions) Regulations 1999. This is because of the effect of paragraph 5 schedule 3 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002. Schedule 3 also prohibits local authorities from providing support to European Economic Area (EEA) nationals under other provisions including section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000, section 21 of the National Assistance Act 1948 and section 17 of the Children Act 1989. However, schedule 3 does not prevent the exercise of a power or the performance of a duty if, and to the extent that, its exercise or performance is necessary for the purpose of avoiding a breach of a person's convention rights or a person's rights under the Community Treaties.

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children from these accession countries will continue to be eligible for support under the existing mechanisms and provisions until their 18th birthday.

Asylum seekers from the accession states will, from 1 May 2004, have the same rights to travel as other nationals of EU and EEA member states. Asylum seekers from the eight eastern European accession countries, namely the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia ("the A8 countries"), will generally be able to take up employment in the UK, providing they register under the Worker Registration Scheme, which will become operational from 1 May 2004. Once they have secured employment and registered under the scheme asylum seekers from the A8 countries may become eligible for family tax credit and child benefit. If they are on low incomes they can also access housing benefit and council tax benefit.

Part time workers may also be eligible for income based Job Seekers Allowance or Income Support, provided they meet the usual conditions for those benefits.

Maltese and Cypriot nationals will have the same rights as existing EEA nationals. If they are seeking work they have the right to reside and look for work for six months. If they satisfy the Habitual Residence Test they will be eligible to apply for income related benefits and for social housing and homelessness assistance. Maltese and Cypriot nationals who are not economically active will only have a right to reside if they are self sufficient and are not placing an unreasonable burden on UK social assistance funds.

Our position is clear, as EU citizens these people are able to work and cannot be maintained at public expense. They gain from being a part of the EU but must become self supporting or return home.

NASS wrote to people in early April to explain their options and then visited many of them at home giving a further opportunity to explain why they would not be able to make alternative arrangements. If people cannot take up one of the options for good reason they need to contact us to explain why.

Since 5 April 180 people have in fact made representations to us, and around 10 per cent. of those have been granted transitional support. Each is dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

The Immigration and Nationality Directorate has also been working with local authorities, their associations and voluntary sector organisations to keep them informed of the position.

No specific steps have been taken to inform hon. Members of the provision available to these accession state nationals.

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers have been given leave to remain in the UK as a result of the exercise announced by him in October 2003; how many dependants have also benefited from this exercise; how many failed asylum seekers who have exhausted their appeal rights have benefited; and how many cases have been refused. [168914]

Mr. Browne: An announcement detailing the results of the exercise including the available statistical information will be made when the exercise is completed. We would not wish to release figures until all those potentially qualifying applicants have had an opportunity to respond to our queries.

We have made good progress in considering the cases originally identified. The bulk of cases has been processed with the majority, where the applicants have responded to our queries, having been decided. We are reliant on the applicants we contact replying to our queries promptly. Those not doing so are being reminded.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 2 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 898W, on asylum and immigration, if he will break down the numbers of asylum seekers refused support under section 55 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 by country of origin. [169411]

Mr. Browne: The information requested is unavailable and could be produced only at a disproportionate cost.

Information on the number of asylum seekers supported by the National Asylum Support Services is published quarterly. The next publication covering the first quarter of 2004 (January to March) will be available on 25 May on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what factors influenced his decision to exclude Northern Ireland as a destination for asylum seeker dispersal; and what plans he has to review his policy. [170112]

Mr. Browne: The National Asylum Support Service (NASS) undertook research to identify the most suitable areas for the dispersal of asylum seekers. The aim was to establish cluster areas where there was already an ethnic minority community or where it was believed the

area was capable of sustaining a new community. Other factors taken into consideration included the availability of support services able to assist newly arrived asylum seekers. It was always acknowledged that not all areas would be suitable for dispersal and, with regard to Northern Ireland, the research identified both a low population of ethnic minorities and a lack of available support services. While the area was not designated as a dispersal area it was agreed that those making their application for asylum in Northern Ireland could remain there if they requested it. Others making their application elsewhere can opt to live with family and friends in Northern Ireland and receive subsistence only support from NASS.

Most of the contracts NASS has with private and public sector providers are due to expire next year and NASS is now looking at where and how to procure accommodation.

Mr. Dawson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the compatibility of Clause 8 of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants) Bill with the *(a)* Human Rights Act 1998, *(b)* Children Act 1989 and *(c)* Children Bill. [169394]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 29 April 2004]:* Clause 8 does not prevent the exercise of a power or the performance of a duty where this is necessary to avoid a breach of a person's Convention Rights.

The Government do not believe clause 8 is incompatible with the Children Act or the Children Bill. Provisions to safeguard and promote children's welfare must take account of the fact that failed asylum seeking families do not have the right to remain in the UK.

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department with reference to the announcement on 30 January of the new agreement on returning Indian immigration offenders, if he will set out the mechanism that will apply to such return; and how many Indian nationals have been returned under this agreement. [170037]

Mr. Browne: The agreement reached with the Indians—the first such agreement they have signed—will accelerate the redocumentation of Indian immigration offenders which the UK seeks to return to India. The Indians have agreed to a more streamlined system of referral and consideration which will be a significant improvement on previous arrangements whereby documents could take up to 18 months to obtain. They have also agreed improved arrangements to deal with immigration offenders who are clearly Indian citizens, but who refuse to co-operate with the documentation process and who refuse to sign a visa application form.

Following the signing of the agreement the Indian Government have had to put in place revised administrative arrangements. This has taken some time, but the new arrangements were in place with effect from 21 April. Consequently there has, so far, been no opportunity to deliver returns under the new arrangements. It is intended to begin referring cases under the new arrangements immediately.

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department with reference to the concession announced by the Home Secretary on 24 October 2003 to allow families who have been in the United Kingdom for three or more years to stay, how many families he expects to be affected; how many persons in total will be affected; how many of those families have been contacted by the Immigration and Nationality Department (IND) to date and given leave to remain; whether he expects IND will have contacted all the relevant families and completed the bulk of the cases by July; what the timescale is for contacting and processing remaining families; and when he expects to allow immigration practitioners to send in a list of cases they believe are covered by the family concession for confirmation that they will receive a questionnaire. [170089]

Mr. Browne: An announcement detailing the results of the exercise including the available statistical information will be made when the exercise is completed and all those potentially qualifying applicants have had an opportunity to respond to our queries.

Good progress has been made in considering the cases originally identified. The bulk of these cases have been processed with the majority, where the applicants have responded to our queries, having been decided. We rely on the applicants we contact replying to our queries promptly and those not doing so are being reminded. We expect the bulk of the cases eligible for ILR to have been processed by July when we will consider how best to sweep up those who believe they are eligible but have not yet been contacted.

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many weeks' training Immigration and Nationality Directorate caseworkers receive; how many other organisations are involved in such training; and what the starting salary of caseworkers is. [170111]

Mr. Browne: Training, consisting of classroom based and formal coaching, will normally last up to six weeks. The amount will depend on the type of casework; the specific roles of the caseworker; and the individual's previous experience.

After formal training and coaching, caseworkers will continue to receive support from their managers and from senior caseworkers.

The United Kingdom High Commission for Refugees and Social Services have been involved in training design and quality assurance. Casework training is being reviewed, including the use of other organisations in training delivery.

The national starting salary for caseworkers in the main caseworking grade (Executive Officer) is £16,606 (£17,294 plus £1,300 London Location Allowance in Croydon).

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) pursuant to his statement of 30 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1439, on immigration entry clearance standards, which Home Office official met the UK consul in Romania; what was discussed at the meeting; whether minutes were taken of the meeting; what actions were taken as a result of the meeting; and if he will make a statement; [166548]

(2) pursuant to the statement of the Minister for Immigration and Nationality of 30 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1476, if he will place in the Library a

copy of the report of the meeting between a senior Immigration and Nationality Directorate official and the British embassy in Bucharest. [166547]

Mr. Browne: A senior Home Office official in the Immigration and Nationality Directorate was in Bucharest on 1 and 2 March for talks with the Romanian Government on our on-going co-operation on illegal immigration.

As part of the visit he held briefing meetings in the embassy. The UK Consul in Romania was present at these.

The visit produced proposals on a number of aspects of immigration to the UK. These are being taken forward and, where relevant, have been fed into the Sutton enquiry. The report on the visit is internal advice to Ministers, which is not for publication.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which air and seaports do not have routine staffing by the Immigration Service. [169248]

Mr. Browne: All the major ports in the United Kingdom (including seaports, hover ports, airports and Waterloo) have a permanent Immigration Service presence. In 1992, following the withdrawal of routine Customs and Excise attendance from ports where they had traditionally operated an immigration control on behalf of the Immigration Service, then Ministers introduced a new policy for immigration coverage of small ports and airports. This policy was later developed with the introduction of new powers in the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 enabling a more flexible approach to the operation of the immigration control. Under the Act carriers are obliged to notify the UK Immigration Service in advance of all passengers subject to control. The passengers will then be cleared by the Immigration Service either by attending the port or remotely; the decision being based on all the available intelligence.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish *(a)* the most recent annual figures of the number of persons refused permission to travel to the United Kingdom by British immigration officers operating from French departure points, broken down by (i) month and (ii) departure points and *(b)* the most recent estimates of his Department of the annual number of persons prevented from travelling to the United Kingdom by foreign immigration officers at departure points at which British immigration officers are present in an advisory capacity. [169250]

Mr. Browne: A breakdown of persons refused and removed by port is not currently published and would be available only at disproportionate cost.

Locally collated management information indicates that during 2003 more than 9,000 passengers have been prevented from travelling from France to the UK as a result of a range of measures including: enhanced juxtaposed controls, deployment of new detection technology and close co-operation with our EU counterparts, carriers and port operators.

The Airline Liaison Officer (ALO) network as well as working closely with airlines to provide training and advice has meant that more than 6,000 people travelling to the UK have been denied boarding by airlines after reference to an ALO during 2003.

In addition airlines advise the Immigration Service that other passengers are also denied boarding at ALO locations as an indirect result of the training and guidance provided to carriers by ALOs.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what routine measures are practised by United Kingdom authorities to detect attempted illegal entrants to the United Kingdom other than those in force at embarkation and arrival points. [169251]

Mr. Browne: The Government have recognised for some time that preventing the arrival in the UK of those who would not qualify to enter or remain must be a key element of its immigration control strategy.

The increasing involvement of organised crime in illegal immigration led to the creation in 2000 of Reflex, the multi-agency forum which brings together key law enforcement players including the Immigration Service, as well as relevant Government Departments and the Security Services, under the chair of the National Crime Squad.

Reflex has successfully brought focus to the issue and has also provided funding and structures to tackle the problem both in the UK and overseas.

UK funding for two successful infrastructure-building projects in the Western Balkans was provided by Reflex, as was funding for other projects in Romania and Turkey aimed at upstream disruption of illegal migration.

As part of a longer-term strategy, the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) manages an expanding network of Immigration Liaison Officers (currently 12) in key overseas posts who work closely with local law enforcement agencies to combat illegal migratory flows.

We have also had in place for some time a network of Airline Liaison Officers (currently 25) working closely with airline staff at key locations worldwide, who offer advice to carriers on the admissibility of passengers seeking to travel to the UK.

We are working closely with UK Visas to put in place visa fraud officers at a number of our missions overseas to enhance further the quality of visa issues.

I should also point out that the introduction of juxtaposed immigration controls in France, and the deployment of New Detection Technology (x-ray machines and scanners) in France and Belgium have been very successful in identifying and stopping unqualified passengers from travelling on to the UK. Further development of this strategy is in hand.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to ensure that enforcement of immigration controls in *(a)* Cherbourg and *(b)* Dorset operates to the same standard seven days per week. [170600]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* The UK Immigration Service does not presently operate in Cherbourg. A pilot project was recently operated at Cherbourg whereby Immigration officers acted in an advisory capacity to the ferry operators to reduce the number of illegal entrants and inadmissible passengers at the point of departure. There are current proposals under way to deploy new detection technology to Cherbourg in partnership with the port authority.

In Dorset the UK Immigration Service operates full immigration border controls at Poole seven day a week. UK Immigration Officers attend the control and check all arriving passengers and will continue to do so.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many illegal immigrants were removed from lorries in Cherbourg bound for Poole in 2003. [170602]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* The Home Office does not collate statistics of how many illegal immigrants were removed from lorries in Cherbourg bound for Poole in 2003. The Immigration Service tracks incidents of illegal clandestine entry into the United Kingdom and reviews the pressures at ports of departure in co-operation with the French authorities. Assessments, through the Cross-Channel Commission, have resulted in proposals to deploy new technology in partnership with the port authority in accordance with the convention on new technology signed by the two governments on 24 November 2003.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what level of staffing of UK immigration officers in Cherbourg was provided in 2003. [170604]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* The exercise involved one Immigration Officer travelling daily to Cherbourg to provide advice and support to the carrier in respect of travel status of passengers prior to boarding in Cherbourg. The officer then returned with the inbound ferry to control passengers seeking leave to enter the United Kingdom during the crossing.

Afghan Refugees

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his policy is on the return of refugee women and children to Afghanistan from the UK. [170305]

Mr. Browne: The Government's preferred option for repatriating Afghan asylum applicants whose asylum claims have been rejected and appeal rights exhausted is assisted voluntary return, in line with the Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding on Voluntary Return between the UK, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Afghan Transitional Administration. When the Memorandum of Understanding was signed we agreed that we would not return family groups to Afghanistan before the summer of 2003. Although this general policy bar on enforcing the removal of families no longer applies, we are still not enforcing the departure of vulnerable groups, such as families with young children, or female heads of household.

Animal Experiments

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his Answer of 23 February 2004, *Official Report*, columns 228–29W, on Centre for the 3Rs, whether he has now received the final report of the Inter-Departmental Group for the 3Rs; and if he will make a statement on how he intends to proceed with the Select Committee's recommendation. [169587]

Caroline Flint: I have recently received the Inter-Departmental Group's final report on the recommendation of the House of Lords Select Committee on Animals in Scientific Procedures that a centre for research into the 3Rs—the replacement of animal use, reduction of the number of animals used and the refinement of the procedures involved to minimise suffering—should be set up and have discussed its findings with Ministerial colleagues. We expect to announce our conclusions in the next few weeks.

Asylum Detainees (Children)

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many children are being held in detention solely under Immigration Act powers; and how many of these have been held for more than 28 days, broken down by removal centre. [169243]

Mr. Browne: Management information indicates that on the 26 January 2004 35 children were detained solely under Immigration Act powers. Three quarters of those had been in detention for 14 days or less and the remainder had been detained for less than four months. These individuals were all detained as part of families whose detention as a group was considered necessary.

Information on the number of people detained solely under Immigration Act powers as at 27 March 2004 will be published on the Home Office website on 25 May: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many children have been held in detention solely under Immigration Act powers since his announcement that children will not be detained for more than 28 days without ministerial consent; and how many of these have been held for more than 28 days, broken down by removal centre. [169244]

Mr. Browne: Information on the total number of children detained under Immigration Act powers since the announcement in October 2003 that children will not be detained for more than 28 days without ministerial consent is not available.

Management information indicates that on the 26 January 2004 35 children were detained solely under Immigration Act powers. Three quarters of those had been in detention for 14 days or less and the remainder had been detained for less than four months. This includes children and infants who were detained as part of family group for very short periods pending removal.

Information on the number of people detained solely under Immigration Act powers as at 27 March 2004 will be published on the Home Office website on 25 May: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Cannabis

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to re-examine the law on the *(a)* sale and *(b)* cultivation of cannabis seeds. [170146]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* None. The seeds are not controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 as they do not contain tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the main psychoactive ingredient in cannabis.

The cultivation of cannabis seeds, other than for purposes licensed by the Home Office, will remain illegal.

Clandestine Entrants

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many clandestine entrants into the United Kingdom have been detected *(a)* on entry and *(b)* in the country in each month since December 2001. [171253]

Mr. Browne: Illegal entry action is initiated against those people who are detected having entered or attempting to enter the country clandestinely or by means of deception, either verbal or documentary.

The available figures include those people who were identified as having entered the country clandestinely, they are not separately identifiable as such information would only be available by examination of individual case-files at disproportionate cost. A monthly breakdown of this figure is not available.

48,050 people had illegal entry action initiated against them in 2002.

Information on the number of people against whom illegal entry action was initiated in 2003 will be published later this year in the Home Office Statistical Bulletin "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom 2002" which can be found on the Home Office website: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 18 March, with regard to Miss Z. Patel. [170700]

Mr. Blunkett: I replied to my right hon. Friend on 29 April 2004.

Crime Statistics

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the percentage change in *(a)* domestic burglary, *(b)* juvenile anti-social behaviour, *(c)* arrests for violent crime, *(d)* incidents of violent crime, *(e)* road traffic collision involving fatality or serious injury, *(f)* domestic burglary per 1,000 households, *(g)* robberies per 1,000 population and *(h)* vehicle crimes per 1,000 population was between 2001–02 and 2002–03 for (i) division of the North Wales police and (ii) each local authority in North Wales. [154295]

Ms Blears: The available statistics recorded by North Wales Police, are given as follows. Those figures derived from recorded crime statistics will have been affected by North Wales police adopting the principles of the National Crime Recording Standard in October 2001.

Percentage changes between 2001–02 and 2002–03:

Domestic burglary[1] increased by 34 per cent.

Juvenile anti-social behaviour[2] remained level. Two Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) were issued in both 2001–02 and 2002–03.

Arrests for violent crime[3] increased by 28 per cent.

Violent crime[1,4] increased by 53 per cent.

Details on road traffic collisions involving fatality or serious injury, are not collected by the Home Office.

Domestic burglaries per 1,000 households[1] increased by 31 per cent.

Robberies per 1,000 population[1] increased by 15 per cent.

Vehicle crimes per 1,000 population[1] increased by 5 per cent.

[1] The National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) had the effect of increasing the number of crimes recorded by the police. Therefore, following the introduction of the Standard, numbers of recorded crimes, and figures derived from them, are not directly comparable with previous years.

[2] Figure based on number of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, as reported to the Home Office, issued to juveniles (persons aged 10–17 years), within North Wales.

[3] Figure based on numbers of notifiable arrests made by North Wales Police.

[4] Violent crime comprises the offences of Violence against the person, Sexual offences and Robbery.

Crime statistics are recorded at Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) level. CDRPs were set up under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and are broadly local authority areas. They include representatives from police, health, probation and other local agencies and provide strategies for reducing crime in the area. The available figures are given in the table.

Percentage change between 2001–02 and 2002–03, by CDRPs in North Wales

CDRP	*Domestic burglary*	*Violent crime*
Conwy	-3	74
Denbighshire	45	78
Flintshire	37	29
Gwynedd	47	41
Isle of Anglesey	104	55
Wrexham	42	53

See footnote 1 above.

The number of ASBOs[1] which were issued to juveniles, by local authority area, for 2001–02 and 2002–03:

Local authority area	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Conwy	0	1
Wrexham	2	1

[1] ASBOs are issued by the courts but can be applied for, among other authorities, the police.

Figures on arrests are not collected by local authority area.

More generally, the British Crime Survey (BCS), which asks members of the public about their experiences of crime, gives a more complete estimate of crime in England and Wales since it covers both unreported and unrecorded crime. It also gives a more

reliable indication of trends in crime as BCS estimates are unaffected by changes in levels of reporting, or in police recording. Between 2001–02 and 2002–03 there was a decrease of 2 per cent. in crime as measured by the BCS.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what public funds were spent on tackling drugs misuse in Preston in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* 2003–04. [169696]

Caroline Flint: Breakdown of financial allocation to local constituencies is not available to the Home Office. Funding is allocated to Drug Action Team (DAT) areas, in this case Lancashire DAT.

In 1997–98 (pre-dating National Drugs Strategy) funding available to Lancashire DAT area totalled £670,000.

In 2003–04 the total drugs allocation for Lancashire was £6,015,000. In order to ensure consistency figures supplied are based on funding streams associated with the National Drug Strategy and are readily verifiable. These funding streams are specifically targeted at tackling the harm caused to individuals, families and communities by the misuse of drugs. Other mainstream funding is made available at a local level, this varies and both in amount and origin as a result it is not possible to provide robust financial information.

2003–04

	Amount (£)
Partnership Capacity	118,000
Treatment Pooled Budget	3,980,000
Through Care After Care Pump Priming	35,000
Building Safer Communities[1]	1,147,000
Young People	735,000
Total	6,015,000

[1] Contains non-drug elements.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what powers preventing racial harassment have been introduced since 1997; and how many times these powers have been used in Wigan. [169336]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 created new and separate offences where the offences of causing fear and violence or of causing harassment, alarm or distress under the Public Order Act 1986, or the offences of harassment or putting in fear of violence under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 were racially aggravated.

Figures for the number of prosecutions in Wigan for this type of offence are not centrally available. Over the period 1999–2000 to 2001–02 Greater Manchester police recorded a total of 2,075 harassment offences.

Prior to 1997 the Race Relations Act (RRA) 1976 already prohibited discrimination on racial grounds. The RRA did not specifically refer to harassment, but it was clear from case law that racial harassment was a type of detriment capable of amounting to the kind of less favourable treatment prohibited by the Act.

As part of its fulfilment of its obligations under the EC Race Directive the UK amended the Race Relations Act 1976 (by virtue of the Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003) so as to make it unlawful to harass a person, on grounds of race or ethnic or national origins, in the areas of activity covered by the 1976 Act.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what public funds were spent on tackling drug misuse in Wigan in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* 2003–04. [169338]

Caroline Flint: The period 1997–98 pre-dates National Drug Strategy, during this time the local council and primary care trust allocated funding for tackling drug misuse. Accounting procedures mean that the 1997 figures are no longer available and that 1998 figures are not accessible by the DAT.

In 2003–04 the total drugs allocation was £2,187,607. In order to ensure consistency figures supplied are based on funding streams associated with the National Drug Strategy and are readily verifiable. These funding streams are specifically targeted at tackling the harm caused to individuals, families and communities by the misuse of drugs. Other mainstream funding is made available at a local level, this varies and both in amount and origin as a result it is not possible to provide robust financial information.

2003–04

	£
Partnership Capacity	72,429
Treatment Pooled Budget	1,455,000
Through Care After Care Pump Priming	35,000
Building Safer Communities[1]	410,404
Young people	214,774
Total	2,187,607

[1] Contains non-drug elements.

Criminal Justice Act

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when part 10 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 will be brought into force. [169161]

Mr. Blunkett: We are working towards implementation of the retrial provisions contained in part 10 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 and will bring this part of the Act into force as soon as practicable.

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when section 114 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 will be brought into force. [169162]

Paul Goggins: No final decision has yet been made but the current aim is to bring the hearsay provisions in the Criminal Justice Act 2003 into force as soon as possible.

Custodial Sentences (Wolverhampton)

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of those convicted in 2003 by courts in Wolverhampton for offences of failing to have valid *(a)* vehicle excise discs, *(b)* vehicle insurance and *(c)* MOT certificates received custodial sentences. [168400]

Caroline Flint: None: these offences are not imprisonable.

Departmental Communications

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much his Department spent on *(a)* internal communications and *(b)* advertising internal initiatives in each of the last five years. [163577]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information is as follows:

(a) The Home Office is a large organisation with inter-related aims so it is important that the 73,000 staff throughout the department and its agencies understand how the work that they do fits together to deliver the departmental outcomes. The department achieves this through the production of a range of services and publications. Examples are Home Office Today—a daily on-line news service for staff, and Inside Track the corporate staff magazine. In addition each agency keeps its own staff informed of internal activities through agency publications. Together the Department and its agencies spent the following sums on internal communications staffing and products:

	£
2001–02	3,670,000
2002–03	4,080,000
2003–04	4,180,000

Note:
Figures for previous years can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

(b) The figures in *(a)* above include the cost of advertising internal initiatives to Home Office staff and cannot be separately identified.

Documentation (Arrivals)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to ensure that inadequately documented passengers arriving in the UK are intercepted. [170521]

Mr. Browne: Measures to intercept passengers with inadequate documents on their arrival in the UK include risk-assessing all incoming flights, conducting intelligence-led document checks, observing passengers as they disembark from aircraft and planned special exercises sometimes involving other agencies and at certain locations using CCTV.

At the main arrivals control, passengers are interviewed and their documents examined to detect impostors and to identify forged or counterfeit passports or passengers without the requisite entry clearance.

In addition we have strategies in place to prevent passengers with inadequate documents arriving in the UK. These include the use of pre-entry controls in France (Juxtaposed controls), new detection technology screening equipment to detect clandestine entrants and Airline Liaison Officers (ALOs) who offer advice to airlines on the validity of travel documents held by passengers.

The Government are currently legislating to make disposing of travel documents without reasonable excuse a criminal offence. In addition a pilot is planned for airlines to scan travel documents at points abroad and supply copies to the UK Immigration Service. This will deter those who might otherwise destroy their documents en route.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether surveillance techniques have been extended to airports other than Heathrow, to ensure that inadequately documented passengers are intercepted. [170522]

Mr. Browne: Surveillance techniques to ensure that inadequately documented passengers are identified and intercepted are already in use at major airports other than Heathrow. The UK Immigration Service has the ability to employ CCTV and/or overt surveillance in order to identify and intercept such passengers.

Smaller airports where these methods are not routinely employed are subject to regular risk assessment, monitoring and special exercises with Customs and other agencies. Resources are deployed to identify and intercept inadequately documented passengers on an intelligence led basis.

Drink Driving

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many persons were sentenced in England and Wales for driving with excess alcohol, excluding those causing death or serious injury, in each of the last 10 years; how many of those received a custodial sentence; and what the average custodial sentence length was. [169087]

Paul Goggins: The available information is contained in the table and relates to persons sentenced for offences of driving etc after consuming alcohol or taking drugs.

It is not possible in the statistics collected centrally to exclude those offences where serious injury is caused, but the figures exclude persons sentenced for the specific offence of 'causing death by careless driving whilst under the influence of drink or drugs'.

Number of persons[1] sentenced at all courts for offences relating to driving etc after consuming alcohol or taking drugs, those sentenced to custody and the average custodial sentence length, England and Wales 1993—2002 Driving etc after consuming alcohol or taking drugs

	Driving etc after consuming alcohol or taking drugs
1993	
Total sentenced	80,926
Custodial sentence	2,575
Average sentence length (months)	3.1
1994	
Total sentenced	78,038
Custodial sentence	3,243
Average sentence length (months)	3.2
1995	
Total sentenced	81,474
Custodial sentence	3,443
Average sentence length (months)	3.1
1996	
Total sentenced	85,010
Custodial sentence	3,529
Average sentence length (months)	3.1

Number of persons[1] sentenced at all courts for offences relating to driving etc after consuming alcohol or taking drugs, those sentenced to custody and the average custodial sentence length. England and Wales 1993—2002 Driving etc after consuming alcohol or taking drugs

	Driving etc after consuming alcohol or taking drugs
1997	
Total sentenced	89.271
Custodial sentence	4,065
Average sentence length (months)	3.0
1998	
Total sentenced	83.092
Custodial sentence	3.754
Average sentence length (months)	3.0
1999	
Total sentenced	79.524
Custodial sentence	3.653
Average sentence length (months)	3.0
2000	
Total sentenced	76.779
Custodial sentence	3.465
Average sentence length (months)	3.1
2001	
Total sentenced	76.113
Custodial sentence	3.475
Average sentence length (months)	3.0
2002	
Total sentenced	81.444
Custodial sentence	3,290
Average sentence length (months)	3.2

Statistics on court proceedings for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

Drugs

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what collaborative endeavours there are with other Governments to stifle the synthetic supply of drugs. [168727]

Caroline Flint: The United Kingdom Government have signed and ratified the United Nations 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, which establishes an international control system for such substances, including a number of synthetic drugs. It has also signed and ratified the United Nations 1988 Convention against the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which provides comprehensive measures against drug trafficking and the diversion of precursor chemicals of synthetic drugs.

UK law enforcement agencies have well-established bi-lateral links with their opposite numbers overseas, and share both strategic and tactical intelligence on synthetic drugs and their precursor chemicals on a regular basis.

They also participate in a range of multi-lateral, operationally focused intelligence work, including, for example:

participation in and follow-up to Europol initiatives on amphetamine profiling, illicit laboratory comparison, and pill logo comparison;

training, through the European Union PHARE Project to aid the EU accession states in combating the illicit trade in precursor chemicals and synthetic drugs;

leading a European Joint Unit on Precursors which co-ordinates EU member state activity in relation to illicit precursor chemicals trade;

acting as joint chair to a major UN initiative to stifle the supply of precursor chemicals used in the production of amphetamine type stimulants.

Employment Agencies

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the employment agencies which his Department has used to supply temporary staff in each financial year since 1996–97 to the most recent date for which figures are available. [163822]

Fiona Mactaggart: The requirements for temporary staff are at Directorate level in the Core Home Office and the relevant supplier then used in each financial year are in the table.

Accountancy Personnel
Adecco
Allegis Group
Anderson Sign Language
Ann Pettengell Gold Helm Ltd.
Badenoch & Clark
Brook Street (UK) Ltd.
Cameron Kennedy Resources Ltd.
Capita Business Services Ltd.
Carlisle Facilities Servs Ltd.
Carlisle Group Staffing Service
Catherine Johnstone Recruitment
Centre for Dispute Resolution
Cgms Consulting
Chubb Security Personnel Ltd.
Computer People Ltd.
Crown Personnel Plc
Crown Protection Services UK
Dbi Consulting
Employment Plus Ltd.
Excel Recruitment Ltd.
First Recruitment Services Ltd
Grafton Recruitment
Hays Accountancy Personnel
Headstart Employment Ltd.
Hto Consulting
Hudson Global Resources Ltd
Huntress Recruitment Specialist
Ibnix Ltd.
Icts (UK) Ltd.
Impact Executives Ltd.
Josephine Sammons Ltd.
K International Plc
Kpmg Fees Account
Logicacmg
Lorien Consulting
Mailsource UK Ltd.
Manpower Plc
Method Application Ltd.
Michael Canham & Associates Lt

Michael Page International
New Appointments Group
Nicholas Andrews & Temps Finance
Office Angels Ltd.
Pa Consulting Services Ltd.
Pcl Security Ltd
Pegasus Security Group Ltd
Pertemps
Prc Employment
Purcon Consultants Ltd.
Reed Information Services Ltd.
Reed Personnel Services
Reed Solutions Plc
Sabrewatch Ltd.
Securicor Security Ltd.
Select Appointments Plc
Symbia
Tangent International Ltd.
The Synergy Group Ltd.
Tmp Worldwide Ltd.
Trowers & Hamlins
Turner & Townsend
Wackenhut UK Ltd.
Watts & Partners
Wt Partnership

Suppliers used

Customer name	*1996–97*	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Accountancy Personnel	Yes	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes
Hays Accountancy Personnel	—	Yes	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adecco	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adecco UK Limited	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Adecco UK Ltd.	—	Yes	Yes	—	—	Yes	—	Yes
Allegis Group	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Anderson Sign Language	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	—	Yes
Anderson Sign Language Consult	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	—	—
Ann Pettengell Gold Helm Ltd.	—	—	—	Yes	—	Yes	Yes	Yes
Badenoch & Clark	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Brook Street (UK) Ltd.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cameron Kennedy Resources Ltd.	—	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes
Capita Business Services Ltd.	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Carlisle Facilities Servs Ltd.	—	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	—
Carlisle Group Staffing Service	—	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes
Carlisle Group Staffing Service	—	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes
Catherine Johnstone Recruitment	—	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes
Centre For Dispute Resolution	—	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	—
Cgms Consulting	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Chubb Security Personnel Ltd.	—	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes
Computer People Ltd.	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	—	Yes	Yes
Crown Personnel Plc	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes
Crown Protection Services UK	—	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	—
Dbi Consulting	Yes	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Employment Plus Ltd.	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes
Excel Recruitment Ltd.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
First Recruitment Services Ltd.	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Grafton Recruitment	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	—	Yes
Headstart Employment Ltd.	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hto Consulting	—	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes
Hudson Global Resources Ltd.	—	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes
Huntress Recruitment Specialist	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ibnix Ltd.	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Icts (UK) Ltd.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Yes
Impact Executives Ltd.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Yes
Josephine Sammons Ltd.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	—	Yes
K International Plc	Yes	—	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	—
Kpmg Consulting	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kpmg Fees Account	—	—	Yes	Yes	—	—	Yes	Yes
Logicacmg	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	—	Yes
Lorien Consulting	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mailsource UK Ltd.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Yes
Manpower Plc	Yes	—	Yes	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Method Application Ltd.	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Michael Canham & Associates Ltd.	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes
Michael Page International	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Yes
New Appointments Group	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nicholas Andrews & Temps Finance	—	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes
Office Angels Ltd.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pa Consulting Services Ltd.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pcl Security Ltd.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Yes
Pegasus Security Group Ltd.	—	—	Yes	—	—	Yes	—	Yes
Pertemps	—	Yes	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Prc Employment	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Purcon Consultants Ltd.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Reed Information Services Ltd.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Yes
Reed Personnel Services Plc	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Yes
Reed Solutions Plc	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sabrewatch Ltd.	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes

Customer name	Suppliers used							
	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Securicor Security Ltd.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Yes
Select Appointments Plc	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Symbia	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	Y
Tangent International Ltd.	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes
The Synergy Group Ltd.	—	—	—	—	—		Yes	Yes
Tmp Worldwide	—	—	—	—	—	Yes		Yes
Tmp Worldwide Ltd.	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes
Trowers & Hamlins	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes
Turner & Townsend	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wackenhut UK Ltd.	—	Yes	Yes	—	—	—	Yes	Yes
Watts & Partners	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wt Partnership	—	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes

EU Accession States

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what arrangements he is making to release, without prejudice to any outstanding application to be allowed to remain in the country, documents held by the UK authorities which are required by individuals from EU accession countries to facilitate their search for work in this country; what the timescale is for the release of such documents; whether such individuals will be able to register on the Workers Registration Scheme while they are seeking work; whether they can utilise the services of Jobcentres; what implications the arrangements for those from new EU member states seeking work in the UK have for *(a)* their right to remain in the UK and *(b)* National Asylum Support Service or local authority support, with particular reference to their accommodation and its cost; and if he will make a statement. [170049]

Mr. Browne: Documents held by the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will be returned to EU accession state nationals as soon as is practicable.

Individuals from the eight Accession States will only be able to register under the Worker Registration Scheme when they are in employment. They should apply to register as soon as they start work and within one month at the latest. They will be able to utilise Jobcentres to enable them to find employment.

Nationals of Cyprus and Malta will have a right of residence in the UK for up to six months on the basis that they are job seekers. Nationals of the remaining eight accession states will be able to remain in the UK while they seek work, provided that they are self-sufficient.

Nationals of the European Economic Area are not eligible for support from the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) or from local authorities under the Asylum Support (Interim Provisions) Regulations 2000. Those who were supported by NASS or their local authority can find work and register, seek support from friends or relatives or leave the UK. Individuals have had advance warning of the fact that they are no longer eligible for support but if they cannot avail themselves of these options without a violation of their Convention rights, they can approach NASS or their local authority to explain why. NASS will consider such representations from such individuals and will consider offering temporary support until that assessment is concluded. NASS have asked local authorities to consider matters relating to Interim Provisions cases in a similar manner and will consider reimbursing costs of continuing support for the short period of time it will take to make an assessment.

European Communities Association Agreement

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the statement by the Minister for Citizenship and Immigration of 8 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1245–52W, on the European Communities Association Agreement, if he will issue amended immigration statistics for the relevant period and categories. [161434]

Mr. Browne: Statistics on European Communities Association Agreement (ECAA) are management information collected by The Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND).

Statistics on the Control of Immigration produced by the Research and Statistics Directorate of the Home Office are part of the National Statistics, and are covered by the National Statistics Code of Practice. This means they are free from political interference and are produced to high professional principles and standards.

There are no plans to issue any corrections to these statistics arising from the statement on the European Communities Association Agreement, as management information on the ECAA are not included in the Control of Immigration Statistics.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Ministers in his Department were informed of the letter from John Ramsden to Chris Mace, of 5 November 2002, regarding the operation of the European Communities Association Agreement scheme. [166559]

Mr. Browne: This matter is covered by the investigation which Mr. Ken Sutton is undertaking of the operation of the European Community Association Agreement scheme for Bulgaria and Romania. I do not wish to pre-empt the investigation by commenting on the issues before it is completed.

Female Prisons

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average female prison population was; and how many female prisons or prison units there were, in each of the last 10 years. [169086]

Paul Goggins: The average female prison population and the number of prisons with female units in each of the last 10 years is given in the table.

Average female prison population and number of England and Wales

	Average female prisons	Prisons with female units
1994	1,810	12
1995	1,979	14
1996	2,262	17
1997	2,675	16
1998	3,105	17
1999	3,247	17
2000	3,350	16
2001	3,741	18
2002	4,298	19
2003	4,425	19

Identity Cards

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what contribution identity cards are intended to make to combating terrorism. [169442]

Mr. Browne: We know that about 35 per cent. of terrorists use false or multiple identities. An identity cards scheme which made it far more difficult to establish multiple identities would help to disrupt terrorist support networks.

As the Home Secretary has always made clear—going back to 2001—an identity card scheme would not guarantee to protect the UK against a terrorist attack. However, the Government have a duty to take all reasonable measures which will contribute to preventing and disrupting terrorist activity.

Mr. Allan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to complete the Gateway Review Stage for the National Identity Cards Programme; and if he will publish the outcome of that review. [169814]

Mr. Browne: Legislation on Identity Cards—A Consultation (CM 6178) explains that the Identity Cards Programme will be subject to continuing external review by the Office of Government Commerce Gateway process. A Gateway 0 review of the Programme took place in January 2004 which concluded that it was ready to proceed to the next stage. Subsequent Gateway reviews of the Programme will take place throughout its development and implementation. In line with the usual practice, the reports from these Gateway Reviews are not published.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what occasion and how frequently identity cards under the Draft Identity Cards Bill would need to be renewed. [169913]

Mr. Browne: ID cards will have a limited validity, this power is provided for in the draft Identity Cards Bill. At present passports and driving licences are valid for 10 years and the cost estimates for the identity cards scheme are based on fees for cards covering a 10 year period.

However, in advance of it being a requirement to register, there will be no compulsion to renew an identity card. Only when it is a requirement to register will there be a requirement on individuals, whose card will expire in a prescribed period or whose card is not valid, to apply for an ID card within a prescribed period. Different validity periods will apply in different cases, for example the validity of cards issued to foreign nationals will be linked to the length of their entitlement to stay in the country. Validity periods will require the approval of Parliament.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the draft regulations under the Draft Identity Cards Bill that will be published in time for pre-legislative scrutiny at the same time as the Bill. [169914]

Mr. Browne: The Legislation on Identity Cards Consultation paper (Cm 6178) makes clear that the draft Identity Cards Bill is an enabling measure and that detailed provisions will be set out later in regulations, relating for example to the level of fees or the application process. Regulations will not, therefore, be published during the consultation period on the draft Bill but will be determined as the identity cards programme proceeds.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the Government databases that will be linked to the National Identity Register under proposals in the Draft Identity Cards Bill. [169916]

Mr. Browne: There are no provisions in the draft Identity Cards Bill, which establish a direct link between the National Identity Register and any other Government database.

However, applications for one of the family of identity cards will require checks to be made against other databases, including those of public sector bodies. The data-sharing gateways established for this purpose will be used only when processing applications for cards or related purposes to ensure that the person, who applies to register and to be issued with an identity card, is the person he or she claims to be. Under the draft Bill, Parliament would have to approve each such "gateway" via an affirmative order where no powers already exist for the sharing of data in this way.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidelines he will issue on police use of finger-print information held on the National Identity Register proposed in the draft Identity Card Bill. [170257]

Mr. Browne: Disclosure of information from the National Identity Register without the individual's consent may be made to the police only in the specified circumstances set out in Clause 20(3) of the draft Bill. This is subject to certain rules, including that information will only be disclosed if the Secretary of State is satisfied that it was not reasonably practicable for the police to have obtained the information by another means. For example, if fingerprint information

is recorded on the register, the police would first have to search their own fingerprint records before resorting to the register. I will consider the need for further guidance on this subject nearer to the time of the introduction of the identity cards scheme.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which bodies will have access to all the data stored on the National Identity Register. [170262]

Mr. Browne: Proposals to permit information held on the National Identity Register to be disclosed without an individual's consent are set out in "Legislation on Identity Cards: A Consultation" (CM6178) published on 26 April.

It is incorrect to say that any body or person will have "access" to the register, rather the legislation will permit the Secretary of Sate to disclose information where a person consents or, where a person does not consent, only for specified purposes to specified persons.

There will be an exception to the general bar on disclosing information without consent, but disclosure will only be allowed to specified persons for specified purposes approved by Parliament and will be subject to an internal authorisation and independent oversight procedure.

There will be a general power to disclose information to the security and intelligence agencies for their statutory purposes under clause 20.

In addition, law enforcement agencies will be able to seek disclosure of information from the National Identity Register for the prevention or investigation of crime under clause 20 (3). For these groups, disclosure of "audit trails" of card usage would be permitted only in cases of serious crime under clause 20 (8). The police in Scotland will have similar powers but will only be permitted to apply for disclosure in relation to matters that are reserved under clause 20 (7)*(b)*.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how individuals will gain access to relevant services if their identity card is lost or stolen. [170263]

Mr. Browne: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer my right hon. Friend the Member for Stretford and Urmston (Beverley Hughes) gave to the hon. Member for Edinburgh, West (John Barrett) on 9 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1261W. My right hon. Friend said that an identity card, although very helpful to public services as a reliable means of proving identity, would not become mandatory for free public services and benefits until a specific further parliamentary decision on a move to compulsion. Where the identity card is used to access public services we will want to ensure that procedures are in place to help those whose card has been lost or stolen, especially in cases of emergency.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what communication strategy has been developed to ensure engagement with the public on the subject of identity cards. [170264]

Mr. Browne: The communication strategy on identity cards includes the following elements to ensure engagement with the public:

Quantitative and qualitative research was undertaken with the general public during the first consultation period. The findings are set out in "Identity Cards: A summary of Findings from the Consultation Exercise on Entitlement Cards and Identity Fraud" (CM6019). Further quantitative and qualitative research among the general will be undertaken during the current consultation period.

It is important that members of the public are able easily and quickly to obtain information about identity cards from a dedicated UK Government website. Therefore a new website domain has been registered (www.identitycards.gov.uk) and a new website created that contains official publications about identity cards. This will be updated with additional information as the national identity cards scheme progresses. Currently, there is a section about the consultation which invites individuals to comment on the draft legislation through a dedicated e-mail address.

Media handling strategies have been developed to make the best use of press and broadcast opportunities for engaging with the general public about identity cards.

The 'essential information' leaflet which is sent out with all new passports has been updated by the UK Passport Service to confirm that, subject to legislation, the passport will become part of a future family of national identity cards.

A public awareness campaign will be developed to support the roll out of the first identity cards from 2007–08.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to pilot data sharing powers in advance of the introduction of identity cards. [170324]

Mr. Browne: "Identity Cards: The Next Steps" (CM 6020) published in November 2003 made it clear that applications for one of the family of identity cards will require checks to be made against other databases, held by the public or private sector, in order to help establish that an application for a card is genuine. This followed recommendations on identity verification included in the Cabinet Office study on Identity Fraud, published in July 2002.

The data-sharing gateways which may be approved by Parliament in clause 11 of the draft Identity Cards Bill will only be used when processing applications for an identity card or for related purposes (for example, issuing a replacement) to ensure that the person who applies to register is the person he or she claims to be. These powers do not confer any general right to share data for wider purposes.

In order to allow for testing of the identity cards scheme in advance of the first cards being issued, these data sharing powers could be piloted but it is not possible to give further detail at this stage as detailed work on implementation of an identity cards scheme is not at the stage where we can be definitive about these timings. Use of the powers on a pilot basis would require Parliament's consent.

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to procure *(a)* ID cards and *(b)* ID card technology from firms within the UK. [170408]

Mr. Browne: Government policy requires that all procurement must be transparent and non-discriminatory, and that contracts must be awarded on a value-for-money

basis. Any requirement for services or goods above certain value thresholds, which will include those in support of the identity cards programme, must be advertised across the European Union.

We have been discussing technical options with Intellect, the UK information technology, telecommunications and electronics industry trade body, for the past two years. We hope that UK industry will rise to the challenge and opportunity that the identity cards programme brings.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what biometric information he intends to store on *(a)* passports and *(b)* driving licences; and what databases will be established to store such information centrally. [170816]

Mr. Browne: The United Kingdom Passport Service is planning to implement the facial recognition image biometric in the British Passport book from 2005. This facial biometric will be stored on the passport database. There are as yet no firm plans for driving licences to include biometric information although the driving licence database already stores digital photographs.

The passport and driving licence may be designated as ID cards under the draft Identity Cards Bill. In which case these documents may include additional biometrics, which would be stored on the new National Identity Register. However, no final decisions have yet been taken on which biometric or biometrics the identity cards scheme will use. The draft Identity Cards Bill allows for fingerprints and other forms of biometric information such as iris images to be recorded.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether an individual will have the right to see all the information contained on his or her entry in the National Identity Register under proposals in the draft Identity Cards Bill. [170817]

Mr. Browne: Clause 3 (1) of the draft Identity Cards Bill published on 26 April sets clear limits for the information that could be held on the National Identity Register. Schedule 1 lists the categories of information that may be held on the Register.

Individuals registered on the identity cards scheme would have subject access rights under the Data Protection Act 1998. In addition the Government will investigate whether it would be possible for a cardholder to use his card securely to access his own record to avoid the usual authorisation process and cost involved in applying for subject access. The Government will have to be satisfied that this could be achieved without compromising personal information, for example that another person could not use a stolen card to view another person's record on the National Identity Register.

Clause 14 (4) excludes information held in Schedule 1, paragraph 9 (records relating to disclosure of an entry) from being disclosed unless the Secretary of State deems it appropriate.

Immigration and Nationality Directorate

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many full-time equivalent staff were employed in the Immigration and Nationality Directorate in each year since 1997; and what the total payroll costs were. [170374]

Mr. Browne: The table shows the full-time equivalent of staff employed in the Immigration and Nationality Directorate in each year since 1997 and pay costs for the same period.

	Staffing numbers	*Total pay costs*
1997–98	5,372	136,784,988
1998–99	[1]4,705	134,391,253
1999–2000	[1]5,976	145,498,131
2000–01	7,523	193,600,000
2001–02	9,640	272,484,211
2002–03	11,186	337,121,813
2003–04	13,716	[2]—

[1] Year end figure.
[2] Pay costs for 2003–04 have not yet been finalised.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reasons applications under the European Communities Association Agreements are now sent directly to the Immigration and Nationality Directorate rather than via local embassies. [166554]

Mr. Browne: This matter is covered by the investigation which Mr. Ken Sutton is undertaking of the operation of the European Communities Association Agreements (ECAA) scheme for Bulgaria and Romania. I do not wish to pre-empt the investigation by commenting on the issues before it is completed.

Immigration Appeals

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what have been the legal costs, to date, of representing the Government *(a)* before the Special Immigration Appeals Commission in connection with (i) proceedings under the Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 and (ii) in respect of removal of nationality under the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 and *(b)* in any subsequent appeals; and if he will make a statement. [168223]

Mr. Browne: A total of £1,287,414.42 has been spent on representing the Government in proceedings under the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 and £35,038.71 in proceedings relating to the deprivation of nationality under the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002. These costs include both Counsels' and the Treasury Solicitor's fees.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to review the right of appeal by the Home Secretary against decisions by the Special Immigration Appeals Commission in cases involving national security. [169810]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 30 April 2004]:* This is a matter which is kept under review. We introduced an amendment to the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants etc) Bill during Lords' Committee Stage, which creates a right of appeal on a point of law in respect of bail decisions by the Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC) in cases involving a person detained under the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001. This mirrors the existing right of appeal in

respect of SIAC determinations where a person has appealed against the decision to certify them as a suspected international terrorist.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to amend his powers to remove nationality and indefinite leave to remain to ensure that action can be taken without undue delay caused by the appeal process. [169812]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 30 April 2004]:* Experience so far does not suggest that it is the appeals process itself which causes delay. I am reviewing the situation to see what lessons we can learn and how we might speed up the holding of appeals. I have no current plans to amend the legislation.

Immigration Minister

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he was first informed of the issues raised in the letter of 4 March 2003 from the hon. Member for Coventry, North-East to the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship. [166560]

Mr. Browne: This matter is covered by the investigation which Mr. Ken Sutton is undertaking of the operation of the European Communities Association Agreements (ECAA) scheme for Bulgaria and Romania. I do not wish to pre-empt the investigation by commenting on the issues before it is completed.

Immigration Summit

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the persons and organisations invited to his Immigration Summit. [169889]

Mr. Browne: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister on 29 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1224–25W.

Iraqi Asylum Seekers

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has had from *(a)* the United Nations and *(b)* other international organisations over the consequences of returning Iraqi asylum seekers in the UK to Iraq; what his response has been; and if he will make a statement. [169146]

Mr. Browne: We keep in close contact with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other relevant organisations. We agree with UNHCR's view that voluntary return is preferable to enforced return, but believe that enforced return to stable areas of Iraq is justifiable.

We are currently facilitating the return of those who wish to go home through the International Organisation for Migration. We have also reached an agreement with the Coalition Provisional Authority to begin enforced returns to Iraq. We are working to finalise the practicalities of the enforced returns programme, which we will implement as soon as the necessary arrangements are in place.

There is clearly a difficult position in those parts of Iraq most affected by insurgencies, but we do not accept this is the case in all areas. Returns will be taken forward on a case by case basis and we will only return to particular areas assessed as sufficiently stable, where we are satisfied that the individual concerned will not be at risk. The situation is kept under constant review and we are still working with the coalition authorities, to return those who are not at risk of persecution and do not need humanitarian protection.

New Workers Registration Scheme

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) who will operate the New Workers Registration Scheme; [161408]

(2) what *(a)* budgetary and *(b)* staffing resources are to be allocated to the New Workers Registration Scheme; [161409]

(3) when the New Workers Registration Scheme will commence operations; [161410]

(4) what target is to be set concerning the average time for the processing of work registration applications; [161411]

(5) whether specific arrangements are to be made for Scotland under the New Workers Registration Scheme. [161412]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 15 March 2004]:* The Worker Registration Scheme, announced by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary in his statement to the House on 23 February 2004, *Official Report*, columns 23–25, will be administered by the Home Office through its Work Permits (UK) operation in Sheffield. A dedicated team of 42 staff is being deployed initially to administer the scheme, the resources for which will form part of the WP (UK) budget for 2004–05.

The Worker Registration Scheme has been operational since 1 May and applications have been accepted from this date onwards. Further guidance for applicants, including the application form and guidance, are available on the "Working in the UK" website (www.workingintheuk.gov.uk).

My hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department, the Member for Slough (Fiona Mactaggart) indicated to the House on 2 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 877–80, that the Worker Registration Team will aim to process 80 per cent. of applications within 24 hours of receipt, following payment clearance. Incomplete applications will take longer to process.

Citizens of the new member states (with the exception of Malta and Cyprus) who take up employment in Scotland will need to apply to register with the Home Office when they start a job, in the same way as those taking up employment in the rest of the UK. Employers in Scotland will be required to satisfy themselves that accession country nationals in their employment have received registration under the scheme.

North London Mosque

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what support the Charity Commissioners propose to offer to the trustees of the

North London Mosque to ensure that it operates within the law on its re-opening; and if he will make a statement. [169793]

Fiona Mactaggart: This is a matter for the Charity Commission as the Government Department responsible for the regulation of charities in England and Wales. The Director of Operations of the Charity Commission will write to the hon. Member and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Offender Management

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the post of *(a)* Head of Human Relations and *(b)* Head of Standards in the National Offender Management Service will be advertised. [168461]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office uses external recruitment when there is a shortage of the necessary skills and knowledge to fill the vacancy. These posts will not be advertised. They are being filled by existing Home Office staff on level transfer and on their existing salaries.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how he will ensure that the National Offender Management Service reduces the prison population. [167516]

Paul Goggins: The National Offender Management Service will ensure the more effective management of offenders as well as better targeting and co-ordination of custodial and community sentences. As a result we intend to maintain the prison population at a stable level of around 80,000 by 2009. Without these reforms, the latest estimates indicate that the prison population may otherwise increase to 93,000 by that date.

Open Prisons

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the occupancy rate was for open prisons in each of the last 10 years. [169085]

Paul Goggins: The average population, average certified normal accommodation and occupancy rate of open prisons in each of the last 10 years is given in the table.

Average population of open prisons and average C.N.A. England and Wales, 30 June

	Average population	*Average C.A.N.*	*Occupancy rate (percentage)*
1994	4,205	4,829	87.1
1995	3,948	4,666	84.6
1996	4,408	4,884	90.3
1997	4,765	5,112	93.2
1998	4,650	5,082	91.5
1999	4,155	5,089	81.6
2000	3,969	4,813	82.5
2001	3,910	4,592	85.1
2002	4,431	4,852	91.3
2003	4,812	5,302	90.8

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what percentage of prisoners serving *(a)* under 12 months, *(b)* 12 months to under four years and *(c)* four years or over completed part or all of their sentence in an open prison in each of the last 10 years. [169090]

Paul Goggins: Information on the number of prisoners serving *(a)* under 12 months, *(b)* 12 months to under four years and *(c)* four years or over who completed part or all of their sentence in an open prison is not available.

The number of prisoners serving sentences in the relevant bands in an open prison on 30 June in each of the last 10 years is given in the table.

Population under sentence of open prisons—England and Wales

As at 30 June	*Less than 12 months*	*Percentage*	*12 months to less than or equal to four years*	*Percentage*	*4 years and over*	*Percentage*
1994	2,017	48.4	1,261	30.3	887	21.3
1995	1,489	36.2	1,697	413	922	22.4
1996	1,244	28.3	2,150	48.9	1,000	22.8
1997	1,279	26.9	2,388	50.2	1,086	22.8
1998	1,125	24.2	2,263	48.7	1,256	27.0
1999	732	77.7	1,884	45.4	1,530	36.9
2000	635	16.0	1,755	44.3	1,569	39.6
2001	586	15.0	1,730	44.4	1,583	40.6
2002	625	15.0	1,728	41.4	1,823	43.7
2003	624	13.0	1,790	37.3	2,382	49.7

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the questions tabled by the hon. Member for Woking on 10 March 2004, refs *(a)* 161619 and *(b)* 161620. [164270]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 29 March 2004]:* I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 28 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1097W and 1102W respectively.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will provide an answer to the questions reference *(a)* 161078 and *(b)* 161079 on steps to control websites encouraging or promoting suicide. [169012]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 27 April 2004]:* I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 26 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 765W.

Parole

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners who had been sentenced to more than 10 years have been recalled during each of the last 48 months; and what the reasons for recall were. [168023]

Paul Goggins: The number of prisoners who had been sentenced to determinate sentences of 10 years or more who have been recalled is given in the table.

Prisoners with sentences of 10 years or more recalled by month of recall and reason for recall

	All	Not known	Further offences	Being out of touch	Hostel—failure to reside	Other
2000						
April	6	0	0	3	0	3
May	8	0	4	1	1	2
June	3	0	1	1	0	1
July	5	0	2	0	1	2
August	6	0	2	2	0	2
September	6	0	3	2	1	0
October	9	0	5	0	1	3
November	4	0	1	0	1	2
December	2	0	0	2	0	0
2001						
January	6	1	4	0	1	0
February	8	0	2	2	2	2
March	5	0	2	0	1	2
April	5	0	1	1	1	2
May	4	0	0	3	0	1
June	2	0	2	0	0	0
July	6	0	2	3	0	1
August	5	0	1	0	1	3
September	5	1	1	1	0	2
October	5	0	1	1	0	3
November	5	0	4	0	0	1
December	4	0	0	1	0	3
2002						
January	5	0	1	0	1	3
February	6	0	3	1	0	2
March	6	0	2	1	2	1
April	8	0	1	1	0	6
May	4	0	2	2	0	0
June	7	0	1	2	0	4
July	8	1	2	2	1	2
August	8	0	6	1	1	0
September	4	0	3	0	0	1
October	5	0	2	0	0	3
November	7	1	3	0	1	2
December	6	0	5	0	0	1
2003						
January	10	1	7	2	0	0
February	5	2	1	0	1	1
March	13	0	5	3	2	3
April	7	0	2	2	2	1
May	7	2	2	0	2	1
June	7	0	1	3	0	3
July	11	1	3	5	0	2
August	6	0	2	1	0	3
September	12	2	5	2	1	2
October	7	1	3	0	0	3
November	7	0	2	2	0	3
December	11	0	7	3	1	0
2004						
January	14	0	4	4	4	2
February	13	1	6	3	0	3
March	14	0	7	5	0	2

Passport Service

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what arrangements are in place to ensure the trustworthiness of staff operating database systems, with particular reference to the UK Passport Service. [170527]

Mr. Browne: There are a number of mechanisms available to minimise the risk to databases operated by Government Departments and Agencies from staff who might not be trustworthy.

In the case of the UK Passport Service (UKPS), all prospective staff are subject to a number of pre-employment checks to confirm identity and entitlement to take employment. UKPS staff are also subject to security clearance checks in accordance with the Prime Minister's statement on security vetting of 15 December 1994. These checks provide UKPS with an appropriate degree of assurance as to the integrity and trustworthiness of staff. The same arrangements apply to the employees of UKPS' private sector partners.

In addition to pre-employment checks and security clearance for staff, all UKPS systems undergo formal risk assessment and are accredited in line with Government standards and Information Security Standard BS7799. This ensures that UKPS has in place management and technical systems to provide comprehensive auditing and accounting facilities to monitor all access to, and activity on, its databases.

Piracy

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many arrests were made on charges of piracy in the UK in 2003. [170058]

Ms Blears: Information collected centrally is based on persons arrested for 'notifiable' offences within main offence groups only, and as such it does not separately identify piracy offences in the "Other" offence group within which they fall.

Prison Officers

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent consideration he has given to the awarding of a long-service medal to prison officers employed in prisons in England and Wales; and if he will make a statement. [162647]

Paul Goggins: There are no plans to introduce a Long Service Medal specifically for prison officers employed in prisons in England and Wales. Prison Officers, along with all other staff employed by the Prison Service, receive a 25 Year Long Service Award.

Prisoners

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners who had been sentenced for more than 10 years were *(a)* in Category C conditions and *(b)* in open conditions on (i) 31 March and (ii) 31 March in each of the last five years. [168027]

Paul Goggins: The number of prisoners sentenced to 10 years or more, including life sentence prisoners, that were in *(a)* Category C conditions and *(b)* open conditions on 31 March 2004 and 31 March in each of the previous four years is given in the table. Information for 31 March 1999 is not available and hence data has instead been provided for 30 June 1999.

Prisoners sentenced to 10 years or more

	Category C conditions	*Open conditions*
2004	2,879	747
2003	1,660	668
2002	1,890	641
2001	1,748	574
2000	1,472	565
1999	1,515	511

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people are projected to be given a custodial sentence in each of the next 12 months. [168030]

Paul Goggins: The number of offenders sentenced to custody each month is not one of the totals contained within the prison population projections. Projections of the prison population under various sentencing scenarios, and the details of these scenarios, are published in the monthly Prison Population Brief.

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what percentage of prisoners were reconvicted of subsequent offences having served a sentence *(a)* under 12 months, *(b)* 12 months to under four years and *(c)* four years or over in each of the last 10 years. [169091]

Paul Goggins: Figures for the number and percentage of prisoners reconvicted within two years of discharge from prison are given in Prison Statistics, England and Wales, 1997–2002. Table 9.3 shows reconviction rates for samples of discharged prisoners in that year. To make a full comparison of reconviction rates over time it is necessary to control for changes in the characteristics of discharged prisoners, such as age and previous criminal history, which are strongly associated with reconviction rates.

Prisons

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the judgment in the case of Mr. David McGee; and what plans he has to amend prison regulations. [170403]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Service is considering the decision of the court in this case and whether any change to the Prison Act might be appropriate.

Private Finance Initiative

Gareth Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with the National Assembly for Wales Government about the use of Private Finance Initiative by North Wales police *(a)* for refurbishment and replacement of police stations and *(b)* generally. [170319]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* I met Welsh Assembly Minister Edwina Hart AM last year to discuss funding of Welsh police forces generally. My officials have also had discussions with their counterparts in the Assembly regarding Private Finance Initiative (PFI) schemes and more generally on Welsh police funding.North Wales police currently have one PFI scheme approved for the divisional HQ at St. Asaph, which is under construction. Another scheme put forward by the force is under consideration, jointly by the Welsh Assembly Government and the Home Office.

Welsh PFI schemes need the approval of the Welsh Assembly Government, as they are responsible for providing the annual revenue grant on the service charge.

Gareth Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the use of Private Finance Initiative in relation to capital investment for use of modernising police stations in North Wales. [170320]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* The Government support the use of Private Finance to help deliver modern police facilities in England and Wales. One Private Finance Initiative (PFI) scheme has been approved for the divisional HQ at St. Asaph in North Wales and is under construction. A second scheme put forward by the North Wales Police is currently under consideration.

All Welsh PFI schemes also need approval by the Welsh Assembly Government, which provides revenue grant on the annual service charges for approved schemes.

Gareth Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much each police force in England and Wales has spent through Private Finance Initiative *(a)* on refurbishment and replacement of police stations and *(b)* in total. [170322]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* The cost incurred by each police force in England and Wales on refurbishment and replacement of police stations through the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) is not held centrally.

As a guide to the volume of PFI schemes, I list in the following table schemes for which grant support has been approved as at 1 April 2004:

£ million

Police authority	*PFI credits*[1]
Cleveland/Durham	11.000
Cumbria[2]	7.500
Derbyshire[2]	3.774
Derbyshire[2]	23.917
Dorset[2]	24.300
Dyfed-Powys[2]	5.300
Gloucestershire[2]	26.200
Kent[2]	23.600
Norfolk[2]	36.300
Northumbria	1.881
Nottinghamshire	21.460
Thames Valley[2]	10.406
Wiltshire	3.053
North Wales[2]	19.623
Cheshire[2]	45.000
Sussex	39.250
Greater Manchester[2]	63.000
Wiltshire	23.979
Total	389.543

[1] PFI credits represent the capital element within the overall project. They form the basis of annual revenue grant support towards the unitary service charge payable by the police authority to the service operator.

[2] Denotes schemes that include police stations.

Public Sector Workers (Assaults)

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent representations he has received on introducing an offence of assaulting a public sector worker in the course of their duty; and if he will make a statement. [169451]

Paul Goggins: Assaulting a public sector worker in the course of his or her duty is an extremely serious matter. Magistrates courts' guidelines emphasise that assault against "a victim serving the public" should be considered an aggravating factor for sentencing purposes. The Sentencing Guidelines Council will draft a new set of consolidated sentencing guidelines for use in all criminal courts. We anticipate this would similarly include references to whether the victim was at the time of the offence working with the public. We believe this is the right way to deal with such offences.

The most recent representations we have received on introducing an offence of assaulting a public sector worker in the course of their duty was from the British Parking Association, who wanted a specific offence of assaulting a parking attendant.

Road Traffic Offences

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people lost their driving licence as a consequence of speeding in each year since 1990. [169445]

Caroline Flint: Available information from 1990 to 2002, which has been taken from the Home Office Court Proceedings Database, is given in the table.

Number of persons disqualified[1] from driving at all courts for speed limit offences[2], England and Wales, 1990 to 2002

	Persons disqualified
1990	14,690
1991	14,858
1992	13,053
1993	9,658
1994	8,899
1995	9,223
1996	9,587
1997	10,061
1998	12,215
1999	12,050
2000	11,283
2001	11,510
2002	9,557

[1] Excludes persons disqualified under s 35 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988 (penalty points system).
[2] Offences under the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 and The Motor Vehicles (Speed Limits on Motorways) Regulations 1973.

Seasonal Agriculture Workers

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the suspension of the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme in respect of students from Romania and Bulgaria; and when he expects to review the suspension. [170107]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 30 April 2004]:* On 30 March 2004, we announced a suspension on the processing of visa applications in Bulgaria and Romania while allegations of abuse of the immigration arrangements were investigated. On 13 April, the suspensions were partially lifted, except for applications under the managed migration entry routes, including the Seasonal Agricultural Workers' Scheme (SAWS).

The investigation into the allegations is being conducted as quickly as possible.

Sustainable Development

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made on his Department's Sustainable Development Strategy. [172305]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Department's Sustainable Development Framework Project has been commissioned to develop, implement and manage a series of individual activities across the Home Office Group including the Prison Service. This project has been established to ensure the Department meets the environmental targets set out in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. A review of existing initiatives and policies has been undertaken and a gap analysis produced to enable the development of individual work streams to address sustainable development targets. Progress against these individual work-streams is being made and is monitored and reviewed regularly.

We have also made significant progress towards sustainable development targets on reducing crime and the fear of crime, and increasing voluntary and community activity. The British Crime Survey (BCS) data shows that vehicle thefts fell by 38 per cent. and burglary by 29 per cent. between 1991 and 2002–03. Recorded crime fell by 23 per cent. and burglary in dwellings by 17 per cent. between 1990 and 2002–03 and that the fear of crime is now lower than the levels in the 2001 British Crime Survey. The number of people engaged in community participation has increased by more than 6 per cent. to 1.6 million since 2001.

Sutton Inquiry

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will ensure that the inquiry and visit to Sofia by Mr. Ken Sutton of his Department into the Managed Migration scheme and related issues will take account of the impact that suspension of the issuing of visas will have on teachers appointed to schools in Essex and Thurrock; and if he will make a statement; [170027]

(2) when he expects to receive the report by Mr. Ken Sutton into the Managed Migration scheme as it operates in Sofia; when teachers appointed to posts in Essex and Thurrock schools can expect consideration of their visa applications; and if he will make a statement. [170028]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 30 April 2004]:* We hope to receive Ken Sutton's report shortly. The length of the temporary suspension of the arrangements for those, in Sofia, seeking visas for managed migration schemes will be as short as possible. The impact on those wishing to seek entry to the UK legitimately under managed migration routes is a matter of regret. However, we consider that this temporary suspension was the right action in the circumstances and crucial to public confidence in the integrity of our immigration system.

Workplace Crime

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to bring the victims of workplace crimes and their families into the remit of the Victims' Charter. [167497]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 28 April 2004]:* A review of the Victim's Charter was completed in 2003. The Charter will be replaced by a statutory Code of Practice for victims, which is enabled by, and one of the key measures in, the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Bill currently before Parliament. The Code will place obligations on criminal justice agencies to provide specific services, within prescribed time scales, to victims of crime, irrespective of where the crime takes place.

As part of the review, my officials had discussions with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). HSE is further developing the existing arrangements for liaison with victims, and bereaved families, of work-related incidents so as to mirror, as far as resources and remit allow, the kinds of services the Code will deliver. However, as the Code's primary purpose is to set out the obligations of criminal justice agencies to victims of crime, the HSE, along with other organisations which have interactions with victims in a broader sense, was considered outside of its scope. My officials will remain in close touch with their counterparts in the HSE to ensure that best practice continues to be shared.

HEALTH

Air Gun Injuries

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people were treated for injuries involving air guns in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [172443]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There are no central data on the total number of patients treated each year in the national health service for injuries involving air guns.

Alzheimer's

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the research projects into Alzheimer's disease and related conditions funded by the Government, with the amounts of money provided in each case. [169890]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Details of research projects relating to Alzheimer's disease and related conditions, funded by, or of interest to, the national health service are recorded on the National Research Register (NRR) at www.update-software.com/national. The NRR currently contains details of over 200 on-going projects in this area, as well as a larger number of completed projects. These include projects commissioned by the Department.

In 2002–03, the Medical Research Council (MRC) spent £6.6 million on research relevant to Alzheimer's and related conditions, such as general dementia, AIDS-related dementia, Pick's disease and Huntington's. Details of the research may be found on the MRC website at www.mrc.ac.uk.

The Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) also funds research relating to Alzheimer's and related conditions. Details of projects can be found on the EPSRC website at www.epsrc.ac.uk.

Ambulances

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance his Department has issued to the ambulance service regarding the introduction of the Localizer or White Noise siren systems. [172645]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department for Health and the Department for Transport have not issued guidance to the ambulance service regarding the introduction of White Noise siren systems.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whose responsibility it is to take decisions on the specifications of ambulance sirens; and whether there is a published list of contact details of the persons responsible. [172646]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The decision of which ambulance siren to use is normally made by the fleet manager or transport manager at each national health service trust, in conjunction with the operations director.

There is no published list of all the personnel responsible for making this decision.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health at what level the decision on the specifications of ambulance sirens was taken. [172647]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Decisions on the specifications of ambulance sirens are made by the local ambulance trusts.

Anti-psychotic Drugs

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many adverse reaction reports were received through the Yellow Card reporting system regarding *(a)* anti-psychotic drugs excluding atypicals and *(b)* atypical anti-psychotic drugs in (i) 2000–01, (ii) 2001–02, (iii) 2002–03 and (iv) 2003–04; and how many prescriptions there were for each of these types of drugs in these years. [172419]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table shows the number of suspected adverse drug reaction (ADR) reports received via the United Kingdom yellow card scheme regarding antipsychotic drugs (atypical and other antipsychotics) each year since 2000 together with the number of prescriptions dispensed in the community in England.

Number of suspected ADR reports UK and number of prescriptions dispensed in the community (England)

	Antipsychotics (excluding atypicals)		*Atypical antipsychotics*	
	ADRs	*Prescriptions*	*ADRs*	*Prescriptions*
2000	110	3,790,273	917	1,149,450
2001	118	2,875,980	1100	1,842,005
2002	100	2,507,203	1322	2,471,345
2003	131	2,251,279	1689	3,083,712

It is important to note that a report of an adverse reaction does not necessarily mean that it was caused by

the drug. Many factors have to be taken into account in assessing causal relationships including temporal association, the possible contribution of concomitant medication and the underlying disease. Other factors such as the time since a drug was first marketed, media interest or regulatory action can also influence the frequency of reporting. This means that reporting rates based on numbers of spontaneous reports and numbers of prescriptions are not true measures of the frequency of reactions or a firm basis for comparisons between drug substances or classes.

Ashford Hospital

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what costs were incurred by his Department in changing the preferred bidder for the proposed diagnostic treatment centre at Ashford hospital; [171112]

(2) what date it was decided to remove preferred bidder status from Mercury Healthcare for the provision of a diagnostic treatment centre at Ashford (Middlesex) hospital; and on what date this decision was communicated to the company. [171113]

Mr. Hutton: The Department made a payment of approximately £1.1 million to Mercury Healthcare as a contribution towards their bid costs when they were deselected as the preferred bidder for the provision of the independent sector treatment centre 'spine' chain. Capio UK was subsequently appointed as preferred bidder for the chain. This switch has enabled the Department to secure a multi-million pound saving in the price of the contact. This significant saving is shared across the entire chain, including the proposed treatment centre at the Ashford hospital.

The decision to remove the preferred bidder status from Mercury Healthcare was formally endorsed by the chain's board of national health service sponsors at its meeting on 27 January 2004. Following a period of negotiation with Mercury Healthcare, the national implementation team formally communicated this decision on 17 February 2004.

Body Piercing/Tattooing

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the regulation of body piercing and tattooing establishments. [172030]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Local authorities have powers to regulate body piercing and tattooing businesses by requiring registration and observance of bylaws relating to the hygiene and cleanliness of premises, practitioners and equipment. In London, local authorities have powers under private legislation to require such businesses to be licensed and observe licensing conditions relating to a range of matters including the hygiene and cleanliness of the premises and equipment.

It is an offence for a body piercing or tattooing business to operate without being registered or licensed or to breach bylaws or licensing conditions.

The following statutory provisions are relevant to the regulation of body piercing and tattooing businesses:

Local Government Act 2003

London Local Authorities Act 2000

London Local Authorities Act 1995

London Local Authorities Act 1991

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982

Greater London Council (General Powers Act) Act 1981

Local authorities also have general enforcement powers under health and safety at work legislation.

Caesarean Sections

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the health risks for *(a)* mother and *(b)* baby in delivery by Caesarean section. [172387]

Dr. Ladyman: The National Institute for Clinical Excellence issued clinical guidelines on the use of caesarean section on 29 April. The guideline will be a useful tool to advise clinicians of best evidence on when to perform a caesarean section and when not to perform one. It also emphasises the appropriate care women and their babies need before, during and after the procedure. The guideline will also ensure that when considering a caesarean section, there should be a discussion on the benefits and risk of caesarean section compared with vaginal birth. We support the need for women to be offered evidence-based information and support to enable them to make informed choices about their care during birth.

The National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) has been established to focus our efforts to improve patient safety in the national health service to promote an open and fair culture and to run a new national reporting and learning system for patient safety incidents including those involving mothers and their babies. The NPSA has begun a programme to roll out this system, launched at NPSA's conference on 25 February 2004, across NHS organisations during 2004.

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many births were by Caesarean section in each maternity unit within Northumbria NHS Trust in 2003; and how many of these were *(a)* emergency and *(b)* planned procedures. [170421]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Estimated[1] numbers of emergency and planned caesarean deliveries at North Tyneside General Hospital for 2002–03 are shown in the table.

[1] Available data on delivery method from 1,552 records are grossed to known number of deliveries.

Type of delivery	*Number*
Planned caesareans	130
Emergency caesareans	193
Total deliveries by caesarean	323
Total deliveries	1,604

Source:
Hospital Episodes Statistics.

Further information can be found at www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public.sb0410.htm.

Chernobyl

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farms in Cumbria are still affected by the radioactive fall out from the 1986 Chernobyl accident. [170662]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer my hon. Friend to the response I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Blaenau Gwent (Llew Smith) on 11 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 208W.

Chest Pain Clinics

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many rapid access chest pain clinics there are in the constituency of Huntingdon. [172633]

Dr. Ladyman: There is one rapid access chest pain clinic in the constituency of Huntingdon, at Hinchingbrooke Healthcare National Health Service Trust.

Continence

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of the number of children with continence problems assessed and managed by *(a)* school nurses, *(b)* general practitioners and *(c)* specialist nurses; [171130]

(2) what assessment he has made of the adequacy of treatment and care received by children with continence conditions. [171132]

Dr. Ladyman: National health service primary care trusts (PCTs) are responsible for assessing and providing continence services. An assessment of service levels and of the numbers of children accessing services provided by school nurses, general practitioners and specialist nurses is not undertaken centrally. Guidance issued in 2000, "Good Practice in Continence Services", advises that each PCT should have specialist continence services in place, which provide an individual assessment of needs. PCTs are also encouraged to use the Modernisation Agency's publication, "Good practice in paediatric continence services—benchmarking in action", when ensuring quality provision.

Dentistry

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) why the appropriation aid provision in the Estimates attributable to dental charges is reduced in 2004–05 to £229,550,000 from £491,000,000 in 2003–04; [168945]

(2) why the provision in the Estimates for general dental services in 2004–05 is £245 million less than the provision in 2003–04. [168947]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 27 April 2004]:* The Government are committed to rebuilding and restoring national health service dentistry to improve the oral health of the nation. Overall expenditure on dental services, covering both general dental services (CDS) and personal dental services (PDS) and the associated income from dental charges, is expected to rise in 2004–05. However, in drawing up the estimate for this early stage in the year, provision for primary dental services has been split initially between section D (GDS) of the estimate and section A (aggregate provision for strategic health authority and primary care trust budgets and central allocations). This is because an increasing number of dental practices are converting from general dental practice contracts to PDS contracts. PDS contracts are funded from discretionary allocations delegated to PCTs, whereas GDS are funded from a national, non-discretionary budget.

The balance of provision between the two sections of the estimate, and the associated charge income, will be adjusted at a supplementary estimate stage when the level of conversion from the GDS to the PDS over the coming 12 months is known. As a non-discretionary service, provision for the GDS will be adjusted to reflect the volume of dentistry delivered by general dental practitioners.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many calls to NHS Direct about access to an NHS dentists there were in each month since November 2001, broken down by *(a)* emergency, *(b)* urgent, *(c)* routine and *(d)* other calls for (i) England and (ii) each strategic health authority. [166118]

Mr. Hutton: Calls to NHS Direct about access to a National Health Service dentist in each month since November 2001 by emergency, urgent, routine and other are shown in the table.

This information is not collated centrally for each strategic health authority.

Number

	Total	*Emergency*	*Urgent*	*Routine*	*Not known*
November 2001	10,922	1,143	2,542	6,546	691
December 2001	10,023	1,456	3,274	4,482	811
January 2002	13,064	1,605	3,078	7,124	1,257
February 2002	10,316	1,073	2,902	5,535	806
March 2002	13,336	1,061	3,849	6,742	1,684
April 2002	15,472	1,666	4,241	8,322	1,243
May 2002	15,693	1,506	4,287	8,361	1,339
June 2002	14,726	1,551	4,598	7,145	1,432
July 2002	16,032	1,539	4,164	8,827	1,502
August 2002	15,797	1,584	4,646	8,303	1,264
September 2002	14,862	1,387	3,886	8,229	1,360
October 2002	15,912	1,409	3,457	9,671	1,375
November 2002	15,770	1,456	3,381	9,505	1,428
December 2002	14,629	1,729	4,308	7,149	1,443
January 2003	17,860	1,614	3,648	10,952	1,646
February 2003	13,576	1,220	3,075	7,968	1,313
March 2003	15,325	1,416	3,407	9,093	1,409
April 2003	15,863	1,399	3,510	9,446	1,508
May 2003	16,257	1,471	3,977	9,307	1,502
June 2003	17,404	1,563	3,823	10,485	1,533
July 2003	19,012	1,581	4,192	10,723	2,516
August 2003	18,016	1,806	4,201	10,471	1,538
September 2003	19,472	1,708	4,117	11,350	2,297
October 2003	19,829	1,529	3,733	10,905	3,662
January 2004	19,702	1,462	3,613	12,726	1,901
February 2004	18,238	1,575	3,653	11,312	1,718

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* dental practices and *(b)* dentists in Hampshire provide NHS treatment; how many hours of NHS dentistry they offer each (i) week and (ii) month; and if he will make a statement on the availability of NHS dental treatment in Hampshire. [168096]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The latest available information for Hampshire shows that there were 288 dental practices and 635 dentists providing national health service dental services in the general dental services or personal dental services.

In the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Strategic Health Authority there were 62 dentists working full or part-time in the Community Dental Service area (a whole time equivalent of 42) and, in the hospital dental service, there were 57 dentists (48 whole-time equivalent). Information on the number of practices is not available.

Information is not available on the number of hours worked as general dental practitioners are independent contractors who are able to vary the amount of NHS dentistry they do and to vary their working week.

We are currently taking forward major reforms of NHS dentistry through proposals in the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003. Under these proposals, primary care trusts (PCT) will have a duty to secure the provision of primary dental services. With these new responsibilities will go the £1.3 billion financial resources (2003–04) currently held centrally. The reforms will give a better deal for patients, for dentists and for the NHS.

In the run up to the changes, we have provided new investment totalling £90 million to improve NHS dentistry. £59 million will support access, and strategic health authorities have been advised of their shares and are working with their PCTs to address access issues. £30 million is to support information technology and the balance of £1 million will support organisational development locally.

The PCTs in Hampshire are working closely with their strategic health authority (Hampshire and Isle of Wight) supported by the shadow special health authority (dentistry) to improve local dental access using their share of the access funds: some £1.64 million in 2004–05.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists have left the NHS, in whole or in part, to work in the private sector in each year since 1997 in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* each London borough. [168940]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the total number of dentists leaving the general dental service (GDS) or personal dental service (PDS) is given in the table for primary care trust (PCT) areas in London; information is not collected by borough. Information is not available on the reason for leaving.

Dentists can leave the national health service for a variety of reasons. These include retirements, short-term absence, leaving for other employment as well as dentists leaving the NHS dental services to practise wholly privately. Those working in the GDS can increase or reduce their NHS commitment, and this is not reflected in the figures.

Few dentists leave the NHS altogether to practise privately. The Office of Fair Trading report, "The private dentistry market in the UK", stated that only 210 practices are totally private in the United Kingdom out of 11,000 practices in total.

The number of NHS dentists in the Greater London area increased from 3,107 in September 1997 to 3,444 in September 2003.

Table 1: Number of leavers from GDS and PDS

	Year ending 30 September					
Primary Care Trust	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Barking and Dagenham	2	1	3	3	6	1
Barnet	12	13	6	13	10	11
Bexley Care Trust	2	6	6	6	7	5
Brent	7	10	4	7	11	11
Bromley	13	2	9	7	8	9
Camden	17	14	13	12	23	11
City and Hackney	9	5	9	6	9	4
Croydon	17	13	9	13	20	5
Ealing	10	13	32	7	21	1
Enfield	10	10	8	8	4	10
Greenwich	4	6	7	7	5	4
Hammersmith and Fulham	4	3	10	9	19	2
Haringey	8	3	11	13	9	8
Harrow	2	6	7	4	7	2
Havering	3	5	5	5	7	7
Hillingdon	6	9	5	9	11	8
Hounslow	6	3	14	13	14	2
Islington	7	7	12	9	12	14
Kensington and Chelsea	10	2	6	5	7	11
Kingston	1	4	7	8	7	2
Lambeth	12	21	8	14	14	5
Lewisham	3	13	9	9	16	5
Newham	5	5	5	9	6	6
Redbridge	5	5	7	9	13	9
Richmond and Twickenham	3	6	9	10	6	6
Southwark	4	10	6	13	6	6
Sutton and Merton	9	8	12	9	17	11
Tower Hamlets	4	6	5	4	7	5
Waltham Forest	7	2	2	5	5	6
Wandsworth	19	10	16	17	19	25
Westminster	13	26	12	24	21	19
Greater London PCTs	234	247	274	287	347	231

Note:
Information is not available on the number of dentists who have partially left the NHS. Dentists in the GDS and PDS are mainly self-employed and are free to vary the amount of NHS work that they do.

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of the availability of NHS dentists in *(a)* Plympton, *(b)* Plymstock and *(c)* South West Devon; and if he will make a statement; [169397]

(2) what steps he intends to take to increase the number of NHS dentists in South West Devon. [169398]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 29 April 2004]:* The number of dental undergraduates is increasing and we are seeking to attract new graduates into national health service dentistry, to bring back returners to practice and to recruit overseas dentists. At a local level, the whole of the South West Peninsula Strategic Health Authority area has been identified as an "Options for Change" field site and dentists are increasingly opting for the new ways of working that personal dental services allows. A total of 18 practices across the South West Peninsula, including two in Plymouth, have now adopted local contracts with their primary care trusts under "Options for Change".

Mr. Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the trend has been in the number of NHS dentistry patients in each year since 1997 in Morley and Rothwell. [169410]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested for Leeds Health Authority (HA) and South Leeds Primary Care Trust (PCT), which covers Morley and Rothwell, is shown in the tables.

General Dental Service: children and adult registration list sizes and registration rates at 30 September 1977 to 2001—Leeds HA

	Number of registrations			Registration rate (percentage)		
	Adult	Child	Total	Adult	Child	Total
1997	304,406	111,899	416,305	55	66	58
1998	273,722	104,724	378,446	50	64	53
1999	269,879	104,494	374,373	49	64	52
2000	269,905	104,420	374,325	49	65	53
2001	266,807	101,479	368,286	48	63	52

General Dental Service: children and adult registration list sizes and registration rates at 30 September 2002 to 2003[1]—South Leeds PCT

	Number of registrations			Registration rate (percentage)		
	Adult	Child	Total	Adult	Child	Total
2002	56,298	21,626	77,924	51	61	53
2003	55,172	21,067	76,239	50	59	52

[1] Following transfer from HAs to PCTs in 2002, results were published for PCTs rather than HAs.

Notes:

1. Based on the number of registrations at 30 September each year.
2. Registration rates are based on a 15 month registration period. Following the change of registration rate from 24 months to 15 months September 1997 rates are affected.
3. Population data are ONS mid year census estimates.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 255W, on dentists, if he will estimate the impact of the recent National Institute for Clinical Excellence draft guidance on the patient charge revenue from dental examinations. [169720]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The National Institute for Clinical Excellence's (NICE) consultation document on dental recall intervals does not constitute its formal guidance: the recommendations are preliminary and may change after the consultation. Dentists will be expected to follow the final advice, which NICE is expected to publish later this year. This may mean that patients with low risk of disease are seen less frequently than now.

We have also set up a working group under the chairmanship of Harry Cayton, the Department's director for patients and the public, to recommend a new patient charge system. This group has now reported and we are considering its recommendations. We hope to publish the report in due course.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people failed to attend NHS dentist appointments in *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* each of the preceding five years in (i) Worthing and (ii) England. [170630]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No information is available on the number of people failing to attend national health service dental appointments. Details of missed appointments are held only by the dentists and are not collected centrally.

Early Retirement

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many staff in his Department took early retirement and at what total cost, in the last financial year. [171864]

Ms Rosie Winterton: 65 staff took early retirement in the Department in the financial year 2003–04 at a cost of £6,311,042, including annual compensation payments until staff reach normal retirement age.

Eating Disorders

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which local health authorities provide a specialist eating disorders service; where these services are located; and how many in-patient beds each facility had in each of the last five years. [172470]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not centrally available.

Details of services available locally can be obtained from strategic health authorities.

The hon. Member may wish to contact the Eating Disorders Association (Registered Charity No. 801343), which provides information on the services available across the country, at the following address.

Eating Disorders Association
103 Prince of Wales Road
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Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding his Department has made available for the specific treatment of eating disorders in each of the last five years. [172474]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In his 2002 Budget announcement, my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced the largest sustained increase in funding of any five-year period in the history of the national health service. Over the years 2003–04 to 2007–08, these plans mean that expenditure on the NHS will increase on average by 7.4 per cent., a year over and above inflation. However in keeping with the philosophy of "Shifting the Balance of Power", primary care trusts are free to decide the allocation of resources locally.

Fluoride

Mr. Etherington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when he expects to *(a)* receive and *(b)* publish the results of the Newcastle university research study on the bioavailability of artificial and natural fluoride in drinking water; [172110]

(2) when he expects to receive the Chief Medical and Chief Dental Officers' report *(a)* on the relevance and priority of the Medical Research Council report on water fluoridation and *(b)* setting out the alternatives available to residents of fluoridated areas who do not wish to drink fluoridated water; and if he will make a statement. [172112]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The report of the research study into the bioavailability of fluoride in naturally and artificially fluoridated drinking water will be placed in the Library when available. The results of the research will enable the Chief Medical and Chief Dental Officer to complete their advice which will cover both research requirements and the conduct of consultations on fluoridating local water supplies. All drinking water contains some fluoride. Strategic health authorities undertaking consultations on proposals to increase the

fluoride content will need to take into account the views of any people who do not wish to drink fluoridated water.

Foreign Health Professionals

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses trained abroad in each of the last three years. [172017]

Mr. Hutton: The number of doctors employed in the national health service by country of qualification for each of the last three years is shown in the table.

The Department does not collect information on the number of nurses employed in the NHS who trained abroad. The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) holds information on the number of overseas nurses entering the register each year. This information can be found on the NMC website at www.nmc-uk.org.

Hospital, Public Health Medicine, Community Health Services (HCHS) and General Medical Practitioners—All NHS Doctors by country of primary medical qualification: England, as at 30 September

Number (Headcount)

	2001	*2002*	*2003*
All Doctors	100,289	104,448	109,964
of which:			
Qualified within United Kingdom	69,833	71,284	74,037
Qualified within the rest of the European Economic Area	4,829	5,097	5,379
Qualified Elsewhere	22,095	24,413	26,785
Unknown[1]	3,532	3,654	3,763
HCHS medical and dental staff[2]	68,484	72,168	76,400
Of which:			
Qualified within United Kingdom	43,831	45,017	46,890
Qualified within the rest of the European Economic Area	3,574	3,741	3,932
Qualified Elsewhere	17,547	19,756	21,815
Unknown[1]	3,532	3,654	3,763
General Medical Practitioner[3]	31,805	32,280	33,564
Of which:			
Qualified within United Kingdom	26,002	26,267	27,147
Qualified within the rest of the European Economic Area	1,255	1,356	1,447
Qualified Elsewhere	4,548	4,657	4,970

[1] Information about country of qualification is derived from the General Medical Council. For staff in dental specialties, with a General Dental Council registration, the country of qualification is therefore unknown
[2] Excludes Hospital Medical Hospital Practitioners and Hospital Medical Clinical Assistants, most of whom are GPs working part-time in hospitals
[3] All practitioners include GMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs, PMS Salaried GPs, Restricted Principals, Assistants, GP Registrars, Salaried Doctors (Para 52 SPA), PMS Other and GP Retainers.
Source:
Department of Health medical and dental workforce census
Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics

Foundation Trusts

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost of the regulator of NHS foundation trusts will be for each of the next three years. [171262]

Mr. Hutton: The provisional amount in parliamentary estimates that has been allocated to the office of the independent regulator for 2004–05 is £5 million. Negotiations on the actual amount of the budget for 2004–05 are nearing completion. The office of the independent regulator is currently classified by the Cabinet Office as an executive non-departmental public body of the Department, and therefore for future financial years the Department will allocate funds based on costed business plans provided by the chairman of the independent regulator each year for inclusion in the departmental vote.

The chairman of the independent regulator is the accounting officer and is responsible for ensuring that the public funds for which he is responsible are properly managed and safeguarded, and are used in line with the regulator's statutory functions and responsibilities. This includes a duty to exercise functions effectively, efficiently and economically.

General Practitioners

Ms. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research his Department has undertaken into the most common reasons for people visiting their general practitioner; what the results were; and if he will make a statement. [168717]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department does not commission such research but studies of this kind are made by the Office of Health Economics.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioner premises have been *(a)* replaced and *(b)* modernised in each year since 1997. [171592]

Mr. Hutton: The table shows the number of general practitioner premises replaced and modernised in each year from 2000–01. This information was not collected prior to that date.

GP premises	*Replaced*	*Modernised*
2000–01	163	403
2001–02	174	358
2002–03	132	402
2003–04[1]	105	213
Totals	574	1,376

[1] Up to December 2003.

Health Services

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on health in Bootle in each of the last seven years. [171482]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested. Expenditure per weighted head in the Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area, which includes the constituency of Bootle, has increased from £596.24 in 1997–98 to £1,103.34 in 2002–03 (the latest year available). This does not represent the total expenditure per head as an element of health expenditure cannot be identified by SHA area.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes he expects in the number of patients requiring health services in the constituency of Huntingdon over the next 10 years; and if he will make a statement. [172634]

Dr. Ladyman: Following the "Shifting the Balance of Power" initiative, it is for primary care trusts (PCTs) in partnership with health authorities and other local stakeholders to plan and commission local services for their local populations.

I understand that Huntingdonshire district council anticipates an increase in population from 158,000 in 2002 to 163,800 by 2011.

Huntingdonshire PCT is working with its local partners to ensure that services meet the future needs of an increased population.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the benefits for residents of the constituency of Huntingdon of the Health Development Agency. [172638]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department has not required the Health Development Agency (HDA) to assess its effect separately at constituency level.

Much of the East of England regional work of the HDA, which includes Huntingdon, is focussed on service delivery that supports the whole of the region's public health development, particularly around cancer, coronary heart disease and respiratory diseases, national healthy schools standards and the ageing population.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of NHS staff working in Greater London hospitals, broken down by national health service trust, receive financial assistance with regard to *(a)* housing and *(b)* transportation. [170508]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Information on the number of healthcare workers who have benefited from Government assistance in purchasing their own homes under the Starter Home Initiative scheme by the end of March 2004 broken down by London national health service trust is collected and is contained in the following table.

SHI Completions 2001–02 to 2003–04

	Number of Units			
Employer name	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*Total completions by end March 2004*
Barking and Dagenham Primary Care Trust	—	1	4	5
Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS trust	—	5	21	26
Barts and the London NHS trust	—	7	58	65
Chingford, Wanstead and Woodford Primary Care Trust City and Hackney Primary Care Trust	—	6	14	110
East London and the City Mental Health NHS Trust	—	13	17	30
Havering Primary Care Trust	—	—	4	4
Homerton Hospital NHS Trust	—	7	28	35
Newham Healthcare NHS Trust	—	5	15	20
Newham Primary Care Trust	—	5	13	18
North East London Mental Health NHS Trust	—	3	10	13
Redbridge Primary Care Trust	—	—	2	2
Tower Hamlets Primary Care Trust	—	4	11	15
Walthamstow, Leyton and Leytonstone Primary Care Trust	—	—	1	1
Whipps Cross University Hospital NHS Trust	—	7	12	19
Total NE London	0	63	201	264
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	—	4	33	37
Barnet Primary Care Trust	—	2	12	14
Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust	—	3	7	10
Camden and Islington Community Health Services NHS Trust	—	8	10	18
Camden and Islington Mental Health NHS Trust	—	7	29	36
Enfield Primary Care Trust	—	1	8	9
Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust	—	28	42	70
Haringey Primary Care Trust	—	5	10	15
Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	11	11
North Middlesex Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	16	16
Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust	—	14	39	53
Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust	—	1	13	14
Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust	—	—	2	2
University College London Hospitals NHS Trust	—	35	56	91
Whittington Hospital NHS Trust	—	4	12	16
Total NC London	0	112	300	412

SHI Completions 2001–02 to 2003–04

Employer name	Number of Units 2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	Total completions by end March 2004
Brent	—	—	4	4
Kensington Chelsea and Westminster Mental Health NHS Trust	—	24	29	53
Chelsea and Westminster Healthcare NHS Trust	1	33	46	80
Ealing Hospital NHS Trust	—	10	16	26
Harrow and Hillingdon Healthcare NHS Trust	—	2	2	4
Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust	—	9	16	25
Hillingdon Primary Care Trust	—	1	4	5
Hounslow Primary Care NHS Trust	—	1	13	14
North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	—	16	28	44
Parkside Health NHS Trust (Hammersmith and Fulham PCT)	1	2	15	18
Riverside Community Healthcare NHS Trust (H and F PCT)	—	3	3	6
Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Trust	—	10	17	27
St. Mary's Hospital NHS Trust	—	17	25	42
The Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust	1	49	57	107
West London Mental Health NHS Trust	—	—	19	19
West Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust	—	7	10	17
Total NW London	3	184	304	491
Bexley Primary Care Trust	—	1	3	4
Bromley Hospitals NHS Trust	—	7	12	19
Bromley Primary Care Trust	—	2	2	4
Community Health South London NHS Trust	—	6	14	20
Greenwich Healthcare NHS Trust	—	3	11	14
Greenwich Primary Care Trust	—	2	2	4
Guy's and St. Thomas' Hospital NHS Trust	—	30	54	84
King's Healthcare NHS Trust	—	21	47	68
London Ambulance Service NHS Trust	—	34	43	77
Oxleas NHS Trust	—	1	13	14
Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust	—	2	5	7
South London and Maudsley NHS Trust	1	37	45	83
The Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust	—	12	13	25
Total SE London	1	158	264	423
Croydon and Surrey Downs Community Health NHS Trust Epsom and St. Helier NHS Trust	—	11	212	313
Kingston Hospital NHS Trust	—	4	11	15
Kingston PCT	—	1	—	1
Mayday Healthcare NHS Trust	—	7	16	23
South West London and St. George's Mental Health NHS Trust	—	15	23	38
South West London Community NHS Trust	—	4	17	21
St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	—	26	37	63
Teddington, Twickenham and Hamptons Primary Care Trust	—	2	2	4
The Royal Marsden NHS Trust	2	10	14	26
Total SW London	2	71	134	207
Total	6	588	1,203	1,797

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many cases of MRSA have been identified in hospitals within Greater London, broken down by national health service trust, in each year since 1997; [170509]

(2) what percentage of patients within hospitals in Greater London, broken down by national health service trust, are infected with MRSA; [170510]

(3) what percentage of NHS staff within hospitals in Greater London, broken down by national health service trust, are infected with MRSA. [170511]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information on cases by individual Trust from 1997 is not available. The tables show data available from the mandatory methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) blood stream (bacteraemia) infections surveillance system that started in April 2001. Information on National Health Service staff is not available, but MRSA rarely infects healthy people such as healthcare staff.

Reported MRSA bacteraemias and rates by acute NHS Trust (April 2001 Mar 2002)

London region	Total MRSA	MRSA Rate per 1,000 bed days
Trust Name		
Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust	92	0.19
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	62	0.18
Barts and the London NHS Trust	62	0.17
Bromley Hospitals NHS Trust	37	0.19
Chelsea and Westminster Healthcare NHS Trust	36	0.21
Ealing Hospital NHS Trust	40	0.29
Epsom and St. Helier NHS Trust	84	0.31
Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust	7	0.09
Guy's and St. Thomas' NHS Trust	114	0.31
Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust	89	0.27

Reported MRSA bacteraemias and rates by acute NHS Trust (April 2001 Mar 2002)

London region	Total MRSA	MRSA Rate per 1,000 bed days
Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust	33	0.15
Homerton Hospital NHS Trust	14	0.09
King's College Hospital NHS Trust	92	0.30
Kingston Hospital NHS Trust	23	0.12
Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust	54	0.29
Mayday Healthcare NHS Trust	39	0.16
Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Trust	0	0.00
Newham Healthcare NHS Trust	25	0.17
North Middlesex Hospital NHS Trust	45	0.28
North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	59	0.21
Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust	18	0.12
Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust	30	0.23
Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Trust	9	0.07
Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust	122	0.43
Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	6	0.09
Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust	2	0.04
St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	115	0.38
St. Mary's NHS Trust	64	0.30
University College London Hospitals NHS Trust	94	0.36
West Middlesex University NHS Trust	32	0.23
Whipps Cross University Hospital NHS Trust	45	0.18
Whittington Hospital NHS Trust	27	0.18

MRSA reported bacteraemias and rates by acute NHS Trust (April 2002 to March 2003)

London region	Total MRSA	MRSA rate per 1,000 bed days
Trust Name		
Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust	77	0.16
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	94	0.27
Barts and the London NHS Trust	74	0.21
Bromley Hospitals NHS Trust	32	0.17
Chelsea and Westminster Healthcare NHS Trust	32	0.19
Ealing Hospital NHS Trust	38	0.28
Epsom and St. Helier NHS Trust	72	0.26
Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust	13	0.17
Guy's and St. Thomas' NHS Trust	154	0.42
Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust	115	0.34
Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust	36	0.17
Homerton Hospital NHS Trust	19	0.13
King's College Hospital NHS Trust	108	0.35
Kingston Hospital NHS Trust	42	0.23
Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust	45	0.24
Mayday Healthcare NHS Trust	48	0.20
Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Trust	0	0.00
Newham Healthcare NHS Trust	33	0.23
North Middlesex Hospital NHS Trust	48	0.30
Queen Elizabeth Hospital	35	0.23
Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust	32	0.24
Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Trust	9	0.07
Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust	101	0.35
Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	7	0.10
Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust	6	0.13
St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	75	0.25
St. Mary's NHS Trust	72	0.33
University College London Hospitals NHS Trust	84	0.32
West Middlesex University NHS Trust	41	0.30
Whipps Cross University Hospital NHS Trust	43	0.18
Whittington Hospital NHS Trust	30	0.20

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in South Ribble are receiving drug treatment. [171657]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In 2000–01, there were a total of 2,874 people receiving drug treatment in the area covered by the drug action team for Lancashire. This is the latest available data. Data broken down by drug action team for 2001–02 and 2002–03 has not yet been finalised and published.

Source:
DH Statistics.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses there were in South Ribble in each of the last seven years. [171273]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on *(a)* heart disease and *(b)* cancer care in South Ribble in each of the last five years. [171669]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally. Allocations of funding for particular treatments are matters for local primary care trusts.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on health in South Ribble in each of the last five years. [171674]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested. Expenditure per weighted head in the Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area, which includes the constituency of South Ribble, has increased from £600.03 in 1997–98 to £1,173.57 in 2002–03 (the latest year available). This does not represent the total expenditure per head, as an element of health expenditure cannot be identified by SHA area.

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the levels of elective admission to Taunton and Somerset NHS Trust in the past three years. [172014]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Data on the levels of elective admission to Taunton and Somerset National Health Service Trust in the past three years is shown in the table.

In year elective admission episodes for Taunton and Somerset NHS Trust

	Number
2000–01	31,329
2001–02	31,385
2002–03	31,907

Notes:

In-year admissions

An in-year admission is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider, excluding admissions beginning before 1 April at the start of the data year. Periods of care ongoing at the end of the data year (unfinished admission episodes) are included. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

Ungrossed Data

Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* therapists and *(b)* scientists were located in Taunton in each of the last three years. [172016]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Requested information on the number of national health service therapists and scientists located in Taunton in each of the last three years is shown in the table.

Headcount

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Taunton Deane PCT	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	13	14
Taunton and Somerset NHS Trust	418	421	432	454	384	377	410

n/a = not applicable.
Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many rapid access chest pain clinics there are in Taunton. [172019]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There is one rapid access chest pain clinic in Taunton, based at the Musgrove Park Hospital, part of the Taunton and Somerset national health service trust.

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on health in West Lancashire in each of the last seven years. [171550]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 10 May 2004]*: The information is not available in the format requested. Expenditure per weighted head in the Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area, which includes the constituency of West Lancashire, has increased from £600.03 in 1997–98 to £1,173.57 in 2002–03 (the latest year available). This does not represent the total expenditure per head as an element of health expenditure cannot be identified by SHA area.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses there were in Wigan in each of the last seven years; and if he will make a statement. [169345]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* therapists and *(b)* scientists were located in Wigan in each of the last seven years. [169346]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff in each specified organisation as at 30 September each specified year

Headcount

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
	488	506	516	528	619	587	624
Ashton, Leigh and Wigan PCT	—	—	—	—	—	311	335
Wigan and Bolton HA	—	—	—	—	4	—	—
Wigan and Leigh Health Services NHS Trust	488	506	516	528	—	—	—
Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	615	276	289
Wrightington Hospitals NHS Trust	40	44	45	47	—	—	—

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will make a statement on the numbers of NHS *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses in Workington constituency in each of the last seven years; [170706]

(2) what changes there have been to NHS waiting list time in the last seven years for the residents of Workington constituency. [170708]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on NHS waiting times for heart surgery in Workington constituency. [170710]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Coronary heart disease waiting time: West Cumbria Primary Care Trust

Year/quarter	*Patients waiting over nine months*
2002–03	
1	5
2	12
3	2
4	0
2003–04	
1	0
2	0
3	0

Source:
Department of Health form QF01.

Hospices

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much of the £12 million announced on 26 December 2003 for palliative care will be available to hospices. [167052]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The additional £12 million investment over three years announced by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State on 26 December 2003 follows on from the commitment in the recent Command Paper "Building on the Best".

This additional money is not intended for hospices. It is to be used to ensure that, by widening the pool of generalist staff, in primary care, in care homes and in hospitals, who are trained in meeting the needs of people nearing the end of their lives, patients—regardless of their diagnosis—will have access to high quality palliative care so that they will be able to be cared for and to die in a place of their choice.

Human Fertilisation and Embryology

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many licensed fertility clinics have had their licences *(a)* suspended and *(b)* revoked by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority in each year since 1991. [166910]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The number of licence suspensions and revocations for failure to comply with the provisions of either the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990, the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority's code of practice or the conditions of the establishment's licence, since 1997, are shown in the table.

Licences suspended or revoked by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority since 1997[1]

Year[2]	*Suspension*	*Revocation*
1999	—	1
2003	[3]1	—
2004	1	—

[1] Figures do not include licences voluntarily given up by licensed establishments.

[2] No licences were suspended or revoked in the years 1997, 1998, 2000, 2001 and 2002.

[3] Suspension applied only to specified licensed activities, not the whole licence.

Source:
Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority.

Information for 1991 to 1996 is held on microfilmed records, by licensed establishment, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Intermediate Care

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of National Service Framework local implementation teams have reported that an intermediate care co-ordinator is in place; and if he will make a statement. [171021]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collected centrally.

Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-regional Strategy

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on proposals for increased funding to growth areas in South-east England, as mentioned in paragraph 97 of the Cross-Government Statement (matters 1, 2, 3, 4) on the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy. [172171]

Mr. Hutton: The Department has given its backing to providing health service infrastructure to support the development of sustainable growth areas.

As announced to Parliament, on 15 March 2004 the Department has agreed to provide an extra £20 million, per annum, of revenue funding in 2004–05 and 2005–06 to be allocated to primary care trusts (PCTs) and £20 million of capital resources in 2005–06 to be allocated to strategic health authorities.

PCTs within the growth areas were notified of their additional 2004–05 and 2005–06 revenue allocations on 25 March 2004.

The Department has also agreed to give priority to Office of the Deputy Prime Minister growth areas for future local improvement finance trust schemes and to include a growth area adjustment for ODPM growth areas in the next round of PCT allocations.

Morphine Sulphate

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the target date is for the availability of morphine sulphate by NHS prescription in each primary care trust area; in what areas it is already available; and when guidelines will be published on the prescription of morphine sulphate. [171928]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Morphine sulphate is available on national health service prescription and was prescribed in all primary care trust areas in 2003.

Guidance on the prescribing of morphine sulphate is given in the British National Formulary, a copy of which is supplied to all NHS doctors and pharmacists. Advice on the use of morphine sulphate in specific medical conditions has also been published in the Drug and Therapeutics Bulletins, the MeReC Bulletins and in PRODIGY guidance for primary care, which are widely distributed free of charge to NHS professional staff.

Mumps

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of teenagers in England who *(a)* are not inoculated against mumps and *(b)* have had only one of the two necessary doses. [167428]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department does not have data on the number of teenagers who either received only one dose of the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine or no doses. Most older children and adolescents will naturally be immune from mumps infection. Seroprevalance data, this is data where antibody levels are measures in blood samples, suggests that around 20 per cent., may be unprotected against mumps.

National Service Frameworks

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will make a statement on progress towards the National Service Framework milestone for

general practitioner practices diagnosing, treating and caring for older people with depression and dementia; [170615]

(2) if he will make a statement on progress towards the National Service Framework milestone for protocols across health and social care systems for the care and management of older people with mental health problems; [170616]

(3) if he will make a statement on progress towards the National Service Framework milestone for strategic and operational plans to include the development of an integrated mental health service for older people. [170629]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department is monitoring progress towards the development of protocol driven, joined-up mental health services for older people. This is a "must do" target in the 2003–06 priorities and planning framework.

All of the milestones relating to standard 7 of the national service framework are the responsibility of strategic health authorities to plan for and monitor progress towards, but we would expect the type of service mentioned to be part of an integrated service.

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on progress towards the National Service Framework milestone for integrated continence services across health and social care systems. [170620]

Dr. Ladyman: The responsibility for implementing this milestone and monitoring progress is the responsibility of strategic health authorities. Monitoring information on progress with this milestone is not collected centrally.

NHS Beds

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS beds were available in Birkenhead in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [167646]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information on the average daily number of beds in acute wards in each national health service trust and England from 1996–97 to 2002–03 is available from the Department's website at www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity/index.htm.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS beds were available in Preston in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [168104]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information on beds is collected on a provider basis from national health service organisations and the latest data available is for the year 2002–03. Beds data for 2003–04 will be published later this year.

Information about the relevant trusts has been placed in the Library.

NHS Information Technology

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the end-user groups being consulted in the National Programme for Information Technology in the NHS. [R] [171823]

Mr. Hutton: Consultation has taken place with clinical representative groups, including the professional Royal Colleges, the General Medical Council, the British Medical Council and the NHS Confederation, all of whom have provided valuable input. As well as the national professional bodies and groups, the national programme for information technology (NPfIT) team has engaged closely with expert primary care practitioners, including practising general practitioners, who are there to represent and feedback issues with their professional colleagues.

The national clinical advisory board (NCAB) has ensured that the wide-ranging clinical needs and requirements are reflected in the design of the NPfIT solutions and integrated into the ongoing plans of the programme. Their work covered a variety of care settings, from cancer care to out of hours care. Since the appointment of Aidan Halligan, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, as joint senior responsible owner and director general for NPfIT, plans are in hand to improve and review the formal arrangements for engaging with key stakeholders across the national health service. This will include a frontline support academy and wider patient groups and an announcement will be made later in summer.

The NPfIT has to date hosted around 400 local events, engaging managers, clinicians, allied health professionals and IT staff. Over 21,000 individuals have been involved. A series of national and regional joint events with the NHS Confederation began on 10 May, aimed at speaking directly to the chief executives and board members who need to lead local implementation.

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the dates of *(a)* past and *(b)* planned future meetings of the clinical consultation group to the National Programme for Information Technology in the NHS are. [R] [171824]

Mr. Hutton: Previous meetings of the national clinical advisory board were held on:

2 October 2003.

27 November 2003.

15 January 2004.

16 March 2004.

13 May 2004.

The Department issued a press notice on 30 April 2004 to outline the plans to continue and improve engagement with patient and national health service stakeholders in order to support the implementation of the national programme for information technology (NPfIT). This follows on from the appointment of Aidan Halligan, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, as joint senior responsible owner and director general for NpfIT, who now has responsibility for leading on the preparations and planning for implementation across the NHS.

The first step has been to set up a new frontline support academy for clinicians. The formal arrangements for engaging with key groups are also being reviewed and an announcement will be made later in the summer.

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the estimated cost is of training *(a)* clinical staff and *(b)* non-clinical staff to use the information systems developed by the National Programme for Information Technology in the NHS. [R] [171826]

Mr. Hutton: Training plans are still evolving as is to be expected when approaching a phased programme of implementation and roll out of new applications, systems and services. The training requirements are not solely related to the national programme for information technology in the national health service in England (NPfIT) as general IT skills are now an everyday element for any public service and service based organisation. The European computer driving licence is helping to improve general skills across the NHS. The move to e-learning and development and the NHS University will both create more demand for computer and online skills and provide more channels and solutions to bring training to people.

As we complete the more detailed plans for each geographical cluster and local service provider contract, we can map out the extent of IT support for clinical practice and patient care over the phased implementation of NPfIT. This will generate clearer training requirements and will enable us to consider the most appropriate ways of providing training and development and produce firmer costs.

NHS Staff

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS whole-time equivalent *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses there were in East Worthing and Shoreham in each of the last seven years. [169028]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is not available for the area requested. However, the number of whole time equivalent doctors and nurses within Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority area, broken down by trust, has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses there were in Wirral, South in each of the last seven years. [172685]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Nurse Training

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health in which years since 1997 applications for nurse training places from suitably qualified applicants have exceeded the number of places available; and if he will make a statement. [171822]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not available. Information on the number of applicants to pre-registration nursing and midwifery training commissions and the number of training commissions available each year is shown in the tables.

The national health service recruitment campaign was launched on 1 March to raise the profile of careers in the NHS and encourage new entrants into training and the Government is increasing the number of training places for nurses and midwives. Between 1997–98 and 2002–03, the number of pre-registration nursing and midwifery training commissions has increased by 6,417, or 39 per cent., with a further increase forecast in 2003–04.

Ratio of applicants to pre-registration nursing and midwifery training courses to nursing and midwifery training commissions in England each year

Diploma[1]

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Applicants	18,732	32,405	34,953	40,908	33,864	29,689
Commissions	16,120	16,586	17,383	18,666	19,704	n/a

n/a = Not available.
[1] Applicant and commissions data are not directly comparable as the NMAS applications cycle runs for longer than the commissioning cycle, 1997–98 applicants data is therefore compared with 1998–99 commissions data and a direct ratio is not applicable
Source:
Nursing and Midwifery Admissions Service Department of Health Quarterly Monitoring Reports Degree.

Degree

	1997–98	*1998–89*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Applicants to commissions ratio	n/a	n/a	n/a	2.0	2.0	2.0
Applicants	n/a	n/a	n/a	5,357	6,126	6,541
Commissions	521	1,569	2,121	2,638	3,104	3,252

n/a = Not available.
Source:
University and Colleges Admission Service Department of Health Quarterly Monitoring Reports

Osteoporosis

Mrs. Dean: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of primary care trusts have a fully integrated falls and osteoporosis service as set out in the National Service Framework for Older People. [172548]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer my hon. Friend to the response I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Forest of Dean (Diana Organ), on 11 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 319W.

Parliamentary Questions

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects to reply to the question from the hon. Member for Westbury, reference 159700, tabled on 5 March, concerning Government information on dentist training numbers. [172174]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I refer the hon. Member to the reply that I gave him on 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 178W.

Patients Forums

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps are being taken by the Commission for Public Patient Involvement to ensure that *(a)* residents and *(b)* patients can find the names of members of local patients' forums. [172522]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Any member of the public can contact their local patients' forum through the forum support organisations (FSO); their details are on the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health website at www.cppih.org.

Names of individual members are made available to the primary care trust and national health service trust that the patients' forum is working with, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 requirements.

Individual members' names are not currently widely available to the public for technical reasons linked to the Data Protection Act. The Commission is, however, working with all forums to enable wide availability of members' names.

Prescriptions

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many pharmacy and general practitioner prescribing projects are operating; how many people they cover; and what assessment he has made of their *(a)* influence on the numbers of people seeking treatment and *(b)* impact on the level of crime. [168722]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department does not centrally collect numbers of general practitioner prescribing projects.

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the numbers of patients who fail to get prescriptions dispensed because of the charges. [165410]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of prescription items dispensed in the community is recorded centrally but no information is held centrally about the number of items prescribed. We have not, therefore, made any assessment of the number of items which might be prescribed but not dispensed. However, in 2002 only 14 per cent. of prescriptions dispensed in the community attracted a charge.

Prisoners

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what alternative therapeutic environments are available to treat women who are sent to prison who are mentally ill. [172610]

Dr. Ladyman: Specialist services for people with mental health problems who come into contact with the criminal justice system are provided by multidisciplinary teams working in in-patient settings and in the community. The Department supports a range of police and court diversion and liaison schemes that enable the early diversion of such people to specialist mental health services. The courts have a number of psychiatric disposals available to them, ranging from a hospital order requiring detention in a psychiatric hospital to probation order with a condition requiring an offender to have psychiatric treatment. In addition, women prisoners assessed as needing in-patient treatment for mental disorder may be transferred to hospital.

Prosthetics/Orthodontics

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action is being taken to train more people in *(a)* prosthetics and *(b)* orthodontics. [172396]

Mr. Hutton: The number of training places in prosthetics and orthodontics has increased from 28 to 30 between 1996–97 and 2002–03 and the workforce review team annually reviews the need for increases in training for all the allied health professions.

Information on the number of consultants and doctors in training in orthodontics is shown in the table. The Department has centrally funded two more training posts in orthodontics in 2004–05, bringing the total training posts in place to 31. The number of dentists electing to train in specialties like orthodontics is related to the number of undergraduates training as dentists relative to the demand for dental care. We have recently completed the first review of the dental workforce since 1987 and will shortly be announcing the results including the implications for the intake of undergraduates to dental schools in England.

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS): dental staff within the Orthodontics and Prosthodontics—England[1]

Orthodontics

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*December 2003*
All staff	509	501	504	513	506	508	522	n/a
Of which:								
Consultant	153	153	157	161	154	161	178	176
Doctors in training	110	120	117	101	115	130	118	n/a

n/a = Not applicable.

[1] Data at 30 September 1997 to 2003 and 31 December 2003.

Note:

December 2003 data has been taken from the mini census which collected consultants only.

Source:

Department of Health medical and dental workforce census.

Provigil (Modafinil)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many prescriptions of provigil (modafinil) have been made for children in each of the last five years. [172586]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* In each of the last five years, it is estimated that under 1,000 prescription items of modafinil were dispensed in the community to children.

Rheumatological/Musculoskeletal Conditions

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice and guidance is provided as part of the expert patients programme to patients with musculoskeletal conditions. [171932]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The expert patients programme (EPP) provides generic, lay-led, group based training for people in the self management of their long term condition. The programme is aimed at a wide range of people from different long term conditions and age groups, geographical location and ethnicity. The EPP is delivered locally by a network of trainers and volunteer tutors with long term conditions.

The EPP is a generic course and teaches five core self-management skills: problem solving; decision making; resource utilisation; developing effective partnerships with healthcare providers and taking action. The programme offers a tool-kit of fundamental techniques that patients can undertake to improve the quality of their life living with a long-term condition.

The course enables patients to develop their communication skills, manage their emotions, manage daily activities, interact with the healthcare system, find health resources, plan for the future, understand exercising and healthy eating, and manage fatigue, sleep, pain, anger and depression.

No specific medical advice is given to people with musculoskeletal conditions, the course aims to develop confidence and self control and does not concentrate on the physiological symptoms of the disease.

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many extended scope physiotherapists are working in the NHS; and what steps are being taken to increase this number. [171934]

Mr. Hutton: Information is not collected separately on the number of extended scope physiotherapists employed in the national health service. As at September 2003, there were 17,922 physiotherapists employed in the NHS, an increase of 3,679 or 26 per cent., since 1997.

The Government have implemented a range of measures to recruit more health care professionals, including physiotherapists. These include improving pay and conditions, encouraging the NHS to become a better, more flexible and diverse employer, increasing training, investing in child care and continuing professional development, attracting back returners and running national and international recruitment campaigns.

School Nurses

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to increase the number of school nurses. [170370]

Mr. Hutton: Information is not available on the number of school nurses employed in the national health service. The Government collected information on the school nursing workforce in the September 2003 non-medical workforce census but this information was incomplete. Reliable information will be available from the September 2004 workforce census.

School nurses are largely employed by primary care trusts (PCTs), and it is for PCTs and care trusts to continue to assess the level of need for school nurses in the context of wider initiatives which impact on the delivery of health services to school age children. These include a review of the nursing, midwifery and health visiting contribution to vulnerable children and young people by the Chief Nursing Officer, the development of the national service framework for children and the work arising from the green paper on children including the development of a workforce strategy covering a range of staff working with children and young people.

Sexually-transmitted Infections

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the percentage changes were, broken down by *(a)* age and *(b)* sex for rates of (i) conception and (ii) sexually transmitted infections in teenagers for each of the last five years in the North West London Health Authority. [167997]

Mr. Hutton: Conception data, numbers, rates and percentage changes, for the years 1997–2001 (latest data available) for North West London Strategic Health Authority is as shown in the table.

Conceptions (numbers, rates, percentage change)—North West London Strategic Health Authority, 1997 to 2001

	Under 16			*16 to 19*		
	Number	*Rate*[1]	*Percentage change*	*Number*	*Rate*[2]	*Percentage change*
1997	205	7.9	—	2,861	72.1	—
1998	213	7.9	0.0	2,969	79.0	+9.5
1999	222	8.0	+1.3	2,933	78.3	-0.9
2000	237	8.4	+5.0	2,950	81.5	+4.1
2001	238	8.4	0.0	2,854	75.1	-7.9

[1] Rate per 1,000 females aged 13 to 16.

[2] Rate per 1,000 females aged 16 to 19.

The following table shows the percentage change in the rate of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) shown for the four principal infections (gonorrhoea, chlamydia, herpes—first attack—and genital warts—first attack) for the combined age group 13 to 19-years-old by sex in North West London Health Authority for the last six years of complete data (1998–2002).

Too few and sporadic cases of syphilis among teenagers 13 to 19 years were reported from GUM clinics in the North West London Health Authority over the last five years, making calculation of rates unreliable; thus these data are not provided.

Note that these diagnoses represent only persons attending genito urinary medicine (GUM) clinics in the North West London Health Authority and not necessarily residents within that area. Data on diagnoses made outside the GUM setting, such as in general practice, are not held centrally and not, therefore, included in these totals.

Diagnoses, rates (per 100,000 of population) and rates change of selected STIs in teenagers age 13 to 19 years attending GUM Clinics in North West London STHA

	Males			Females		
	Diagnoses	Rate	Rate change (Percentage)	Diagnoses	Rate	Rate change (Percentage)
Uncomplicated genital chlamydia						
1997	66	88.9	—	296	423.9	—
1998	72	96.9	9.0	342	492.7	16.2
1999	98	133.7	38.0	387	580.3	17.8
2000	225	303.0	126.6	709	1,088.2	87.5
2001	257	363.1	19.8	675	1,014.1	-6.8
2002	252	356.0	-1.9	630	946.5	-6.7
Uncomplicated gonorrhoea						
1997	105	141.5	—	105	150.4	—
1998	80	107.7	-23.9	105	151.3	0.6
1999	106	144.6	34.3	147	220.4	45.7
2000	200	269.3	86.2	230	353.0	60.2
2001	180	254.3	-5.6	235	353.0	0.0
2002	189	267.0	5.0	233	350.0	-0.9
Genital herpes						
1997	13	17.5	—	97	138.9	—
1998	17	22.9	30.6	109	157.0	13.0
1999	23	31.4	37.2	92	137.9	-12.2
2000	32	43.1	37.3	105	161.2	16.8
2001	28	39.6	-8.2	117	175.8	9.1
2002	25	35.3	-10.7	83	124.7	-29.1
Genital warts						
1997	56	75.5	—	217	310.8	—
1998	77	103.6	37.3	213	306.9	-1.3
1999	79	107.8	4.0	230	344.9	12.4
2000	97	130.6	21.2	217	333.1	-3.4
2001	88	124.3	-4.8	253	380.1	14.1
2002	94	132.8	6.8	248	372.6	-2.0
Total						
1997	240	323.4	—	715	1,023.9	—
1998	247	332.4	2.8	769	1,107.9	8.2
1999	306	417.5	25.6	857	1,285.0	16.0
2000	555	747.3	79.0	1261	1,935.4	50.6
2001	553	781.2	4.5	1280	1,923.0	-0.6
2002	561	792.5	1.4	1194	1,793.8	-6.7

Source:
Health Protection Agency.

Unified NHS Database

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to create a unified database of *(a)* health records and *(b)* users of NHS services; and if he will make a statement. [170334]

Mr. Hutton: The national programme for information technology in the national health service in England has been established to connect delivery of the NHS Plan with the capabilities of modern information technologies to support the delivery of fast, convenient and seamless services designed around the patient.

Fundamental to this is the NHS care records service (NHS CRS) that will enable patient care information and records to be accessed at the point of need anywhere in England.

Over time, the NHS CRS will provide all 50 million NHS patients with an individual electronic care record to summarise key treatment and episodes of care within either the health service or social care. Access to any personally identifiable information about patients will be subject to stringent access controls, confidentiality and security safeguards and will be fully compliant with the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

Unused Medicines

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate for each year since 1997 *(a)* the amount of medicines dispensed and never used in (i) England, (ii) each NHS region, (iii) each strategic health authority and *(b)* the cost of these medicines to the NHS; and if he will make a statement. [169704]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not collected centrally.

Waiting Lists

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average number of patients on *(a)* in-patient and *(b)* day case waiting lists was in each Greater London NHS Trust since 1997; and what the percentage change was in each year. [168936]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested for the national health service trusts within the five London strategic health authorities has been placed in the Library.

Waiting Lists/Times

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of suspected cancer patients in Manchester, Gorton saw an NHS consultant within two weeks in each of the last seven years. [167386]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Waiting times for first consultant out-patient appointment for suspected cancer following urgent GP referral

			Seen within 2 weeks	
	Quarter	*NHS Trust*	*Percentage*	*Number*
2000–01	4	Central Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	90.4	75
2000–01	4	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	95.0	19
2001–02	1	Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust	90.0	81
2001–02	1	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	83.3	5
2001–02	2	Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust	85.0	68
2001–02	2	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	100.0	8
2001–02	3	Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust	93.5	100
2001–02	3	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	100.0	3
2001–02	4	Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust	87.9	80
2001–02	4	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	100.0	3
2002–03	1	Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust	88.0	95
2002–03	1	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	83.3	5
2002–03	2	Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust	98.4	125
2002–03	2	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	100.0	2
2002–03	3	Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	165
2002–03	3	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	85.7	6
2002–03	4	Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	135
2002–03	4	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	80.0	4
2003–04	1	Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	109
2003–04	1	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	75.0	3
2003–04	2	Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust	99.2	128
2003–04	2	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	100.0	5
2003–04	3	Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	151
2003–04	3	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	100.0	3

Source:
Department of Health form QMCW.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on NHS waiting times for heart surgery in Manchester, Gorton. [167387]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In February 2004, no one waited more than nine months for a heart operation at Central Manchester and Manchester Children's Hospital National Health Service Trust. The total number of people waiting for a heart operation at Central Manchester and Manchester Children's Hospital NHS Trust was 257.

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time was for non-urgent operations within the *(a)* Sunderland, *(b)* Easington, *(c)* Hartlepool and *(d)* Durham primary care trusts in the last year for which figures are available. [168306]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

	Primary care trust	*Finished admissions*	*Time waited mean (days)*
5D9	Hartlepool PCT	9,185	96
5J8	Durham Dales PCT	6,082	89
5KC	Durham and Chester-le-Street PCT	10,371	118
5KD	Easington PCT	8,717	105
5KL	Sunderland Teaching PCT	22,164	95

Notes:

1. A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one health care provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

2. Time waited statistics from Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) are not the same as the published waiting list statistics. HES provides counts and time waited for all patients admitted to hospital within a given period whereas the published waiting list statistics count those waiting for treatment on a specific date and how long they have been on the waiting list. Also, HES calculates the time waited as the difference between the admission and decision to admit dates. Unlike published waiting list statistics, this is not adjusted for self-deferrals or periods of medical/social suspension.

3. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e., the data is ungrossed).

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the waiting times are for hip replacements within the *(a)* Sunderland, *(b)* Easington, *(c)* Hartlepool and *(d)* Durham primary care trusts. [168307]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

	PCT—Primary care trust code	Finished admissions	Time waited mean (days)
5D9	Hartlepool PCT	153	145
5J8	Durham Dales PCT	165	237
5KC	Durham and Chester-le-Street PCT	193	247
5KD	Easington PCT	149	233
5KL	Sunderland Teaching PCT	385	293

Notes:

1. A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
2. Time waited statistics from Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) are not the same as the published waiting list statistics. HES provides counts and time waited for all patients admitted to hospital within a given period whereas the published waiting list statistics count those waiting for treatment on a specific date and how long they have been on the waiting list. Also, HES calculates the time waited as the difference between the admission and decision to admit dates. Unlike published waiting list statistics, this is not adjusted for self-deferrals or periods of medical/social suspension.
3. The main operation is the first recorded operation in the HES data set and is usually the most resource intensive procedure performed during the episode. It is appropriate to use main operation when looking at admission details, e.g. time waited, but the figures for "all operations count of episodes" give a more complete count of episodes with an operation.
4. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the *(a)* shortest, *(b)* longest and *(c)* medium waiting times were for first diagnostic appointments to consultant (i) neurologists, (ii) geriatricians and (iii) physicians for people suspected of having Parkinson's disease in of the last five years for which figures are available; [172578]

(2) how many patients were in the latter stages of Parkinson's accessed hospice care in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [172579]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* The information requested is not collected centrally. However, the Department is driving forward a major programme of work to improve equality of access to all national health service treatment and care services. Maximum waiting times have fallen over the past few years and will continue to do so. By the end of 2005, the maximum waiting time for a first out-patient appointment with a consultant will fall to three months and the maximum wait for inpatient treatment will fall to six months.

The Department is developing a national service framework for long term conditions, which will focus on improving services for people with neurological conditions such as Parkinson's Disease. The Department has also commissioned the National Institute for Clinical Excellence to prepare guidelines for the diagnosis, management and treatment of Parkinson's disease in primary and secondary care. We expect that the guidelines will be published in spring 2006.

Wanless Report

Mr. Maples: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what measures are being taken to ensure that the recommendations of the Derek Wanless Report are being implemented, with particular regard to the prevention of cardiac arrhythmias; [169270]

(2) how he will ensure that the *(a)* measures to improve patient information access and *(b)* the expert patients programme will be applicable to sufferers of cardiac arrhythmias. [169273]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Wanless Report does not make any specific recommendations with regard to the prevention of cardiac arrhythmias. On 12 March 2004, the Government announced that a new national service framework chapter on arrhythmias and sudden cardiac death would be published within one year.

An expert group will be formed to take this work forward.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 18 May 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Animal Welfare

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) if she will oppose in the Council of Ministers proposals providing for journey time of longer than eight hours for all animals travelling for slaughter or further fattening; [166931]

(2) if she will make representations for EU regulations on the maximum legally permitted temperature at which animals can be transported to be reduced; and if she will make a statement; [166933]

(3) if she will make representations for EU regulations on the maximum stocking densities for animals in transit to be reduced to allow animals to *(a)* reposition themselves so as not to fall and *(b)* lie down comfortably; and if she will make a statement. [166932]

Mr. Bradshaw: These are all important matters that were considered at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council on 26 April. The talks failed as the Presidency could not secure a qualified majority for its proposals, which in our opinion failed to do enough to improve animal welfare. For this reason the UK was among those member states which could not support the Presidency.

Avian Flu

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions her Department has had with Asian countries in order to ensure that surveillance of the vaccination programme to combat the bird influenza outbreak in chickens is rigorous enough to spot the evolution of new strains of the virus. [165261]

Mr. Bradshaw: We have had no direct contact on this issue. Our key protection against the disease is to control or ban imports. That operates regardless of the strain. We have received reports on the outbreak through the OIE and from EU representatives in south east Asia and have acted immediately to ban imports from wherever the disease has occurred.

Thailand is the only country in the region from which imports of poultry products were permitted prior to the outbreak of avian influenza. Imports of poultry products which could transmit the virus have been stopped and will be allowed to resume only once it is clear that the disease has been eradicated. Thailand has reported that it has not used vaccination in its efforts to eradicate the disease.

Battery Cages

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many inspections have been carried out on battery cage systems in the past 12 months; how many breaches of the law were found; whether there was full compliance with the Welfare of Farmed Animals Regulations (England) 2002 requirement that each hen should be given at least 550 square centimetres space; what action has been taken to address breaches of UK legislation; and if she will make a statement. [173058]

Mr. Bradshaw: From the 1 April 2003–31 March 2004 there were 95 inspections carried out on battery cage systems in England.

There were 19 breaches of welfare law found. Of the 19 breaches, two revealed a failure to comply with the Welfare of Farmed Animals Regulations (England) 2002 requirement that each hen should be given at least 550 square centimetres space.

Action taken to address breaches of UK legislation is as follows:

(a) Advisory letter informing of legislative requirements and outlining corrective action is sent in all cases.

(b) In all cases where failure to comply with legislation is found, a follow up visit is made to ensure no unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress is disclosed. If unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress occurs then further action will be taken.

(c) A Regulation 11 Improvement notice requiring corrective action may be served if an owner appears uncooperative or does not take action to comply with the advisory letter.

(d) Statement from inspector and initiate prosecution procedures where there is failure to comply or unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress occurs.

(e) Further action in addition to the above is dependent pending on additional reports of follow up visits.

(f) No further action may be recommended following a further report e.g. farm depopulated or no longer keeping poultry.

In the two breaches of the Welfare of Farmed Animals Regulations (England) 2002 referred to above concerning space per hen, the farmers were sent an advisory letter. At the follow up visit they were in compliance with the Regulations.

Bovine TB

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the feasibility of recolonising areas cleared of TB infected badgers from areas in the UK colonised by badgers which are known to be free from TB infection. [158606]

Mr. Bradshaw: No such assessment has been made.

Translocating animals is not a straightforward process. There are significant welfare implications for the animals concerned that need to be fully assessed prior to any animal movements. In addition, there do not appear to be any good reasons to translocate badgers from areas of low TB incidence to areas of high incidence.

Animal Disease Compensation

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on her proposals for the Compensation Scheme Review. [173876]

Mr. Bradshaw: The consultation period on proposals for rationalising compensation for notifiable animal diseases ended on 7 January this year.

The results of the consultation have been analysed and a summary of the responses posted on the Defra website.

In light of the responses, officials are considering how best to take the policy forward.

Environmental Protection

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much Government funding was available in each of the past three years to the Tidy Britain campaign. [168809]

Alun Michael: Government funding was provided to Encams (formerly Tidy Britain Group) as follows:

	Thousand
2001–02	3,762
2002–03	[1]4,597
2003–04	3,574

[1] Defra allocated an additional 1 million to local authorities through ENCAMS for the Local Environmental Quality Pathfinder Programme that forged partnerships between local authorities and the local community. Some of the projects developed reduced fast food litter, railway land litter and schools litter.

EU Directives

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which European Union directives for which her Department has responsibility were not transposed into UK law before the passing of the transposition deadlines in each of the last five years. [168368]

Alun Michael: While every effort is made to ensure that transposition deadlines are met, it is inevitable that this will not always be the case. Transposition can be complex, and it is important that timely transposition is balanced against other objectives, such as avoiding over implementation and unnecessary regulation. In most cases these directives require transposition by the devolved Administrations as well as at Westminster and in some cases also in Gibraltar.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs plays a leading role in the United Kingdom's EU policy on the environment, agriculture, fisheries, animal and plant health. Between 8 June 2001 and 31 December 2003, 42 EU directives were not fully transposed across the whole of the UK by the transposition deadline. Of these, 88 per cent. have now been transposed.

A table listing the directives that have not been transposed into UK law before the transposition deadlines had passed has been placed in the Library of the House.

Farm Income

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list which EU member states *(a)* intend to make single farm payments to fruit growers and *(b)* do not. [166025]

Alun Michael: Under EU legislation governing the Single Payment Scheme, land under permanent crops, including top fruit, is not eligible to use in support of a payment claim in any member state. However, land used to grow soft fruit will be eligible in those member states and regions which adopt the flat rate or 'hybrid' payment models. Our current understanding is that Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Luxembourg, in addition to England, Northern Ireland, are likely to adopt such models. We expect that no payments will be made in respect of land used for fruit production in the remaining member states, nor in Scotland and Wales.

Fast Food Outlets

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the *(a)* risk to human health and *(b)* impact on the environment of discarded waste from fast food outlets; what action she requires to be taken to deal with this problem, and by whom; and if she will make a statement. [173240]

Alun Michael: The Government's approach to cutting fast food litter, with the voluntary code we have promoted resulting in a 20 per cent. cut in fast food litter in pilot areas compared with a general worsening by 12 per cent. across the country between 2002 and 2003. The challenge now is for all concerned to put the lessons into practice.

In October 2003 Defra launched a consultation exercise in order to establish a Voluntary Code of Practice for the Fast Food Industry, following 18 months of research with industry representatives. Defra commissioned ENCAMS (formerly Tidy Britain Group) to develop the voluntary code. In February we published the Local Environmental Quality Survey for England 2002–03 (LEQSE) carried out by ENCAMS which showed fast food litter had increased by 12 per cent. over the last year, and that it had become more widespread. However, with practical application of the code's recommendations, a good practice example project led to a 20 per cent. reduction in fast food littering.

The aim of the proposed voluntary code of practice is to reduce fast food litter and waste that becomes litter in the local environment by outlining best practice and recommendations for action to be taken by all fast food retailers working with local authorities and seeking to involve the local public. It will allow all parties to work together in a mutually supportive partnership, to find local solutions to local problems.

In addition the Government are involved in studies regarding the health effects of waste management processes, although these have not been concerned with small scale local issues such as commercial waste from food outlets. These are dealt with effectively by way of local authority Environmental Health Officers.

Fertilisers

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what plans she has to make the regulations for *(a)* the manufacture and *(b)* the supply of ammonium nitrate fertiliser more stringent; [172742]

(2) what measures her Department and its predecessors have taken to control the manufacture, storage and use of ammonium nitrate fertiliser; [172745]

(3) how many tonnes of ammonium nitrate fertiliser was manufactured in the United Kingdom in each year since 2000. [172747]

Alun Michael: The Government have taken a number of measures to control the manufacture, storage and use of AN fertiliser in the general climate of heightened security. We need to balance the risks of potential misuse associated with AN against its clear and proven benefits in supporting food output in this country.

The Government have been working with the fertiliser industry to improve controls in the storage and supply chain of AN. We have endorsed industry guidelines which advise producers and sellers of AN fertiliser to:

sell only to known, bona fide customers, in particular those who have a credit account;

refrain from making cash sales;

ask questions to potential buyers of AN fertiliser to establish their knowledge of agriculture;

in the case of suspicious inquiries, to record and notify the police of the purchaser's name and address (verified by documentary proof such as details from a driving licence) and full details of the inquirer's vehicle, including the registration number.

We are continuing our dialogue with industry and have asked them to produce a code of practice to encourage direct deliveries from manufacturers to farmers to shorten supply chains and ensure better traceability. We have also endorsed industry guidance, produced in collaboration with farmers unions and the police, on 'Security of Fertiliser Storage on Farm'.

To supplement the voluntary measures, Defra has introduced regulations to control the supply of both home produced and imported AN. The regulations require AN fertiliser, with a high nitrogen content, including mixtures, to have satisfied a Detonation Resistance Test and all sellers have to maintain records of sales.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has issued a self-help checklist to all those known to be handling or storing significant quantities of AN. The checklist has been distributed widely. It is aimed at spreading good practice and offering HSE as a source of further advice. Additionally, HSE has lowered the notification threshold under the Notification of Installations Handling Hazardous Substances Regulations 1982 from 500 to 150 tonnes and widened the range of products to be included in the notifications.

The regulations governing the manufacture and supply of AN fertilisers are kept under continuous review and further measures will be taken if necessary.

The following amounts of ammonium nitrate (AN) fertiliser have been manufactured in the United Kingdom since 2000:

	Thousand tonnes
2000	1,263
2001	952
2002	1,181
2003	1,250

The reduction in manufacturing output in 2001 was a consequence of the foot and mouth disease outbreak and an exceptionally wet autumn which, together, led to a fall in demand for AN.

Fishing Industry

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) if she will make a statement on the use of pelagic fishing gear for the fishing of demersal species; [172946]

(2) whether her Department classifies sea bass as a *(a)* pelagic or *(b)* demersal species. [172947]

Mr. Bradshaw: Pelagic fishing gear is normally used for shoaling mid-water swimming species such as mackerel, pilchards and sprats. Other species of fish may also be taken as a bycatch when pelagic gear is used and these may include demersal species.

Sea bass can be taken in both pelagic (that is, fisfied in mid-water) and demersal (fished in contact with the seabed) gears and so could be classed as either pelagic or demersal since its behaviour at different times of the year leads it to swim in mid-water or near the bottom.

Horse Passports

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many horse passports had been issued by the issuing authorities by 1 May; how many applications received are awaiting issue; how many she expects to be issued by 30 June; and what percentage of the horse-owning population she expects to comply. [173101]

Alun Michael: As of 1 May, Defra have been notified of a minimum of 179,000 passports issued. This figure will increase as we are waiting for some Passport Issuing Organisations to inform us about how many passports they have issued.

The above figure includes passports returned to Passport Issuing Organisations for updating in order that they meet the new European requirements.

Passport Issuing Organisations based in England have approximately 37,000 outstanding passport applications.

All horse owners will be expected to comply with the regulations.

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will reply to the letter to her from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 15 March 2004 with regard to Jo Hopkin. [168986]

Alun Michael: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State responded on 14 May.

Mayor of London

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list *(a)* the official meetings she has had with the Mayor of London since July 2000 and *(b)* the dates and subject of each meeting. [170569]

Margaret Beckett *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* No such meetings have taken place.

Meat and Livestock Commission

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the conditions are for repayment attached to the loan to the Meat and Livestock Commission in respect of the welfare scheme which operated during the foot and mouth disease outbreak; and whether the loan has been repaid. [172683]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Pig Industry Development Scheme (PIDS) was initiated in March 2001 to establish an industry fund to help provide advice, services, facilities and financial assistance to British pig producers to assist with the prevention of exotic pig diseases such as Classical Swine Fever, and/or to help minimise their impact. Collection of this industry levy was delayed due to the foot and mouth disease outbreak of that year. In April 2001 the then MAFF and the Meat and Livestock Commission concluded a loan agreement to enable early payment of the industry top-up to producers.

Under the terms of the loan agreement, repayment, including interest, was due on 31 July 2003. However problems associated with the unforseen decline in pig slaughterings delayed the collection of the levy from pig producers to repay the loan. By mutual agreement the loan deadline was extended to 31 December 2003 and repayment was made by that date, including the interest to that date.

The PIDS levy on slaughterings was reduced to zero in August 2003; however the scheme is to remain open for the foreseeable future with the facility to increase the levy if required.

New Forest

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she plans to announce her decision on the designation of the New Forest as a National Park. [173482]

Alun Michael: I am currently considering the Inspector's report. No announcement can be made until that consideration is complete.

Potato Ring Rot

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the itinerary was for the transport from the country of origin to the final country of destination of the potatoes which brought potato ring-rot into the UK. [174154]

Mr. Bradshaw: As Defra's Final Report into the 2003 Ring Rot Outbreak in the UK makes clear, it has not been possible to trace the origin of infection which resulted in the ring rot outbreak in Wales. However, Appendix VI of the Report (see http://defra.gov.uk/planth/ring/repfinal/app6.pdf) outlines the itinerary for the Provento seed potatoes which were supplied to the Welsh farm, from which the crop was grown which resulted in the outbreak. This Appendix was prepared by the Dutch Plant Protection Service who gave permission for it to be published as part of Defra's Report.

In essence, the Dutch report indicates that the seed potatoes were exported from the Netherlands to Honduras on 26 September 2002. The consignment was refused entry to Honduras because it did not meet their requirements on the absence of soil (not because of a concern with the potatoes) and was returned to the Netherlands on 5 December 2002. Following re-sorting and re-bagging, to remove potatoes which had sprouted, the seed potatoes were split into different lots which were then sent directly to various destinations (Wales, Portugal, Iraq, Honduras and Ukraine) between the period 5 December 2002 and 1 May 2003.

Specialist Fermentation Sector

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the size of the specialist fermentation sector of the food industry is in *(a)* the United Kingdom and *(b)* Europe. [170081]

Alun Michael: For beer, UK production in the 2001–02 financial year was 57 million hectolitres compared with 254 million hectolitres in the rest of the EU in 2002. For cider, UK production was 4.9 million hectolitres in 2001–02 compared with 5.1 million hectolitres in the rest of the EU in 2000.

Tobacco

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much EU funding was given to growing tobacco in the last year for which figures are available; and if she will list the countries which benefited. [173772]

Alun Michael: The main recipients of tobacco subsidies are Greece, Italy, Spain and France. A table showing the tobacco premiums paid in each of the EU member states which benefited is as follows.

EU expenditure on tobacco premiums in 2002

	€ *million*
Greece	369
Italy	330.8
Spain	115.4
France	80.4
Germany	35.1
Portugal	16.3
Belgium	3.9
Austria	0.9
Total	951.8

Source:
EU Commission

Two Tree Island

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which species of wildlife *(a)* inhabit and *(b)* visit Two Tree Island in the Thames during a typical year. [171871]

Mr. Bradshaw: Two Tree Island is split into two areas, eastern and western. The eastern part of Two Tree Island consists of a small tidal island with the adjoining

saltmarsh (86 acres) and a large area of inter-tidal mudflats (271 acres). It is part of Leigh National Nature Reserve.

The mudflats are noted for their dense, vigorous growth of eel grass species, which, together with a large resource of invertebrates, support nationally and internationally important numbers of dark-bellied Brent geese and waders, such as grey plover and knot. Waders such as curlew, dunlin, and redshank, occur in significant numbers outside the breeding season. The nearby Leigh cockle sheds bring winter flocks of turnstone close inshore and attract some of the rarer gull species.

The saltmarshes are the most important on the north side of the Thames Estuary. They are of considerable botanical interest being noted for the five glasswort species that occur there. Sea aster, with small cord-grass, common cord-grass and glasswort species are found on the lower marshes, while sea purslane dominates the upper marshes. In addition the area also supports other saltmarsh plants such as golden samphire, sea wormwood, common and lax-flowered sea lavenders.

At its western tip a range of birds can be seen such as redshank and heron. The island itself consists mainly of grassland and scrub, with the former rubbish tip supporting a number of interesting alien plants and 'escapes'. A wide variety of birds can be seen at its western tip, including kestrels and short-eared owls during the winter, hunting for field voles. Grass snakes and lizards are seen. Insects of note include the marbled white butterfly, Roesel's bush cricket, the house cricket and the lesser marsh grasshopper.

TRANSPORT

Railway Lines

13. **Norman Baker:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of railway lines have been reopened since 1 May 1997. [173505]

Dr. Howells: Between 1996–97 and 2003–04 the total length of railway open to passenger traffic has increased from 15,034 kilometres to 15,042 kilometres.

Rail Review

14. **Mr. Swayne:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on progress in the Rail Review. [173506]

Mr. McNulty: The review is progressing and as my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport, said in his statement to the House on 19 January, we will publish proposals in the summer.

Noisy Roads

15. **Tony Baldry:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on measures to address the problem of noisy roads. [173507]

Mr. Jamieson: The Government recognises that traffic noise from main roads can be a nuisance. Our strategy is to set vehicle construction standards that reduce noise at source wherever feasible and desirable on safety grounds. We also encourage the mitigation of noise with insulation, barriers, traffic management measures and low noise surfaces.

Global Warming

16. **Richard Younger-Ross:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the threat to strategic road and rail routes from global warming. [173508]

Mr. McNulty: The Department is aware that climate change will have a profound impact on both the Department's work and that of the delivery agencies. To this end, assessments have been made by the Department, the Rail Safety and Standards Board and the Highways Agency. The Department's report can be found on our website and copies of this and of the other reports can be found in both libraries of the House.

Transport (Nottingham)

17. **Mr. Allen:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions he has had with Nottingham city council on transport issues in the city. [173509]

Mr. McNulty: When my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport visited Nottingham to launch Line One of the Nottingham Express Transit system, he also attended a meeting with the Greater Nottingham Transport Partnership (on which the City and county councils are represented). A number of issues relating to transport in Nottingham were raised.

Offshore Wind Farms

18. **Mr. Heathcoat-Amory:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he has taken to ensure that shipping lanes are not impeded by off-shore wind farms. [173510]

Mr. Jamieson: Government have assured the shipping and ports industries that offshore wind farms will not be sited where they present a danger to navigation. No offshore wind farms can be constructed without Government consents. Full consultation with the shipping and ports industries will be undertaken before any consent granted.

Bus Services

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the sources are of the statistics published by his Department on *(a)* bus reliability, *(b)* bus punctuality and *(c)* bus patronage; whether independent audits are conducted to verify the source data and the methods used to produce these statistics; and if he will place source information and methodology statements in the Library. [173470]

Mr. McNulty: The statistics published on bus reliability and patronage are based on returns completed by bus operators. There are currently no statistics on bus punctuality. The bus patronage data are collected via a statutory survey under the Statistics of Trade Act 1947. The bus reliability survey is voluntary. When received, the raw data are treated as Restricted-Commercial and are not released to other parties, except with the permission of the operators themselves.

The methods used were examined in the National Statistics Quality Review which was carried out by WS Atkins Ltd. in 2002–03 and published on 6 August 2003. Short descriptions of the methods used for estimating bus reliability and patronage statistics are included in the review, a copy of which is held in the House of Commons Library.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list bus usage in terms of *(a)* number of passengers and *(b)* passenger kilometres in each year since 1997, broken down by region. [174172]

Mr. McNulty: The estimates of local bus usage in terms of passenger journeys for the years 1997–98 to 2002–03 are given in the following table. Estimates of passenger kilometres are only available for London and are given in the final row of the table.

Million passenger journeys

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
North East	262	253	252	243	241	237
North West	507	509	493	489	480	485
Yorks and Humberside	411	386	381	374	369	37
West Midlands	464	447	450	454	447	439
East Midlands	209	212	210	210	210	212
Eastern	163	165	167	170	172	167
London	1,294	1,279	1,307	1,359	1,434	1,542
South East	272	287	289	282	276	268
South West	191	183	182	179	175	175
England	3,773	3,719	3,732	3,760	3,804	3,901
London (million passenger kilometres)	4,350	4,315	4,429	4,709	5,128	5,721

The estimates for passenger journeys are taken from Table 13 of the "Bulletin of Public Transport Statistics Great Britain: 2003 Edition", copies of which are held in the Libraries of the House.

Car Sharing

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funding has been made available to local authorities specifically to promote car-sharing, car clubs, education programmes to promote walking and cycling or other soft measures to address transport issues in each year since 1997. [173312]

Mr. McNulty: In general, revenue funding provided to local authorities is not dedicated to specific purposes in this way. We have, however, provided some ring-fenced funding to local authorities through our bursary scheme for the employment of school and workplace travel plan co-ordinators at a cost of £3 million per annum for the three years from April 2001 to March 2004. From April 2004, the bursary scheme has been focussed on school travel plan co-ordinators, and its value has increased to £7.5 million per year (joint with DfES).

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment the Government have made of car-sharing within schools as a means of reducing congestion associated with the school run. [173315]

Mr. McNulty: The Department has commissioned research to identify the most successful school travel plans in the country and what has made these plans successful. We shall be publishing good practice guidance drawn from this research under the title "Making School Travel Plans Work" later this year. The guidance will include information on car-sharing initiatives where these have contributed to the wider success of school travel plans. We already know of a number of individual car-sharing initiatives that have been effective in reducing the number of cars taking children to school, and that many families make their own informal arrangements for sharing.

Crossrail

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the Crossrail project; and what the level of Government involvement in the project is. [173512]

Mr. McNulty: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport is currently considering Adrian Montague's detailed advice on Crossrail and will publish his findings in due course.

Departmental Annual Report

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much the production of his Department's latest annual report cost; how many copies were printed; how many copies of it were sold at its cover price; to whom copies of the report have been provided free of charge; and how many copies were provided free of charge. [171079]

Mr. McNulty: The Department's Annual Report was published on 30 April 2004 and is freely available on the DfT website.

1,100 copies of the report were printed. To date, a total of approximately 250 copies have been provided free of charge to the House Libraries, the Transport Select Committee, Department for Transport Ministers and officials, and to other Government Departments. The Stationery Office (TSO) has taken 700 copies for sale. Data on the level of sales is not yet available.

The total cost of the Annual Report was £34,820 excluding VAT.

Driving Standards Agency

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport under what statutory basis the Chief Executive, Chief Driving Examiner and the directors of the Driving Standards Agency have withheld their salary and performance pay from being disclosed in the Driving Standards Agency's Annual Report. [172084]

Mr. Jamieson: The Driving Standards Agency is a Trading Fund. HM Treasury accounting guidance for Trading Funds allows for non-disclosure of the remuneration of the Chief Executive, the Chief Driving Examiner and the full-time directors in the Agency's Annual Report and Accounts, provided that consent to non-disclosure is noted.

Harassment Contact Officers

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many harassment contact officers were employed by his Department on the last date for which figures are available. [174174]

Mr. McNulty: The Department for Transport has a total of 86 harrassment contact officers.

MOTs

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether MOT garages were charged additional supplements for the MOT certificates they purchased from *(a)* the former Vehicle Inspectorate and *(b)* the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency. [173890]

Mr. Jamieson: No supplements have been added to MOT test certificate charges, levied on MOT testing stations, either by the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency or, before April 2003, by the Vehicle Inspectorate.

Railways

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how many train services have been cut, and on which lines, as a result of the Strategic Rail Authority's policy of selective thinning of train services; [170266]

(2) what criteria are used by the Strategic Rail Authority to implement the objective of selective thinning of train services. [170267]

Mr. Darling: The Strategic Rail Authority has no policy of selective thinning of train services. The changes to the May and September 2003 timetables for Virgin Cross Country, Central Trains, South West Trains, Wessex, Arriva Trains Northern and Wales and Borders represent less than 1 per cent. of the daily services. They were made to improve performance and reliability through better capacity utilisation. The main changes were to Virgin Cross Country where they contributed to a 25 per cent. improvement in performance.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will announce his findings on the review of the railways while Parliament is in session. [172989]

Mr. McNulty: As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport said in his statement to the House on 19 January, the rail review will publish its proposals in the summer.

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which of the new train operators serving London and the south east showed the greatest improvement in punctuality between the third quarter of 2003–04 and the third quarter of 2002–03; and if he will make a statement. [173918]

Mr. McNulty: The biggest improvement was at West Anglia Great Northern. Its average performance for the year to the end of quarter three 2003–04 was 82.3 per cent. compared with 77.9 per cent. for the year to the end of quarter three 2002–03.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 12 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 410W, on railways, how many of the sites identified have *(a)* been put up for sale, *(b)* been sold and *(c)* are under offer. [174240]

Mr. Darling: Of the 36 sites identified by the Strategic Rail Authority as suitable for disposal, 20 have been put up for sale; of these, four have been sold, 12 are under offer and four are still for sale. This is shown in the following table.

SRA sites released for disposal since end 2002

Map reference	*Location*	*Site description*	*Status*
G-HAS-13–1	Alloa	Site of former crossing at Hilton Road Whinhill	Under offer
LNW-GC-4–2	Aylesbury	Railway club and sports ground Perm Road	Under offer
BI-DB-27–6	Banbury	Fields by Woodford closed line	Under offer
BI-DB-27–8	Banbury	South end of closed line in Woodford Halse	Under offer
LS-ECO-2–1	Bexhill	Former Galley Hill sidings	For sale
BI-FFD-1–1	Brize Norton	Part of former Fairford branch	—
BI-FFD-1–2	Cassington	Part of former Fairford branch	—
W-LNW-ER-45–1	Castlethorpe	Former goods yard	Under offer
BR-XBS-34–34	Challow	Former station yard	—
LNE-CWN-2–1	Colchester Town	Lower Yard, Magdalene Street	—
BI-KEM-19–1	Corby	Land at Cottingham Road	Sold
LNW-TL-38–1	Dunstable	Land at Skimpot Road/Jeans Way	—
LNW-TL-23–2	Elstree	Former goods yard	—
BR-WSP-30–30	Exeter	Former goods yard	—
BR-WSP-26–26	Exeter	Land and building (Red House)	Sold
BR-WSP-29–29	Exeter	Tan Lane former goods yard	—
M-SOG-18–1	Formby	Andrew's Lane	Sold
BR-XFR-3–3	Frome	Former east goods yard	—
G-EG-4–1	Glasgow	Eastfield Depot	Under offer
LS-WCO-10–1	Goring-by-Sea	Land south of railway	—
LS-DCE-1–1	Greenhithe	Land by station	—
Y-ALS-1–1	Haltwhistle	Alston branch	Under offer
BR-FWB-5–5	Hullavington	Former goods yard	—
M-MVE-104/105/106–1	Horwich	Land at site of former railway works	Under offer
Y-LNO-1–7	Hunslet	Land between Ivory Street and Jack lane	For sale

SRA sites released for disposal since end 2002

Map reference	*Location*	*Site description*	*Status*
G-HAS-19-2	Kincardine	Plot of land beneath electricity pylon	Under offer
LNE-EKL-23-1	Kings Lynn	Land at Extons Place	—
BI-FFD-1-3	Lechlade	Part of former Fairford branch	—
M-LPN-40-1	Liverpool, James Street	Moor House	Under offer
G-RWR-1-1	Melrose	Leaderfoot Viaduct	—
M-GOO-2-15	Reddish	Former depot, Wayland Road	For sale
LS-WCO-22-4	Shoreham-by-Sea	Land at Queens Place	Under offer
LS-TH-4-1	Tunbridge Wells	Former goods yard	For sale
BI-SWR-42-1	Walsall	Land off Littleton Street West	Under offer
W-LNW-ER-20-7	Watford	Wiggenhall Road	Sold
LS-BML-5-12	Wivelsfield	Land at Rockery Lane	—

Road Accidents (Tired Drivers)

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his latest assessment is of the number of accidents attributable to sleep and microsleep on roads. [167658]

Mr. Jamieson: Research studies indicate that driver sleepiness accounts for 15–20 per cent. of accidents on motorways and similar roads and for about 10 per cent. of all accidents on the road network in Great Britain.

Tonnage Tax Scheme

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how the Department for Transport is monitoring changes in *(a)* training and *(b)* employment positions for seafaring ratings generated by the tonnage tax scheme. [172990]

Mr. Jamieson: As part of its annual application for approval of a core training commitment, each tonnage tax company or group is required to provide a breakdown of the number of deck and engine ratings employed on its ships according to whether they are British, other European Economic Area (EEA), or other, non-EEA, nationality. The company or group is also required to state which of the training and employment recommendations of the Ratings Task Force it expects to implement.

Where a company is meeting part of its training commitment in respect of officers by employing apprentices or ratings to officer conversion trainees, this is reported to us on end of period adjustment reports due three times a year.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what measures he has put in place to ensure that companies do not remove themselves from the 10-year obligation to the UK shipping industry tonnage tax regime by switching registers. [172991]

Mr. Jamieson: None. The act of a tonnage tax company in switching vessels from one register to another does not remove those vessels from the tonnage tax regime or change the obligations of the company under the tax.

Transport Direct

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent by his Department on Transport Direct, broken down by year; and how this has changed since original estimates of the cost of the work were made. [170869]

Dr. Howells: The total spend up to March 2002 was £0.7 million. The spend for 2002–03 was £2.8 million (original estimate £5.0 million), while the spend for 2003–04 was £13.2 million (original estimate £23.0 million).

Vehicle Activated Signs

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of reductions in traffic accident rates at vehicle activated sign sites; and if he will make a statement. [171897]

Mr. Jamieson: Vehicle activated signs are used predominately where there are concerns about inappropriate speed. They are not designed to deal with excessive speed. Research into the effectiveness of vehicle activated signs at a range of locations was carried out by TRL Ltd. on behalf of the Department for Transport in 2002. Results of this work concluded that across all sites there was a 31 per cent. reduction in accidents following installation. In addition where vehicle activated signs were used to remind the driver of the speed limit in force, speed reductions of between three and nine mph were achieved. Where installed to warn drivers of a potential hazard, reductions of up to seven mph were achieved. Guidance on the use of vehicle activated signs is available in the Libraries of the House (Ref: Traffic Advisory Leaflet 1/03—Vehicle Activated Signs).

Vehicle and Operator Services Agency

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the *(a)* financial arrangements and *(b)* resources provided for the merger between the Vehicle Inspectorate and the Traffic Area Network in 2003. [173887]

Mr. Jamieson: As part of a merger between the Vehicle Inspectorate and Traffic Area Network a new Trading Fund named Vehicle and Operator Services Agency was established. All income and expenditure of the merged organisation is accounted for within the new Trading Fund.

Resources for supporting and delivering the merger are funded from within the Trading Fund. This includes project management support, ICT and process integration, Agency name and branding changes and harmonisation of pay.

DEFENCE

Departmental Executive Agencies

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* resource provision and *(b)* outturn for his Department's executive non-departmental public bodies was for financial years (i) 2000–01, (ii) 2001–02 and (iii) 2002–03. [172124]

Mr. Ingram: The executive non-departmental public bodies produced their own sets of accounts for these years, and these are available in the Library of the House. Non-departmental bodies secure funding for their operations from various sources. The Department's contribution to these bodies is generally in the form of grants-in-aid, and this has been disclosed in Note 10 of the Departmental Resource Accounts for the respective years. The bodies would normally draw down their full grant-in-aid provision.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

School Outdoor Pursuits

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps her Department is taking to promote adventure holidays and other outdoor pursuits in schools; and if she will make a statement. [171605]

Mr. Caborn: The issue of adventure holidays and outdoor pursuits within schools is a matter for the Department for Education and Skills. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Education and Skills (Mr. Twigg) on 13 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 540W.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he intends to reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 5 April with regard to Ms Catherine Thompson. [172258]

Yvette Cooper: I replied to my right hon. Friend on 17 May 2004.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will reply to the letter to him from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, dated 5 April, with regard to Ms Catherine Thompson. [174148]

Yvette Cooper: I replied to my right hon. Friend on 17 May 2004.

Decent Homes Standard

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his target was for the proportion of houses brought up to the Decent Homes Standard by 1 April; and what proportion was achieved by that date, broken down by housing sector. [173670]

Keith Hill: The milestone for 1 April was

> "to achieve a reduction of one third in the number of non-decent social sector homes over the 2001 baseline."

It will be met if the estimates reported by local authorities through their Business Plan Statistical returns and the regulatory returns from housing associations submitted in July 2004 (stating the number of non-decent homes as at 1 April 2004), show that in aggregate the number of non-decent dwellings has reduced by at least one third reduction since 2001; and the 2004–05 continuous EHCS (reporting in October 2005) confirms there are 1.1 million or fewer non-decent social sector dwellings.

The target was for both sectors combined not each sector separately. Our estimate, based on local authority and registered social landlord (RSL) out-turn data up to the end March 2003 and their plans to March 2004, shows a 26 per cent. reduction across both sectors. Local authorities show a 32 per cent. reduction taking into account the stock they transferred. There was a 6 per cent. reduction in the RSL sector, which takes into account all the non-decent stock they receive through stock transferred from local authorities.

Regional Assemblies

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the Guidance on the Government use of Public Relations Consultants, Annex B to Guidance on the work of the Government Information Service, paragraph 6, on what grounds he decided that the core components of the Your Say information campaign on elected regional assemblies could not be carried out by the Government's own employees. [174275]

Mr. Raynsford: No public relations consultants have been appointed to work on this campaign. All the relevant PR activity has been undertaken by Government employees.

The marketing and advertising arm of Robson Brown have been contracted to work on other aspects of the campaign, including branding, leaflet design, event management and advertising. This is in line with current guidance and normal practice.

Empty Homes

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average number of empty homes in the United Kingdom was in each year since 1997, broken down by area. [173697]

Keith Hill: The available information on empty residential dwellings in England by Government Office region is in the table. This data has been provided from a combination of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Housing Investment Programme return and Housing Corporation's Regulatory Statistical Return. The same information from similar sources for other parts of the United Kingdom is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Vacant dwelling stock, 1997–2003

	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997
North East	44,000	47,000	46,000	50,000	49,000	44,000	41,000
Yorkshire & Humberside	88,000	94,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	86,000	81,000
East Midlands	59,000	58,000	63,000	68,000	67,000	67,000	67,000
Eastern	63,000	64,000	63,000	70,000	70,000	73,000	81,000
London	101,000	101,000	105,000	105,000	114,000	114,000	122,000
South East	81,000	85,000	86,000	87,000	95,000	96,000	101,000
South West	76,000	71,000	68,000	64,000	67,000	70,000	78,000
West Midlands	73,000	77,000	79,000	80,000	77,000	78,000	73,000
North West	135,000	136,000	141,000	138,000	127,000	126,000	125,000
England	720,000	732,000	751,000	761,000	767,000	753,000	767,000

Sources:
ODPM's Housing Investment Programme return and Housing Corporation's Regulatory Statistical Return.
Figures presented to the nearest thousand

High Hedges

Mr. Paice: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects local authorities to be able to use the powers provided by the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 to deal with high hedges. [173530]

Yvette Cooper: The powers to deal with complaints about high hedges given to local authorities by the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 are expected to be fully operational towards the end of 2004. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is currently conducting a public consultation in England on how the legislation will work in practice.

Housing

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many homes in the United Kingdom were classed as overcrowded in each year since 1997, broken down by area. [173698]

Keith Hill: The information requested is not held centrally, and could only be provided at disproportionate cost. Only 2 per cent. of households are overcrowded nationally; this means that annual estimates, derived from sample surveys such as the Survey of English Housing or the Family Resources Survey, of such a small target population are subject to considerable sampling error. For this reason reliable annual estimates cannot be produced at regional or sub-regional level.

Although annual estimates cannot be produced at regional and sub-regional level, estimates can be produced for several years combined. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has recently produced two research reports into levels of overcrowding for the years 2000–01, 2001–02, 2002–03 combined, which are available on our website and the path to reach them is:

"Home" > "Housing" > "Housing research" > "Housing research reports" > "The impact of overcrowding on health and education".

Clive Efford: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he is taking to assist teachers in London with housing costs; what the reasons were for changing from 1 April the criteria by which teachers qualify for assistance with housing costs in London; and if he will make a statement. [173461]

Keith Hill: The Key Worker Living (KWL) programme which started on 1 April 2004 is helping teachers in London into home ownership and intermediate rented accommodation. It also offers teachers who are existing home owners help to buy a larger home to meet their household needs. The programme superseded the Starter Home Initiative which came to an end on 31 March.

The assistance available under KWL is:

(a) equity loans of up to £50,000 to buy a home on the open market or a newly-built property provided by a registered social landlord;

(b) equity loans of up to £100,000 for school teachers in London with the potential to become leaders of London's education sector in the future;

(c) shared ownership of newly-built properties where a share of the property is purchased and a reduced rent is paid on the remaining share;

(d) intermediate renting of newly-built properties where the rent is set at a level below market rents.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not changed the eligibility criteria for the scheme: school teachers in London with seven or more points are eligible for up to £100,000 equity loan assistance; school teachers and Further Education teachers are also eligible for up to £50,000 equity loan assistance. Points are awarded under the scheme for:

being an advanced skills teacher, a Commissioner's teacher, on the fast track teaching programme or past the Threshold;

teaching in a shortage subject or in a challenging school;

having management or leadership responsibilities.

The eligibility criteria and the points system for the KWL programme were devised following discussions with the key worker sponsor Departments including Department for Education and Skills.

A key aim of KWL is to retain more experienced teachers in London. Since the scheme was launched we have received over 1,600 applications in London. As the KWL budget is limited, school teachers in London with four points or more are being prioritised for assistance, and those with less than four points are being placed on the waiting list for assistance.

Officials of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are keeping the situation under review and expectations are that some teachers on the waiting list will receive assistance as the scheme progresses.

Colin Burgon: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects to receive the final business case covering the Pathfinder scheme for Swarcliffe. [173934]

Keith Hill: Leeds City Council is aiming to submit a Final Business Case to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for late May or early June 2004.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost was of gap funding for housing transfers in each year since it was introduced; and what the projected costs are for the next financial year. [173666]

Keith Hill: No gap funding has been paid to date. Regional Housing Boards (RHB) provisional allocations for 2004–05 are £1.029 million for the transfer of housing on the Tarling Estate and £1.759 million on the Crossways Estate both in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. Provisional allocations for 2005–06 are a further £3.564 million for the transfer of housing on the Crossways Estate in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and £2.0 million for the transfer of the housing stock of North East Lincolnshire Council.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his estimate is of the annual cost of the extra gap funding he has announced for housing transfers in areas with negative equity; and whether gap funding allocations will be increased for such areas already in the process of transfer. [173667]

Keith Hill: The annual cost of any gap funding will be dependent on those authorities whose decent home delivery option appraisal determines that a negative value transfer is the best value for money option to pursue and who then secure a positive tenant ballot result. Those transfers already on the housing transfer programme have demonstrated they have deliverable transfer schemes and it is not anticipated that they should therefore require gap funding.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much money has been committed to date for setting up arm's length management organisations for housing transfer; and on what basis this is allocated. [173668]

Keith Hill: Expenditure under the arm's length management organisation (Almo) programme to the end of 2003–04 has been approximately £365 million. Current commitments for 2004–05 and 2005–06 total £952 million, subject in some cases to Almos achieving at least a 2* rating from the Housing Inspectorate. Further allocations are subject to the outcome of the 2004 Spending Review. Expenditure on setting up Almos is a matter for the local authorities concerned. Under the Almo option the local authority remains the owner and landlord of the housing stock : no transfer of ownership occurs. Almo funding for work towards the Government's Decent Homes target is allocated on the basis of local authorities' bids, which are assessed against the criteria set out in the Almo Guidance published in March 2003.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how he has advised tenants who have rejected arm's length management organisations or transfers of housing stock to rethink their decision; what proposals he has for facilitating this; and what sanctions and resources he proposes to bring to bear to facilitate rethinking. [173695]

Keith Hill: Where tenants have rejected transfer and arm's length management organisations prior to local authorities being required to have an option appraisal signed off by Government Offices they will be asked to undertake an option appraisal. Guidance on option appraisal makes it clear that local authorities should engage with their tenants from the very beginning of the option appraisal process. The decision on which option to pursue should therefore incorporate the views of tenants before any ballot is held. Effective tenant engagement is a key criterion of the option appraisal assessment process and appraisals will not be signed off unless this has been achieved.

The Community Housing Task Force (CHTF) is the main resource available to assist councils and their tenants in delivering option appraisals. Tenants may also seek advice from their Independent Tenant Adviser (ITA). Further training and capacity building for tenants to help them with options appraisal is funded by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and provided via the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS), PEP and the National Tenants Resource Centre (NTRC).

If tenants subsequently reject all options that deliver extra resources and the option appraisal process has been effectively undertaken then the wishes of the tenants will be respected and they will not be forced into accepting the options available.

Renewal Areas (Physical Activity)

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what research the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit has commissioned into the barriers that stop sport and renewal working together more closely. [173708]

Yvette Cooper: The Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU) has recently received the report from a study on joint working between sport and neighbourhood renewal agencies. The research aims were to identify existing arrangements for joint working, to highlight barriers to further integration, and to provide suggestions for overcoming these in the future.

The report finds that at both the regional and local levels, joint working is generally underdeveloped. Where joint working does occur, projects are rarely focused on the achievement of well-defined outcomes or targeted towards influencing mainstream services. There is incomplete data on sporting participation in deprived areas and amongst specific groups. There are also few explicit targets for raising participation and a lack of incentives for joint working. Nevertheless, there are some noteworthy examples of joint strategic working between local authority health and education Departments and sport—in ways that will impact on deprived areas.

In response to these findings, the NRU has produced a short practitioner guide for local and regional decision-makers and frontline workers in both sports and regeneration organisations. It explains the importance of linking sport and renewal activities, provides practical advice on how to do this, and shows where to find further resources and help.

Road Maintenance Expenditure

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether road maintenance expenditure as set out in figure 5a, page 49 of the Department for Transport Annual Report is met from the Revenue Support Grant administered by his office. [174175]

Mr. Raynsford: Footnote 1 to Figure 5a: Local transport spending by central Government, page 49 of the Department for Transport Annual Report 2004 states "Excludes local transport expenditure on highway maintenance, concessionary fares and other public transport support that is funded by the Revenue Support Grant".

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the amount spent by local authorities on road maintenance in the last financial year for which figures are available. [174176]

Mr. Raynsford: Local authorities in England reported net current expenditure on highways maintenance in 2002–03 as £1,949 million.

Source:
2002–03 Revenue Outturn (R02) form

Sellers Packs

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on progress on the consultation on the operation of home sellers' packs. [173867]

Keith Hill: Wide-ranging consultation and extensive research by independent contractors have endorsed the benefits of home information packs in helping to make the home buying and selling process easier and more certain. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is working closely with industry and consumer stakeholders on the detail of the proposals in order to ensure a smooth introduction of mandatory home information packs from January 2007. Many home buyers and sellers will not have to wait until 2007 to benefit from home information packs. An increasing number of estate agents, surveyors and conveyancers are operating pack schemes on a voluntary basis.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions he has had on the proposal by chartered surveyors to remove mandatory home condition reports from home sellers packs. [173868]

Keith Hill: None. The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) supports the Government's proposals for mandatory home information packs, including a home condition report. These reports will provide at the start of the transaction process reliable information about the condition of the property. This information is important to the decisions buyers and sellers need to make and, along with other components of home information pack, will make home buying and selling more transparent and more certain.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what research he has undertaken on possible legal and insurance claims against surveyors in advance of the introduction of home condition reports. [173869]

Keith Hill: Home Inspectors preparing the home condition report will be required to have appropriate indemnity insurance to protect the home seller, a potential or actual buyer, and mortgage lender. With assistance from the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, the Association of British Insurers and other industry stakeholders, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is carrying out research into the insurance requirements. This includes an analysis by insurance specialists Willis Ltd. of historic claims made against surveyors for negligent surveys to determine the average number of successful and unsuccessful claims as well as the average sum paid and the cost of claims administration. We expect to publish an interim report very shortly.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what charge he estimates will be levied for home condition reports. [173870]

Keith Hill: The home condition report will be a professional and objective report on the condition and energy efficiency of the property, which can be legally relied upon by sellers, buyers and mortgage lenders. It will be for the market to determine the price of home condition reports in practice and the point at which any charge is paid. Based on current prices, it is estimated that the report will cost about £300 on average (plus VAT). This estimate is based on a report on a three bedroom semi-detached house in a provincial town and can be compared with the typical costs of a building survey (£500 plus VAT) and mortgage lenders valuation report (£180).

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the likely impact on property prices of the introduction of home sellers' packs. [173871]

Keith Hill: The initial view of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is that the introduction of home information packs (HIPs) is unlikely to have a significant effect on property prices. This is supported by evidence from other countries that have introduced similar measures and by a survey carried out by the UK's largest estate agency group which suggested there would be little impact on the number of properties sold if HIPs were introduced. We will continue to keep this assessment under review during our discussions with stakeholders and consumer representatives on the final contents of the HIP.

Social Housing

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his estimate is of the costs of repair and renovation of social housing over the next 10 years under *(a)* council ownership, *(b)* registered social landlord ownership and *(c)* arm's length management organisation ownership. [173561]

Keith Hill: Local authorities and registered social landlords are expected to put in place plans to meet the decent homes target by 2010.

At 2001 there was an estimated backlog of £20 billion of repair and improvement work required for local authority housing. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects local authorities to have tackled the majority of this backlog by 2010.

Local authorities have been asked to complete Option Appraisals by July 2005 in which they will consider, with their tenants and given their particular circumstances, which options will provide best value for money in meeting the decent homes target. They will take into account a variety of relevant factors including the trend in real construction costs and the scope for improved efficiency in carrying out this work.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his estimate is of the total number of properties owned by *(a)* registered social landlords and *(b)* each of the 20 largest registered social landlords. [174283]

Keith Hill: Housing association (registered social landlord) stock in England as at 31 March 2003 was estimated at 1,728,000.

The 20 largest housing associations (measured by stock) were as tabled following and together accounted for about 21 per cent. of the total housing association stock.

Name of housing association	*Total stock at 31 March 2003*
North British Housing Ltd	36,567
Home Group Limited	28,558
Anchor Trust	27,313
Sanctuary Housing Association	25,927
London and Quadrant Housing Trust	23,915
The Guinness Trust	20,019
Riverside Housing	19,889
Knowsley Housing Trust	16,480
Peabody Trust	16,432
William Sutton Trust	15,726
Northern Counties Housing Association Limited	15,575
Hyde Housing Association Limited	14,518
Helena Housing Limited	14,214
Orbit Housing Association	14,171
Metropolitan Housing Trust Limited	13,801
Housing 21	12,558
Focus Housing Association Limited	12,365
Pennine Housing 2000 Limited	12,108
Circle Thirty Three Housing Trust Limited	11,949
Broomleigh Housing Association Limited	11,789

Source:
Housing Corporation, Regulatory and Statistical Return 2003.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Hon. Members (Facilities)

Mrs. Lawrence: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what the total expenditure on facilities entirely for the use of hon. Members was in each year since 1995. [174150]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: There are few facilities that are used exclusively by hon. Members. The facilities that are exclusively for Members include Members' Offices, the Smoking Room, the Chess Room, the three Lady Members' rooms, the Members' changing room and the Members' cloakroom. We do not have sufficient disaggregated data on the cost of running these facilities to provide the information requested.

House Employees

Mrs. Lawrence: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission how many employees there were as at 1 January, in each year since 1995 in the House *(a)* Works Services Directorate, *(b)* Operations Directorate, *(c)* Personnel Policy Directorate, *(d)* Internal Review Services Directorate, *(e)* Financial Management Directorate, *(f)* Communications Directorate and *(g)* Estates Directorate. [174153]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The information requested is as follows. The information is not available for 1 January; the reference date used is therefore 31 March. For 1 April 2002 and previous years the breakdown requested is not available, but more general information about the numbers of staff in House departments is available in the House of Commons Commission's Annual Reports for those covering years.

Full time equivalents

Directorate	*Employees at 1 April 2003*	*Employees at 1 April 2004*
Works Services	138	141
Operations (Department of Finance and Administration)	74	75
Personnel Policy	20	20
Internal Review Services	6	7
Financial Management	25	21
Communications	60	69
Estates	22	24

House of Commons (Running Costs)

Mrs. Lawrence: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what the total annual running costs were in each year since 1995 of the House *(a)* Works Services Directorate, *(b)* Operations Directorate, *(c)* Personnel Policy Directorate, *(d)* Internal Review Services Directorate, *(e)* Financial Management Directorate, *(f)* Communications Directorate and *(g)* Estates Directorate. [174152]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The table shows the annual costs to the House of running the named directorates since 1995–96. These are the administrative costs; they do not include capital expenditure, or the cost of general services provided for the House as a whole, but which are managed within each directorate's budgets. For example, the Estates Directorate pays rent and rent and rates for the whole of Parliament, but this is not included in the figures.

Not all of the directorates have been in existence since 1995–96; costs are provided from the time of their establishment.

All figures in £000

Directorate	*1995–96*	*1996–97*	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–00*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Works Services	—	—	—	—	—	—	2,728	2,525	2,646
Operations	—	—	—	—	—	1,453	1,746	1,810	1,973
Personnel Policy	—	—	—	—	—	418	330	280	323
Internal Review Services	228	216	176	138	154	177	233	246	255
btFinancial Management	—	—	—	—	—	530	549	524	469
Communications	334	741	1,278	1,663	1,661	1,620	1,825	2,390	2,954
Estates	—	—	—	—	—	—	428	393	535

Officers of the House

Mrs. Lawrence: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission how many officers other than Clerks there were in the House on 1 January in each year since 1995. [174151]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The information requested is as follows. The information is not available for 1 January each year; the reference date is therefore 31 March each year.

	Number
1995	110
1996	113.5
1997	118.5
1998	118.5
1999	122.5
2000	127.5
2001	132
2002	[1]142
2003	[1]141
2004	[1]161

[1] Since 2002 the figures have been calculated as full time equivalents. Earlier figures are the numbers of individuals.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Aerosol Paints

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action the Department is taking in assisting the police to enforce the ban on sales of aerosol paints to under-16s. [172497]

Ms Blears: We are in discussion with relevant stakeholders as to what further measures might be necessary to ensure the effective enforcement of these provisions.

The Together Action Line—0870 220 2000—is also available to practitioners throughout England and Wales to provide help and support in tackling anti-social behaviour. This includes police officers with queries on the aerosol paint ban. Throughout March we ran a series of Together Academies across the country to help professionals develop best practice in addressing all forms of anti-social behaviour.

These new powers are just one part of measures to tackle graffiti through our Together campaign on anti-social behaviour. For example, 12 pilot local authorities are testing new powers to clean graffiti from street furniture and public transport property. In addition our "name that tag" campaign, encouraging the public to report "taggers" sends a clear message to graffiti vandals that we will deal with the problem.

Animal Rights Activists

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many animal rights activists have been arrested in the last 36 months, broken down by the type of offence for which they were arrested; how many were convicted; and what sentences were passed on those convicted. [168982]

Caroline Flint: It is not possible from the information collected centrally by the Home Office to identify whether a defendant is an animal rights activist.

However we understand from the police that there were 117 arrests of animal rights activists during the first four months of 2004 compared with 15 arrests during the same period in 2003.

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many companies and organisations have reported illegal actions against them over the last 24 months by animal rights activists. [172057]

Caroline Flint: It is not possible from the information collected centrally by the Home Office to identify whether a victim of crime works in a company or organisation targeted by animal rights extremists. The Government are working closely with industry, the police and other criminal justice agencies to protect those who work in the pharmaceutical and bioscience industries and their suppliers.

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans his Department has to introduce legislation to restrict the activities of animal rights activists; and if he will make a statement. [172061]

Caroline Flint: The police have a range of powers under existing criminal law and public order legislation to deal with the unlawful activities of animal rights extremists. Changes to legislation have been made to strengthen police powers to deal with intimidatory protests and office occupations in the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003.

We are looking carefully at whether further action is needed to strengthen police powers to deal with the tactics employed by extremist protestors.

Asylum Seekers

John Robertson:: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how his Department keeps track of asylum seekers who are evicted by local authorities from National Asylum Support Service accommodation following refusal of an application for asylum. [171345]

Mr. Browne: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) maintains databases containing address and other information for asylum seekers. This is also recorded in the individual Home Office file.

Applicants and their representatives are informed of their obligation to notify the Home Office of any subsequent change of address. This may be done either in person, at a designated Reporting Centre (RC), or by post to the Change of Address Team (CoAT), based in Croydon.

The Immigration Service (IS) has eleven designated reporting centres to assist in managing reporting regimes and, in addition, a person may be required to report to a police station. The reporting network will be further expanded by the development of Accommodation Centres and the establishment of additional RCs.

Commission for Racial Equality

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Commission for Racial Equality Office in Leeds will close; and if he will make a statement. [170238]

Fiona Mactaggart: I understand from the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) that the lease on its Leeds office is due for renewal, but that an in-principle decision not to extend it has been taken in view of the likely expense involved in making the premises compliant with the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act and in enhancing security measures to protect staff. It is therefore proposed that Leeds-based staff be transferred to the Manchester office in order to create a unified CRE presence in the north of England. The Commission is presently consulting its partners on this proposal.

Crime Statistics

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish the crime figures, including figures for *(a)* dangerous crime and *(b)* drug-related offences, in the constituency of Edmonton in (i) 1991–92, (ii) 2001–02 and (iii) 2003. [169303]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* The constituency of Edmonton is within the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) for Enfield. 'Dangerous crime' is taken to mean violent crime. The available information therefore relates to offences of violent crime which is comprised of violence against the person, sexual offences and robbery. With regard to drug-related offences, the available data relates to the recorded offences of trafficking, possession and other drug offences. CDRP data for violent crime is only available from 1998–99, and for drug offences from 2002–03, and is quoted in the table.

Recorded offences in the Enfield Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership Area

	Violent crime	*Drug offences*
1991	n/a	n/a
2001–02	6,665	n/a
2002–03	6,964	746

Note:
Figures for 2002–03 will have been affected by the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard on 1 April 2002.

The total number of offences recorded in the Enfield Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership for 2002–03 is 30,042. Totals for earlier years are not available centrally. Detailed statistics for Enfield for 2002–03 (including quarterly data) are available on the new Home Office website at: www.crimestatistics.org.uk.

Criminal Justice

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether changes to the *(a)* definition and *(b)* seriousness of due care in motoring offences are included in the existing proposals to reform the criminal justice system. [172789]

Caroline Flint: The Government are reviewing the existing framework of the criminal law concerning bad driving, particularly where death or injury results, in order to ensure that appropriate offences and penalties are put in place. This includes the offence of driving without due care and attention. We hope to publish a consultation paper in the near future detailing the options for change.

Cycling Offences

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what advice he has given to chief constables concerning enforcement of the legislation relating to the riding of cycles *(a)* on pavements and *(b)* without lights during the hours of darkness. [172157]

Caroline Flint: Chief officers of police are best placed to assess the level, nature and cause of cycling offences locally and decide the response.

Police officers will take action as appropriate against cyclists whom they see breaking road traffic laws in the ways described. Forces also sometimes undertake short intensive campaigns to deal with persistent cycling offenders.

We have, to help the police with enforcement, given Community Support Officers the power to issue £30 fixed penalty notices for cycling inconsiderately or irresponsibly on the pavement.

Dungavel Removal Centre

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with Scottish Ministers on the expansion of Dungavel removal centre. [162630]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 22 March 2004]:* Officials met Andrew Kerr MSP on 13 March 2003. The discussion, which was wide ranging about the feasibility study we intended to make concerning the expansion of Dungavel, was a useful precursor to discussions with the local council.

Drugs

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what public funds were spent on tackling drug misuse in Wirral, South in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* 2003–04. [172689]

Caroline Flint: Breakdown of financial allocation to local constituencies is not available in the form requested as funding is allocated to Drug Action Team (DAT) area (Wirral DAT).

In 1997–98 funding available to the two main local drug treatment providers in the Wirral area totalled £610,452. This was prior to the formation of the National Drugs Strategy, and this figure has been provided from locally held information.

	Fund	*Treatment provider*	*Budget headings*	*Amount (£)*	*Source of information*
Wirral health authority	AID/HIV monies	Wirral West Cheshire partnership trust	Aids/HIV	39,137	PCT records
			Needle and Syringe Exchange	152,411	
			Infection control nurse	12,304	
			Drug Service budget	109,852	
			Total	313,704	
Wirral MBC Social Services Department	Social Services Grant	Arch Initiatives	SS Grant for counselling and support and residential services	296,748	Wirral MBC and Arch Initiatives
			Total	296,748	

In 2003–04 the total drugs allocation was £5,265,567. In order to ensure consistency figures supplied are based on funding streams associated with the National Drug Strategy and are readily verifiable. These funding streams are specifically targeted at tackling the harm caused to individuals, families and communities by the misuse of drugs. Other mainstream funding is made available at a local level, this varies and both in amount and origin as a result it is not possible to provide robust financial information.

2003–04

	£
Partnership Capacity (DAT CAD and DAT DEV and strategic grant)	80,328
Treatment Pooled Budget	4,299,273
Through Care After Care Pump Priming	35,000
Building Safer Communities[1]	362,745
Young people	488,221
Total	5,265,567

[1] Contains non drug elements.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what investigations have been carried out by his Department on the reliability of the drugs tests currently available. [161181]

Caroline Flint: Drug testing technology and its reliability is kept under constant review by the Home Office due to its applicability to roadside impairment testing and its relevance in the workplace. The extent and definition of 'reliability' in these different settings is by nature of the criminal law different in each case.

Recently there has been research on the reliability of different methods of drug testing carried out by the Forensic Science Service (FSS) for the specific purpose of testing persons in custody suites to see if they have used drugs. The research used saliva as a point-of-contact using the Cozart RapiScan™ electronic test strip reader, one of few commercially available on-site testing kits for oral fluid (saliva). Overall, the results of this study revealed that saliva based testings are not reliable enough to evidence impairment for the purposes of charge for driving while impaired by alcohol or drugs.

In the workplace, the requirements of the criminal law do not have to be met and it is up to employers to decide what margin of proof is required to consider action against specific employees. Saliva, urine, hair analysis or blood tests may all be sufficiently reliable. The Home Office does provides guidance on the various types of tests available to any companies who seek advice, which suggests that some tests are more reliable than others.

In the July 2004, an independent inquiry report on drugs testing in the workplace will review some of the complex and wide reaching issues surrounding drug testing in the workplace including the reliability of different testing devices. The report will be the first attempt to give a full picture of drug testing in the workplace and will include recommendations to government, employers and other relevant bodies.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions the police have issued closure notices on premises they had reason to believe were being used for the production, supply or use of Class A drugs and causing serious nuisance or disturbance under powers contained in section 1 (11) of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. [169784]

Caroline Flint: The power to close premises has been widely welcomed and applauded by both the police who use it and the communities to whom its use has provided immediate relief from the blight of drug supply and use, and associated antisocial behaviour. This power provides a genuinely effective tool to tackle nightmare premises such as 'crack houses'. The power has been used at least 19 times in our Anti Social Behaviour Trailblazer sites alone since January and indications from discussions with the police and courts suggest that the power may have been used over 100 times in England and Wales.

However, the numbers of closure notices issued by the police are not recorded centrally as this data requirement would be an additional burden upon frontline police forces. We wish instead to record the number of closure orders issued by magistrates courts under section 2 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act. As this data becomes available this will allow for us to count how the power is being used nationally.

Green Minister

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what work his Department's Green Minister has undertaken in the last three months in that capacity. [172310]

Fiona Mactaggart: Much of my day-to-day work on community cohesion, race issues, voluntary and community activity and active citizenship directly supports sustainable development. In the last three months, in my capacity as Green Minister, I have also participated in a number of meetings, judged an energy efficiency switch off campaign competition for the department and continued to support the Framework Project established to tackle the environmental targets for the Government Estate, which I launched at a departmental workshop in December last year.

I have also re-launched the Regulatory Impact Assessment within the Department to reflect the greater emphasis on sustainable development.

Identity Cards

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment the Office of Government Commerce has carried out of the identity card programme as referred to at paragraph 1.11 of his consultation document, Legislation on Identity Cards (Cm 6178). [170815]

Mr. Browne: The Office of Government Commerce completed a Gateway 0 Review in January 2004 and assessed the programme as being ready to go forward to its next phase.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department from what date it will no longer be possible to obtain *(a)* a passport and *(b)* a driving licence which is not designated as an identity card under the proposals in the draft Identity Card Bill. [172300]

Mr. Browne: No date has yet been set for when any specific document will be designated as an ID card and therefore from when that document must be issued with, or as part of, an ID card.

Immigration

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of applications for immigration were accepted in England and Wales were accepted in each year since 1997. [168457]

Mr. Browne: The latest available statistics relating to decisions on applications for an extension of leave to remain or settlement made in the United Kingdom are given in the following table. Corresponding information for England and Wales is not available.

Detailed statistics on immigration control are published in the Command Paper "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom 2002" (Cm 6053), which is available in the Library, the Stationery Office and via the Home Office website http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/hobpubs1.html.

Decisions on applications for an extension of leave to remain[1] in the United Kingdom and settlement[2], by category, excluding EEA nationals, 1997–2002

	Number of decisions					
Category	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
All decisions	166,580	160,080	178,810	249,920	277,375	337,650
Visitors	9,590	10,000	9,085	12,990	14,695	15,355
Working holidaymakers	340	360	270	300	1,340	2,700
Students	54,450	46,500	52,495	74,205	90,115	128,400
Trainees	8,810	8,360	8,230	8,825	8,270	7,960
Au Pairs	910	810	495	435	495	360
Work permit holders	10,950	12,605	14,555	27,040	44,025	54,865
Permit free employment[3]	5,080	4,470	4,155	5,680	6,015	7,415
Independent means	50	50	25	40	35	10
Business[4]	320	420	310	1,835	5,580	10,715
Fiancé(e)s	80	40	45	95	85	100
Spouse (probationary year applications)[5]	17,200	16,720	16,555	27,645	24,910	19,235
Other limited leave	16,030	7,900	6,600	7,655	6,915	10,470
Settlement	42,760	51,835	65,995	83,165	74,900	78,935
Category unknown	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,140

	Percentage granted					
Category	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
All decisions	95.1	95.9	97.6	95.5	94.4	94.5
Visitors	89.4	91.3	92.9	90.1	88.9	91.6
Working holidaymakers	78.3	77.8	75.0	70.4	93.9	97.4
Students	95.7	97.0	97.5	95.2	92.3	94.7
Trainees	97.7	97.8	97.7	98.1	98.7	99.4
Au Pairs	90.7	89.1	80.4	53.2	64.9	54.6
Work permit holders	94.8	95.5	94.7	96.9	98.2	96.9
Permit free employment[3]	97.1	96.7	98.5	96.1	97.1	89.3

Category	Percentage granted					
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Independent means	73.5	69.2	80.8	47.6	57.6	33.3
Business[4]	83.7	66.1	84.8	93.3	94.4	92.2
Fiancé(e)s	63.3	71.4	76.7	75.5	77.6	77.6
Spouse (probationary year applications)[5]	92.2	93.4	98.4	95.5	92.6	96.2
Other limited leave	96.4	93.0	95.5	83.1	82.1	83.5
Settlement	95.9	97.3	99.2	97.4	97.1	94.6
Category unknown	—	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	84.3

n/a = not applicable.
[1] Excludes dependants of principal applicants, asylum related decisions, the outcome of appeals and withdrawn applications.
[2] Excludes "in line" dependants and the outcome of appeals.
[3] Includes writers and artists.
[4] Includes investors and innovators.
[5] Data include unmarried partners.
Note:
Data rounded to the nearest 5.

Interception Warrants

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many interception warrants have been issue in each year since 1997. [172495]

Ms Blears: The figures for the number of interception warrants issued since 1997 are published annually in the Annual Reports of the Interception of Communications Commissioner initially appointed under the Interception of Communications Act 1985 and now under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. Copies are available in the House of Commons Library.

NHS Recruitment

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what checks are in place in ensure that foreign healthcare workers who have been granted work permits are employed in the provision of healthcare upon entering the United Kingdom; [170666]

(2) what checks are in place in ensure that foreign healthcare workers who have been granted work permits are employed as stated on their application upon entering the United Kingdom. [170667]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* Sample checks are carried out on a random or intelligence led basis on employers, by post or by visiting their premises, including those in the Healthcare Sector, in order to ensure that work permit holders are employed for the purpose stated on the work permit application. Where it can be shown that is not the case, action is taken to revoke the work permits.

North London Mosque

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the public order consequences of the regular Friday meetings held outside the North London Mosque; and if he will make a statement. [169781]

Caroline Flint: The Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis tells me that he understands the concerns of local residents about the disruption caused by the road closure. However, it is necessary for safety reasons to close the road while prayers take place.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will invite the Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis to ensure that the public highway is free from obstructions on Fridays outside the North London Mosque; and if he will make a statement. [169804]

Caroline Flint: This is an operational matter for the Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis. He tells me that it is necessary for safety reasons to close the road outside the North London Mosque on Fridays while prayers take place.

Parliamentary Questions

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Home Office questions were tabled between 6 January and 31 March; and how many remain unanswered. [167523]

Fiona Mactaggart: According to our records the Home Office received 2,769 parliamentary questions (PQ) between the period of 6 January and 31 March, the numbers that remain unanswered is 86 (3 per cent.).

Every effort is made to reply to parliamentary questions within the parliamentary deadlines wherever possible. Consequently the Home Office is currently in the process of introducing a new PQ system, the electronic parliamentary questions system (ePQS) to better monitor and manage the Department's performance.

The ePQS monitoring system has identified the bottlenecks in the PQ process and remedial action is being taken. As is usual with the introduction of any new IT system, performance has shown an initial decline. The benefits of ePQS are now being realised across the Department and performance is improving.

Probation Service

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the reasons were for the change in the gross financial provision of the National Probation Directorate for 2003–04 [168463]

Paul Goggins: The original budget delegation to the National Probation Service, which comprises the central directorate and 42 local probation boards, for 2003–04 was £778 million including £33 million capital. The latest budget provision is £856 million including £38 capital.

The main reasons for the additional funding include: the need to build capacity in preparation for the Criminal Justice Act 2003; and increased funding for electronic monitoring, Drug Treatment and Testing Orders and the development of IT.

Proceeds of Crime Act

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what principles govern the allocation of funds received from the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002; and if he will give examples of where and how this money has been spent. [172932]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* The general principles which govern the allocation of funds received from the confiscation of criminal assets under proceeds of crime legislation, are:

(a) to build asset recovery capacity in front line law enforcement and prosecuting agencies as a contribution to crime reduction;

(b) to incentivise law enforcement agencies to do more asset recovery and;

(c) to recycle a proportion of the proceeds of crime into community based crime reduction projects.

The Recovered Assets Incentive Fund was set up last financial year to incentivise asset recovery by asset recovery agencies including law enforcement and prosecuting authorities. £15.5 million a year for three years has been allocated to the fund. The funds have been fully committed to projects, agreed by the Association of Chief Police Officers and others that will increase the confiscation of criminal assets.

Of £46.5 million that will be available under the fund over three years, up to £12 million a year has been allocated to set up four new multi-agency Regional Asset Recovery Teams (RARTs) to disrupt organised crime groups, confiscate more criminal assets and to tackle money laundering. A successful pilot in the West Midlands has been rolled out to the North West, North East, Wales and London. The teams have been operational since February and comprise staff from the police, National Crime Squad, Her Majesty's Customs and Excise, National Criminal Intelligence Service, Crown Prosecution Service, Assets Recovery Agency and the Inland Revenue.

An additional £7 million a year for three years has been made available separately from the Recovered Assets Incentive Fund for community based crime reduction projects.

Last year £4 million was allocated to the Adventure Capital Fund to regenerate communities across England. £3 million was allocated to regional government offices, of which £1.5 million funded anti-gun crime initiatives and £1.5 million funded capacity building in crime and disorder reduction partnerships. Of the £7 million available this year, £3 million has been committed to funding a community justice centre pilot scheme in Liverpool; £2 million to fund support services for victims of sexual offences in England and Wales; and £2 million to fund new and existing projects to tackle gun crime in England and Wales.

On 24 February I announced a new police incentivisation scheme to be introduced in 2004–05 that will enable police forces in England and Wales, and the Police Service of Northern Ireland, to receive a share of the criminal assets they recover locally, in the following year. Separate arrangements exist in Scotland. The scheme has the full support of the Association of Chief Police Officers in England and Wales. Police forces will benefit by receiving a third of all the recovered assets above £40 million in 2004–05, increasing to half for 2005–06. The maximum benefit available to the police will be £43 million in 2004–05 rising to £65 million in 2005–06. The Government will be using the first £40 million to help fund existing commitments in the asset recovery field.

There will be no restrictions on how the police should spend this money so there may be scope in the future for them to devote some of the funds to community-based projects aimed at crime reduction. We are currently considering how we might be able to extend the scheme to 2006–07 and beyond.

Racial Equality Councils

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which *(a)* racial equality councils and *(b)* other organisations have received Commission for Racial Equality section 44 funding for 2004–05; and what amounts have been allocated to each organisation. [172863]

Fiona Mactaggart: The table lists all the organisations, which successfully bid for funding in 2004–05, and how much they have been allocated.

Accepted organisations for GR funding 2004–05

£

	Grant	Pension	Total
London and South			
1. Avon and Bristol Law Centre	41,600	n/a	
2. Aylesbury REC	33,800	17,963	
3. Bath and N E Somerset REC	29,900	n/a	
4. Bedford REC	39,500	n/a	
5. Bexley CRE	29,300	n/a	
6. PACE—Bournemouth University[1]	6,500	n/a	
7. Bristol REC	26,900	33,627	
8. Bromley REC	30,000	n/a	
9. BTCV—Swindon[1]	15,000	n/a	
10. City Life Church, Southampton (CLEAR Project)[1]	15,000	n/a	
11. Devon and Exeter REC	38,600	n/a	
12. Dockland Settlement No. 2—Isle of Dogs[1]	15,000	n/a	
13. Dorset REC	20,000	n/a	
14. Ealing REC	55,000	n/a	

Accepted organisations for GR funding 2004–05

£

	Grant	Pension	Total
15. Enfield REC	24,000	17,479	—
16. Essex REC	40,000	n/a	—
17. Gloucester Law Centre[1]	30,000	n/a	—
18. Greenwich REC	30,000	28,115	—
19. Haringey REC	21,000	18,853	—
20. Harrow REC	28,700	18,408	—
21. Hillingdon REC	20,000	n/a	—
22. Hounslow REC	49,700	10,046	—
23. Ipswich and Suffolk CRE	26,600	17,963	—
24. Irish Traveller Movement in Britain	15,000	n/a	—
25. Islington and Camden Community Integration Project[1]	8,200	n/a	—
26. Kingston REC	35,000	18,853	—
27. Luton Race and Equality Pilot Steering Group[1]	15,000	n/a	—
28. Medway REC	30,100	17,963	—
29. Merton REC	34,800	n/a	—
30. Milton Keynes REC	50,000	8,907	—
31. North Lambeth LC	150,000	n/a	—
32. North West Kent REC	47,000	n/a	—
33. Norwich and Norfolk REC	65,000	17,963	—
34. Oxfordshire REC	34,200	n/a	—
35. Plymouth REC	30,000	n/a	—
36. Race Equality Action for Lewisham[1]	32,000	n/a	—
37. Race Equality in Newham	33,000	9,014	—
38. Racial Equality Partnership Croydon	37,000	n/a	—
39. Reading REC	38,000	17,963	—
40. Redbridge REC	49,000	22,714	—
41. Slough REC	30,000	17,963	—
42. Southwark REC	45,483	9,909	—
43. Sutton REC	33,800	n/a	—
44. Swindon REC	20,700	18,412	—
45. The Angolan Civic Communities Alliance[1]	6,100	n/a	—
46. Waltham Forest REC	50,100	16,105	—
47. Watford REC	43,500	n/a	—
48. Wiltshire REC	30,000	n/a	—
Sub-total	1,629,083	338,220	1,967,303
Scotland			
1. Ayrshire REP	15,000	n/a	—
2. Central Scotland REC	56,570	17,963	—
3. Citizen Advice and Rights Fife	21,681	n/a	—
4. Ethnic Minorities Law Centre	21,600	n/a	—
5. Grampian REC	37,403	28,463	—
6. West Lothian Council Advice Shop[1]	15,000	n/a	—
7. West of Scotland REC	30,000	19,107	—
Sub-total	197,254	65,533	262,787
Midlands			
1. Birmingham RAP	35,000	n/a	—
2. BTCV Birmingham[1]	15,000	n/a	—
3. Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum[1]	22,350	n/a	—
4. Derby Millennium Network[1]	4,100	n/a	—
5. Derby REC	18,777	18,412	—
6. Dudley REC	39,652	17,069	—
7. East Staffordshire REC	34,113	18,412	—
8. Huntingdonshire Housing Partnership Ltd.[1]	15,000	n/a	—
9. Leicester REC	17,270	17,963	—
10. Lincolnshire REC	21,000	n/a	—
11. North Staffordshire REC	67,041	18,412	—
12. Northamptonshire REC	54,000	15,908	—
13. Nottingham and Nottinghamshire REC	60,751	19,014	—
14. Peterborough REC	50,400	17,963	—
15. Race Equality Sandwell	15,600	n/a	—
16. Race Equality West Midlands	96,000	n/a	—
17. Rugby REC	27,500	n/a	—
18. Soft Touch Community Arts[1]	14,323	n/a	—
19. Worcestershire REC	18,700	n/a	—
20. YWCA Worcester[1]	7,396	n/a	—
Sub-total	633,973	143,153	777,126
North			
1. Bradford Law Centre	25,000	n/a	—
2. Cheshire HW REC	55,523	n/a	—
3. Kirklees REC	16,000	n/a	—
4. Leeds REC	32,800	9,262	—
5. Liverpool 8 Law Centre	36,200	n/a	—
6. North East Centre for Diversity	122,501	8,829	—

Accepted organisations for GR funding 2004–05

£

	Grant	Pension	Total
7. Novas Ouvertures Group[1]	15,275	n/a	—
8. Oldham REP	19,200	n/a	—
9. Preston and Western Lancashire REC	53,500	17,963	—
10. Rotherham REC	33,243	n/a	—
11. Sheffield REC	44,500	n/a	—
12. Tameside REC	166,263	17,963	—
13. Third Party Hotline[1]	14,800	n/a	—
14. York REN	24,596	n/a	—
Sub-total	659,401	54,017	713,418
Wales			
1. North Wales REN	17,812	n/a	—
2. Race Equality First	25,000	18,412	—
3. Swansea Bay REC	31,465	9,026	—
4. Valleys REC	17,846	n/a	—
Sub-total	92,123	27,438	119,561
Grand-total	3,211,834	628,361	3,840,195

[1] Organisation funded for the first time.

Sexual Offences

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the efficacy of products used to detect the presence of date rape drugs in drinks; and if he will make a statement. [171022]

Caroline Flint: None. Commercial products such as these are not licensed or endorsed by the Home Office.

Heroin

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what changes have been recorded in the price of street heroin since October 2001. [166872]

Caroline Flint: The UK average price of street heroin (per gram) reported to NCIS since October 2001 for inclusion in the National Drug Price Guide (NDPG) has been as follows:

	Price (£)
December 2001	63
April 2002	60
August 2002	61
December 2002	61
April 2003	61
August 2003	61
December 2003	62
April 2004	59

Sustainable Development

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the meetings at which his Department has been represented regarding the delivery of sustainable development across Government as co-ordinated by the Ministerial Sub-Committee of Green Ministers. [172309]

Fiona Mactaggart: I am a member of the Ministerial Sub-Committee of Green Ministers. However, it has been established practice under successive Governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees. This practice is now formalised by Exemption 2 of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Together Action Line

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many calls the Together Action Line has received since its inception. [172500]

Ms Blears: From 3 March 2004 to 3 May 2004 the Together Action Line has dealt with 1,531 calls and 261 emails. Within this number there have been some notable successes:

In March, the ASB coordinator from Portsmouth attended a Together Academy event and learnt about new crack house, closure powers. The following day she called the Action Line for some advice on procedure. Within hours, they had their first closure order

In April, Swansea Safer Partnership contacted the Action Line about the procedure for obtaining a closure order on a property which was causing serious nuisance. This included intimidation and harassment of residents, drug paraphernalia and other dangerous items lying around, as well as high numbers of people entering and leaving the premises. CCTV footage showed up to 100 visitors in a 24-hour period. The ActionLine advised Swansea on the process and sent through a detailed example of how a similar problem had been tackled elsewhere. Safer Swansea Partnership secured a closure order—the first one in Wales.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Climate Change

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions he has had with his counterparts in developing countries concerning the allocation of greenhouse gas emissions rights on an equal per capita basis, as proposed by the Africa Group of countries in 1997 and the Indian Prime Minister at the 9th UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in December 2002. [171231]

Hilary Benn: Tackling global climate change is a high priority for the Government and for the Department for International Development.

The Government are working hard to ensure that the Kyoto Protocol enters into force and is effective. The Government's focus has been on securing full compliance with the obligations under the Protocol's first commitment period; these do not of course apply to developing countries. However, DFID is also considering how the UK should engage in a future debate about wider commitments. This includes looking at ways in which developing countries can become more engaged in the debate on global greenhouse gas mitigation on terms that will allow them to follow clean development paths whilst meeting their development and poverty reduction objectives. The Department for International Development will be working closely with our partners in tackling these issues.

Colombia

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) how much *(a)* money and *(b)* aid in kind the UK has (i) pledged and (ii) delivered to date to the (A) International Organisation for Migration and (B) the UN Development Fund for Women within the framework of the UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Columbia 2003; and if he will make a statement; [173442]

(2) how much *(a)* money and *(b)* aid in kind the UK has (i) pledged and (ii) delivered to date to the Food and Agriculture Organisation within the framework of the UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Colombia 2003; and if he will make a statement. [173449]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The UK did not directly respond to the UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Colombia in 2003 (Humanitarian Assistance Plan, HAP), nor did it contribute funds or provide aid in kind to the Food and Agriculture Organisation, International Organisation for Migration or the UN Development Fund for Women within that framework. DFID's support took the form of its 18 per cent. share of the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) commitment of €8.6 million to Colombia in 2003 through it's own Global Plan 2003, for internally displaced people and people affected by internal conflict in Colombia.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what programmes aimed at *(a)* aiding internally displaced people and *(b)* aiding indigenous tribes his Department (i) has established since 2000, (ii) runs, (iii) helps to run, (iv) finances and (v) helps finance in Colombia; how many people each has (A) housed and (B) fed per annum since 2000; and if he will make a statement. [173444]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID has provided support for internally displaced people (IDPs) through UK non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and its 18 per cent. share of the European Commission's (EC) humanitarian assistance programme.

DFID supported Oxfam's Communities for Peace initiative in northern Colombia (1999–2000) by contributing £107,000. This strengthened local capacity to protect and realise the human rights of community members through community based support to health, food security, income generation, education and social inclusion.

DFID funded £150,000 for a Save the Children Fund project (1999–2000) where they worked with three local NGOs (Dos Mundos, Asoda and Benposta) in Colombia to meet the social and emotional needs of children and adolescents who had been internally displaced by conflict.

The EC's commitment to IDPs is shown in the following table. The European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office's (ECHO) Global Plan focuses on four specific objectives: short-term humanitarian assistance and protection to IDPs, post-emergency assistance to IDPs and vulnerable groups, co-ordination to increase the exchange of information among humanitarian organisations, and technical assistance.

EC Commitment for IDPs

€ *million*

	ECHO	*Assistance for up-rooted people*
2000	6.5	—
2001	10	—
2002	9.2	1.5
2003	8.6	10.55

The latest figures available for numbers benefiting are for the EC's 2002 commitment. These show that 195,000 new IDPs received emergency assistance, 85,000 people had their living conditions considerably improved, and 25,000 people were given access to basic health care assistance.

DFID has not supported programmes that specifically work on Colombian indigenous communities either directly or through the EC since 2000.

Gambia

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much aid his Department has provided to the Gambia in each year since 1997. [173445]

Hilary Benn: DFID has provided the following amounts of direct assistance to The Gambia since 1997:

Fiscal year	Total amount (£000)
1996–97	1,862
1997–98	1,311
1998–99	976
1999–2000	1,370
2000–01	1,748
2001–02	2,043
2002–03	894
2003–04 (Provisional)	429

Following a review of the Programme in 2002 DFID decided to remain engaged in The Gambia with a modest programme of support focused on the education sector, governance reform and public financial management. These proposals are at various stages of development.

HMG also provides a considerable amount of assistance to The Gambia through the UK's contributions to multilateral organisations. The UK's imputed multilateral shares since 1997 are as follows:

	European Commission	Other	United Nations	World Bank	Total (£ million)
1997	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.9
1998	0.9	0.2	0.3	0.1	1.4
1999	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.6
2000	0.9	0.3	0.3	0.3	1.8
2001	0.5	1.2	0.3	0.6	2.6

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what educational programmes aimed at children between the ages of six and 16 his Department *(a)* has established since 1997, *(b)* runs, *(c)* helps run, *(d)* finances and *(e)* helps finance in the Gambia. [173446]

Hilary Benn: DFID has recently approved a £2.9 million project aimed at enhancing the capacity of the Department of State for Education (DoSE) to implement the Gambia's poverty reduction strategy in the education sector.

Previously, from 2000–02, DFID provided £655,000 to DoSE through an education management project concentrating on the establishment of an education management information system (EMIS) and staff appraisal system.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what sexual education programmes his Department *(a)* has established since 1997, *(b)* runs, *(c)* helps run, *(d)* finances and *(e)* helps finance in the Gambia. [173447]

Hilary Benn: DFID has not provided direct funding or been involved in any sexual education programmes in The Gambia since 1997. Indirectly, DFID supports and contributes globally to the activities of many organisations involved in promoting sex education and tackling HIV/AIDS. These include the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNICEF, the World Health Programme (WHO) and the HIV/AIDS Rapid Response Programme (HARRP) funded by the World Bank.

In The Gambia, activities include the HIV/AIDS Rapid Response Project (HARRP) of approximately US $15 million, which supports the Gambian National AIDS strategy and addresses a wide range of prevention activities. In addition The Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM), to which DFID also contributes, is considering providing US $14.5 million over 5 years for the treatment, care and support for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the international initiatives in the Gambia that his Department has participated in *(a)* financially and *(b)* logistically since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [173448]

Hilary Benn: The UK makes multilateral contributions to a number of international organisations active in The Gambia. Since 1997 the UK's imputed share of multilateral contributions is as follows:

	European Commission	Other	United Nations	World Bank	Total (£ million)
1997	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.9
1998	0.9	0.2	0.3	0.1	1.4
1999	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.6
2000	0.9	0.3	0.3	0.3	1.8
2001	0.5	1.2	0.3	0.6	2.6

(b) DFID works closely with the Gambian Government and other donors in building a co-ordinated approach to the implementation of the Gambia's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). Initiatives coordinated with other donors include support to Public Expenditure Reviews in 2002 and 2004, and a Country Financial Accountability Assessment in 2003.

Ministerial Visits

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list visits made by each Minister in the Department between December 2003 and April 2004, broken down by *(a)* date, *(b)* constituency visited and *(c)* cost. [171565]

Hilary Benn: I visited the City of York on 17 March for departmental business. This visit cost £226.

Gareth Thomas travelled to East Kilbride (DFID's second Headquarters) on 4 December 2003 at a cost of £163.10. On Thursday 18 December 2003 Gareth Thomas travelled to Gateshead, East and Tynemouth at a cost of £254.00. These visits were undertaken as part of the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State's departmental business.

For details of overseas visits the Government publishes on an annual basis the total costs of all ministerial overseas travel and a list of all visits by Cabinet Ministers costing in excess of £500. Information for 2003–04 is currently being collected and will be published as soon as it is ready.

Occupied Palestinian Territories

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the Statement of 29 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 372WH, on the Occupied Palestinian Territories, on which issues the Government has made representations to the Government of Israel. [172080]

Mr. Rammell: I have been asked to reply.

My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and my noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean regularly make representations to the Israeli Government about all aspects of the humanitarian situation in the Occupied Territories, including access for humanitarian organisations, as well as settlements and the route of the barrier.

In addition, we have recently made representations about the deaths of British Nationals in the Occupied Territories, extra judicial killings and Israeli public statements implying that Yasser Arafat might be a target.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

EU Chemicals Legislation

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations have been received from the US Administration in respect of the proposed REACH legislation in the EU. [171512]

Mr. Rammell: In early 2003, during their regular meetings with officials from the British Embassy in Washington, officials from the United States Trade Representative raised their concern about the impact of the proposed Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals (REACH) legislation on the US chemicals industry and its trade with the EU.

Officials from the US Embassy in London have also requested general information regarding the proposed REACH legislation.

The UK Government are a strong supporter of the overall objectives of REACH. We want to see a rapid, efficient system for collecting the necessary information on chemicals and for tackling those of most concern, while minimising animal testing and maintaining the competitiveness of the chemical industry.

Colombia

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports his Department has received concerning the plight of Colombian refugees *(a)* seeking to enter and *(b)* who have already entered Panama; what assistance his Department has offered to the Government of Panama better to deal with the influx of refugees from Colombia; and if he will make a statement. [173437]

Mr. Rammell: Our Embassies in Panama and Colombia provide reporting on movements of people between Colombia and Panama, although it can be difficult to obtain very accurate information. We are also in contact with the recently opened office in Panama City of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other EU missions. We have not provided any assistance to the Panamanian Government on dealing with Colombian refugees and illegal immigrants. The Panamanian authorities work closely with their Colombian counterparts on the border and on repatriation of Colombian nationals. They also work with some international NGOs providing assistance to Colombian refugees.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of *(a)* the numbers and *(b)* the (i) economic and (ii) security implications of the internally displaced persons currently within Colombia; how this situation has developed over the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [173460]

Mr. Rammell: Our Embassy in Bogota reports regularly on internally displaced people (IDPs) in Colombia, and discusses the situation with the Colombian authorities and NGOs. Given the nature of the issue, it is very difficult to put a completely accurate figure on the number of IDPs in recent years. Colombian government provided and unofficial statistics differ slightly. According to government statistics 327,606 were displaced in 2001 and 379,289 in 2002. The economic and security implications are loss of income through unemployment, lack of access to education and health care and increased vulnerability. This terrible situation has arisen as a direct result of the armed conflict in Colombia. 2003 showed a marked decline in numbers as the security forces made some headway against the illegally armed groups; according to government statistics 172,851 were displaced in 2003. But the situation is still critical and more needs to be done to address the issue.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many UK personnel operating at the British embassy, Bogota, are absent from the diplomatic list; for what reason they are absent; what their activities and roles are; and if he will make a statement. [173236]

Mr. Rammell: There are two lists covering the embassy staff in Bogota, one produced by the Colombian authorities and one produced by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). All our staff at the embassy are accredited to the Colombian Government through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and appear in the Ministry's list as and when it is updated. Regarding the FCO list, only four substantive members of the embassy's staff do not appear in the Diplomatic Service Overseas List. All are junior civilian members of Government Departments undertaking secretarial, administrative or technical duties. It is not our practice to include in the list these categories of staff at our posts.

Computer File Formats

Mr. Allan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his Department's policy is in respect of the computer file formats used for the *(a)* distribution and *(b)* archiving of publicly available documents. [173352]

Mr. Rammell: The Department's documents generally available to the public electronically are provided through the Department's website: www.fco.gov.uk.

These are usually available in HTML or PDF formats. Previously published documents are archived in the same way at www.fco.gov.uk/directory. Public documents that pre-date the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) website are available on request from the FCO Library: library.enquiries@fco.gov.uk.

Gambia

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with his counterpart from the Gambia concerning child prostitution and sex tourism; and if he will make a statement. [173458]

Mr. Mullin: The issue of child prostitution and sex tourism in The Gambia is a matter of increasing concern. Our High Commissioner has discussed the problem with the Ministers of Tourism and the Interior, and maintains close contact with senior police and immigration officials on these issues.

He is also in close contact with UNICEF locally. With the active participation of the Government of The Gambia. UNICEF launched a report on 5 May 2004 on the sexual abuse of children. This made several recommendations including the need to raise public awareness and make legislative reform. UNICEF is working with the authorities and local Non Governmental Organisations to draw up an action plan to take forward these recommendations.

Our High Commission in Banjul actively supports the Child Protection Alliance in The Gambia by funding several projects.

Iraq

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many British nominees are serving in the Iraq Survey Group. [173427]

Mr. MacShane *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* As at 13 May, there were 49 British personnel (both military and civilian) serving with the Iraq Survey Group.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make available to *(a)* the United States Administration and *(b)* Mr. Paul Bremer a copy of the report prepared for his Department entitled "A Human Rights Approach to Prison Management" launched on 20 November 2002. [173862]

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has provided a copy of the handbook, "A Human Rights Approach to Prison Management", launched by him on 11 November 2002 to the Coaliton Provisional Authority. [174331]

Mr. Rammell: Copies of "A Human Rights Approach to Prison Management" were sent to the US Federal Bureau of Prisons, the National Institute of Corrections. Commissioners of the Department of Corrections in every state and the American Correctional Association by the International Centre for Prison Studies who produced the handbook. A copy has not been passed directly to Paul Bremer. However a senior prison governor who has been seconded to CPA(South) from the UK Prisons Service to advise and mentor the Iraqis on running their penal system was given copies of the handbook in Arabic. We hope that the handbook will be used as a basic training tool in the future Iraqi prison service.

Julie Ward

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what *(a)* discussions concerning and *(b)* involvement in the further inquiries that are to take place into the Julie Ward murder in Kenya his Department plans; with whom discussions are to take place; and if he will make a statement. [173292]

Mr. Mullin: I discussed the Julie Ward murder case with the Kenyan Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Kiraitu Murungi, during his visit to London on 29 April. Mr. Murungi assured me that the Kenyan Government would take all necessary steps to ensure that justice is done if new evidence relating to the murder came to light. During a meeting with our Acting High Commissioner in Nairobi on 7 May, Mr. Murungi further confirmed that any new information relating to the case should be passed to the Kenyan Director of Public Prosecutions.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is ready to offer assistance, if requested, but has not been asked by Julie Ward's family to take action relating to any further inquiry.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether *(a)* he and *(b)* other Ministers from his Department (i) have met and (ii) intend to meet Mr. John Ward to discuss the murder of his daughter, Julie Ward, in Kenya; and if he will make a statement. [173293]

Mr. Mullin: Mr. Ward met my right hon. Friend the then Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) (Mr. Hain) in 2000. FCO Ministers would be happy to meet Mr. Ward again, should he request a meeting.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he raised *(a)* the issue of the search for peace in Darfur, *(b)* human rights abuses and the implementation of sharia law and *(c)* the future of Dr. al-Tarubi in discussions with the Foreign Minister of the Sudan, during his recent visit to London. [173785]

Mr. Mullin *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* My right hon. Friends the Foreign Secretary and the Secretary of State for International Development, and I registered strongly our concerns about the situation in Darfur during our meetings with the Sudanese Foreign Minister on 11 May. He accepted that progress was now needed. I also raised our concerns about human rights and the implementation of sharia law. We did not discuss Dr. al-Turabi.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) whether the Government have addressed the concerns of the UN Human Rights Commission following its recent session

on the Sudan; and what work he is undertaking with the EU to highlight human rights abuses *(a)* in Darfur and *(b)* elsewhere in the Sudan; [173786]

(2) whether the report of the United Nations Human Rights Commission following its recent session in Sudan was available to the meeting of the UN session on the human rights situation in Sudan. [173907]

Mr. Mullin *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* We are in close contact with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) about the situation in Darfur. We are working to ensure that the Independent Expert, mandated by the 23 April UN Commission on Human Rights decision on Sudan, is appointed as soon as possible.

The advance version of the report of the recent OHCHR mission to Sudan was only issued on 10 May, so it was not available for consideration during the recent UN Commission on Human Rights.

We raise the human rights situation in Sudan on a regular basis, both bilaterally and as part of the EU-Sudan dialogue. The humanitarian and human rights situation in Darfur was discussed at the General Affairs and External Relations Council on 26 April, and in the Political and Security Council on 27, 30 April and 11 May.

Thailand

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many United Kingdom citizens have been arrested while on holiday in Thailand in each year since 1997; if he will list the five most common charges United Kingdom citizens were arrested for; how many United Kingdom citizens were sentenced in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [173457]

Mr. Mullin: The information requested is in the form of a table.

UK citizens arrested in Thailand per annum since 1997

	Number
1997–98	251
1998–99	113
1999–2000	165
2000–01	430
2001–02	161
2002–03	185
2003–04	315

These figures include British nationals both resident and on holiday in Thailand. We do not hold figures for the number of British nationals sentenced in Thailand. The most common charges, listed in order, are for visa and work permit irregularities, drugs, motoring offences, assault, and theft.

Zimbabwe

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on human rights abuses committed by the Government of Zimbabwe. [173411]

Mr. Mullin: The Government of Zimbabwe continues to commit serious human rights abuses. It has repeatedly harassed, intimidated and attacked the opposition, independent media and wider civil society. We and the rest of the international community have made our condemnation clear. With our partners we are helping to provide help for those who have suffered and support to human rights lawyers and others working to end these abuses.

CABINET OFFICE

e-Government

23. **Mr. Tom Harris:** To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how the United Kingdom compares with other OECD member countries in the provision of internet access to Government services. [173516]

Mr. Woolas: The OECD has not conducted its own e-Government benchmarking study. Other reports indicate that the UK is closely behind Scandinavia and among the other leading countries worldwide in the delivery of e-Government services.

Directgov, the new one-stop internet and DTV service for citizens, is a world-leading service which is attracting significant interest from other OECD governments.

Better Regulation

24. **Andrew George:** To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what recent progress has been achieved towards better regulation. [173517]

Mr. Woolas: The UK remains well-placed in international comparisons of regulatory burdens and regulatory reform.

Recent progress on better regulation includes delivery of over 300 of the measures in the Regulatory Reform Action Plan. 23 Regulatory Reform Orders have been laid before Parliament. Compliance with the Regulatory Impact Assessment process measured at 100 per cent. in November 2003. A revised Code of Practice on Consultation was issued in January 2004.

Civil Service (Disabled People)

25. **Mrs. Humble:** To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what action is being taken to ensure that people with disabilities are represented throughout the civil service. [173518]

Mr. Woolas: The Government remain committed to increased representation of disabled people in the civil service. Current figures show that 4.3 per cent. of civil servants have declared a disability, including 1.7 per cent. of those at senior civil service level. We have set a target of 3.0 per cent. for disabled staff at senior civil service level by April 2005.

Action to increase representation of disabled people includes a bursary scheme for disabled staff with high potential and a summer placement scheme to encourage disabled applicants to the graduate fast stream.

Ombudsmen

26. **Mr. Clifton-Brown:** To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what plans he has to co-ordinate the activities of the Ombudsmen to ensure that they act in a consistent manner. [173519]

Mr. Woolas: The Government's response to the Public Administration Select Committee's Third Report of Session 2002–03 on Ombudsman issues made clear that we are working closely with the parliamentary Ombudsman and others in the Ombudsmen community to promote joint working and ensure that Ombudsmen arrangements are fit for purpose.

Better Regulation Taskforce

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office when he next expects to meet the Better Regulation Taskforce to discuss its plans for 2004–05. [173520]

Mr. Alexander: I have regular meetings with the Chairman of the Better Regulation Task Force to discuss all aspects of the better regulation agenda.

The Task Force are currently scoping ideas for their work programme for 2004–05 and they have not taken any decisions as yet. However, they are, as always, open to ideas.

PRIME MINISTER

Ministerial Code

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister whether section 6 of the Ministerial Code permits individuals other than special advisers to use Government property to undertake manifesto preparation work for New Labour. [174083]

The Prime Minister: The use of Government property is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Ministerial Code, the Civil Service Code and the Code of Conduct for Special Advisers.

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister on how many occasions in each year since 1 May 1997 spouses or partners of Ministers travelled *(a)* within the United Kingdom and *(b)* overseas at public expense under the provisions of section 87 of the Ministerial Code; and what the total cost of such expenses was in each year. [174084]

The Prime Minister: The information requested is not held centrally. The cost of spouses or partners accompanying Ministers on overseas visits is included in the overall cost of Minister's visits overseas which is published on an annual basis. The cost of visits from 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004 is currently being collated and will be published in the normal way before the summer recess. Copies for previous years are available in the Library of the House.

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister whether the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs sought his approval for her recent absences overseas in accordance with section 7, paragraph 73 of the Ministerial Code; and if he will make a statement. [174085]

The Prime Minister: Ministerial travel complies with the requirements of the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers.

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister how he plans to apply section 90 of the Ministerial Code of Conduct to the recent offer by the US authorities of a decoration. [174086]

The Prime Minister: As I made clear to the hon. Member on 10 July 2003, *Official Report*, columns 933–34W, the Ministerial Code is a code of conduct and guidance on procedures for Ministers. Any offer of a decoration from a foreign state is considered in light of this guidance.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Bereavement Allowance

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department plans to lower the age at which the bereavement allowance is paid to widows. [172002]

Mr. Pond: Bereavement benefits were introduced on 9 April 2001, and for the first time extended support to both widows and widowers following the death of a spouse. These new benefits concentrate the help available where it is most needed; on immediate needs and on families with children.

The bereavement payment is a lump sum payment of £2,000 payable immediately to help with costs arising on bereavement. Widowed parent's allowance is a weekly benefit payable to widowed parents who satisfy the qualifying conditions. In addition bereavement allowance is a weekly benefit payable, for 52 weeks following widowhood, to widows and widowers aged 45 and over without dependant children.

We have no plans to change these arrangements.

Jobcentre Plus

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects the new Jobcentre Plus office in Burnley to open; and if he will make a statement. [174041]

Jane Kennedy: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to my hon. Friend.

Letter from David Anderson to Mr. Peter Pike, dated 18 May 2004:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning when the new Jobcentre Plus office in Burnley will open. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Jobcentre Plus has been established to deliver a radical change in the way that benefits and employment services are provided to people of working age. By 2006, we plan to introduce a network of around 1,000 fully integrated Jobcentre Plus offices.

Through the development of these new modern offices, Jobcentre Plus will provide an integrated, work-focused service to all people of working age. The introduction of work-focused interviews is extending the opportunity to more people to take advantage of the help, guidance and support we can provide to assist them to move into sustainable employment. We are also

introducing new services for employers, which will help them fill vacancies more quickly with well-prepared and motivated employees.

I am pleased to tell you that the Jobcentre Plus Investment Board met on 12 May and funding has been secured for the new Jobcentre Plus office in Burnley. Subject to planning permission for the new office and intrusive site survey results being satisfactory, we expect to proceed with a new building on the Town Hall car park site and have completion by Spring 2006, assuming there are no unforeseen technical problems. This office will deliver all the Jobcentre Plus face to face services and we will retain the Social Security office at Brun House as a Benefit Processing Centre.

I have asked the Jobcentre Plus District Manager for East Lancashire to keep you informed of developments.

I hope this is helpful.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for what reason 960 business square metres is sought for a new Shanklin Jobcentre Plus office; and what the area is in business square metres of Ryde and Newport Jobcentre Plus office. [174341]

Jane Kennedy: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from David Anderson to Mr. Andrew Turner, dated 18 May 2004:

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions has asked me to reply direct to your question concerning the business square metres sought for the new Jobcentre Plus office in Shanklin and the number of business square metres of the Jobcentre Plus offices in Ryde and Newport. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

To maximise the possibility of maintaining an office in Shanklin two options were examined. An initial search was made for 960 square metres of business space to accommodate other business together with a Jobcentre Plus outlet. This was subsequently reviewed and 450 square metres sought for an outlet only.

Ryde Jobcentre Plus outlet is 351 business square metres. Newport Jobcentre Plus outlet is co located with other parts of our business on a large site. The area used for the Jobcentre Plus is approximately 850 business square metres.

I hope this is helpful.

Pensioner Poverty

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners his Department estimates have been living in persistent poverty in each of the last seven years. [172005]

Mr. Pond: The Department for Work and Pension's strategy report 'Opportunity for all' (OFA) reports on persistent poverty, and provides results for individuals with an equivalised income below 60 per cent. of the median for at least three out of four successive years. A time series showing the proportion of pensioners in persistent poverty using this definition is presented in the following table:

Proportion below 60 per cent. of median income in at least 3 out of 4 years

	Percentage of pensioners
1992 to 1995	16
1993 to 1996	16
1994 to 1997	17
1995 to 1998	17
1996 to 1999	18
1997 to 2000	17
1998 to 2001	18

Notes:

1. *Source:* British Household Panel Survey (BHPS), which is carried out by the Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) UK Longitudinal Studies Centre at the University of Essex.
2. The latest date for which BHPS data are available is the calendar year 2001. Figures for the calendar year 2002 will be published in the second half of 2004.
3. Persistent poverty using this definition is measured over four-year periods. The table presents figures for the most recent seven four-year periods.
4. Estimates are for Great Britain.
5. The definition used in the answer is used in the Government's Opportunity for all report (Cm 5956), which is available in the Library. This gives indicators of persistent low income for children, working age adults and older people using both 60 and 70 per cent. of overall median income as the thresholds for low income.
6. Using four-year windows to estimate the proportion in persistent low income, and the way in which response patterns vary within each of the survey years, has meant that it is not possible to present robust estimates of the numbers in persistent poverty using the BHPS survey. For this reason, proportions have been presented.

Sure Start

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many mothers in West Lancashire have taken up the Sure Start maternity grant. [171724]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested, the available information is in the tables.

Sure Start maternity grants for South West Lancashire Social Fund District

	Applications	*Awards*
2000–01	1,184	1,071
2001–02	1,259	1,143
2002–03	1,592	1,320
2003 April	126	86

Sure Start maternity grants for the area covered by Lancashire West Jobcentre Plus District

	2003 May to March
Applications	4,866
Awards	3,710

Notes:

1. In May 2003, part of South West Lancashire Social Fund District was combined with Blackpool and Preston Social Fund Districts and part of Lancaster and South Cumbria Social Fund District to form Lancashire West Jobcentre Plus District. West Lancashire Parliamentary Constituency is now in Lancashire West Jobcentre Plus District. The two areas for which data is given in the table are thus different, and the data is not comparable.
2. There were no cases for 1999–2000.
3. Data is given for all applications and awards, irrespective of whether the application was made by the mother or her partner.

Source:

DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System.

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many mothers in Blackpool, South have received the Sure Start maternity grant. [173061]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested. The available information is in the tables.

Sure Start maternity grants for Blackpool Social Fund District

	Applications	*Awards*
2000–01	1,269	1,027
2001–02	1,359	1,173
2002–03	1,650	1,391
2003 April	143	109

Sure Start maternity grants for area covered by Lancashire West Jobcentre Plus District

	Applications	*Awards*
2003 May to March	4,866	3,710
2004 April	402	294

Notes:
1. Data are not available by parliamentary constituency.
2. Blackpool South parliamentary constituency used to be part of Blackpool Social Fund District. This District was involved in a very complex interlocking set of boundary changes affecting an area from North Cumbria to Norfolk, which took place from September 2002 to June 2003. In May 2003, Blackpool Social Fund District was combined with Preston Social Fund District and parts of South West Lancashire, and Lancaster and South Cumbria Social Fund Districts to form Lancashire West Jobcentre Plus District. The two areas for which data are given in the table are thus different, so the data is not comparable.
3. Sure Start maternity grants were introduced on 27 March 2000. The very small number of cases for 1999–2000 has been excluded for data protection reasons.
4. Data is given for all applications and awards, irrespective of whether the application was made by the mother or her partner.
Source:
DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System.

Verification Framework

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will place in the Library a list of the local authorities *(a)* not complying, *(b)* partially complying and *(c)* fully complying with the verification framework for the most recent year available. [172981]

Mr. Pond *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* The information has been placed in the Library.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Breastfeeding

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Minister for Women what entitlement there is for women in work to take breaks for breastfeeding; and if she will make a statement. [173955]

Ms Hewitt: The law requires employers to give breastfeeding women a place to rest and every employer must ensure that when an employee notifies that she is breastfeeding she or her child are not exposed to any risks from the work activity as long as she continues to breastfeed. HSE publishes comprehensive guidance on how employers can meet their legal requirements on their website: www.hse.gov.uk/mothers.

The Government believes that arrangements for when breaks should be taken for breastfeeding should be a matter for agreement between employers and employees as it would be difficult to design a regulatory provision that would be workable across different sectors. We would always encourage employers and employees to work together to find arrangements which will best balance the needs of the mother and the business.

TREASURY

Death Certificates

Albert Owen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is a requirement that the cause of death be printed on death certificates in England and Wales. [174072]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the General Registrar for England and Wales, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Albert Owen, dated 18 May 2004:

As National Statistician and Registrar General for England and Wales, I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning whether it is now a requirement for the cause of death to be printed on death certificates in England and Wales. (174072)

Currently a certified copy of an entry in a death register must contain all the information in the entry, including the cause of death.

However, in January 2002 the Government published a White Paper "Civil Registration: Vital Change" (Cm 5355) containing proposals for the reform of the civil registration service in England and Wales. One of the proposals is in addition to providing a full death certificate, to make available a shortened form that omits the cause of death. It is intended that the White Paper proposals are taken forward by means of an order under the Regulatory Reform Act 2001. A draft order is currently being prepared for laying before Parliament.

Birth Registrations

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what reports he has received on delays, for administrative reasons, in the registration of births; what the latest average time *(a)* in London and *(b)* in the UK for a birth being registered is; and if he will make a statement. [174181]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the Registrar General, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Harry Cohen, dated 18 May 2004:

As National Statistician and Registrar General for England and Wales, I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning the average time taken in *(a)* London and *(b)* the UK to register a birth. (174181)

The General Register Office does not routinely collect information on administrative delays to birth registration. Responsibility for delivering the civil registration service in England and Wales is split between each of the 172 local authorities and the Registrar General for England and Wales.

Complaints about administrative delays would be referred to the Proper Officer for Registration Matters appointed by each local authority with responsibility for delivery of registration services.

The length of the interval between birth and registration may be influenced by parental choice or circumstances. For example, the interval may be longer than it would otherwise have been if the father is not immediately available to attend the register office along with the mother, or if the parents are undecided on the child's name. If parents express concern about a delay in the registration because of non-availability of a registrar, that concern would be addressed by the local authority.

A fundamental review of civil registration is being undertaken currently which, if the necessary changes in law are implemented, will extend the means available to the public for registering events. In addition to the existing face-to-face interview with the registrar, it is proposed to introduce the facility for telephone and internet registration. Reforms are being introduced by means of an Order under the Regulatory Reform Act. An Order is due to be presented later this session.

The average interval between occurrence and registration of births to women usually resident in London was 24.1 days in 2003. The equivalent figure for England and Wales was 17.9 days. Civil registration is a devolved matter in Northern Ireland and Scotland, and further information is available from the General Register Offices of these countries.

Budget Information (Costs)

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the *(a)* design costs, *(b)* production costs, *(c)* distribution costs, *(d)* number of staff involved in production and distribution and *(e)* total number produced of the 'What Budget 2004 means for' leaflets for each of the regions and nations of the United Kingdom. [174273]

Ruth Kelly: The 'What Budget 2004 means for . . .' leaflets were produced as part of the wider Budget process within normal staffing duties. The costs of design, production and distribution were met within Departmental Expenditure Limits and amounted to approximately £3,930. 1,500 leaflets were produced for each of the regions and nations of the United Kingdom, that is 18,000 in total.

Budget Report

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the amount raised by each of the revenue categories listed in Table C8 of Chapter C in the 2004 Financial Statement and Budget Report in each of the English regions in each year since 1997. [174274]

Dawn Primarolo: A regional breakdown of all the revenue categories listed in Table C8 of Chapter C in the 2004 Financial Statement and Budget Report is not available. However, estimates of income tax liabilities and stamp duty from residential property transactions by region are available on the Inland Revenue website at http://www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/income_distribution/menu-by-year.htm#313 and http://www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/stamp_duty/03IR152.pdf respectively.

Child Benefit

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how long he requires that it takes to transfer child benefit from parents to grandparents when they become the main carer and beneficiary. [172327]

Dawn Primarolo: Our published target for clearance of all claims for child benefit for 2004–05 was 93 per cent. within 36 working days.

Child Tax Credit

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many child tax credit calculations have resulted in underpayment as a result of computer problems which lead to an incorrect assessment of income; how many people have been affected by such errors; how much has been underpaid as a result; and what steps have been taken to *(a)* explain and *(b)* apologise to those affected. [164616]

Dawn Primarolo: The Inland Revenue is not aware of any such issues causing underpayment of child tax credit. The income element of the entitlement calculation is based on figures supplied by the claimant rather than an assessment by the Inland Revenue. The Inland Revenue will be pleased to look into any individual cases where people consider that they have been underpaid tax credits in such circumstances.

Computer File Formats

Mr. Allan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his Department's policy is in respect of the computer file formats used for the *(a)* distribution and *(b)* archiving of publicly available documents. [173363]

Ruth Kelly: The information is as follows:

(a) Distribution

The use of PDF is common to all the main Chancellor's Departments (Office of National Statistics, HM Treasury, HM Customs and Excise and Inland Revenue), along with Microsoft Office applications (typically Word or Excel) though these formats can vary depending on the content of the file. ONS differs from the others in that its internal document management is based on the use of the IBM/Lotus Notes e- mail and collaboration suite and also the Microsoft Office suite. The Departments' individual websites all use HTML, although other applications are also used.

(b) Archiving

There is no common policy for archiving documents among the four Departments, although each has its own system in place to ensure information is captured. ONS uses an approved Electronic Records Management System; HMCE currently archives material in PDF format but for the future is looking at the use of XML; IR use a Content Management System to archive its internet published documents and the Treasury uses a records management system to store documents.

Council Tax

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many households headed by a person of pensionable age were estimated to be paying more in council tax than income tax in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* the most recent year for which figures are available. [171712]

Ruth Kelly: Recent figures show that there were 5.2 million households in 2002–03 who paid more net council tax than income tax; in 1997–98 there were 4.8 million. The majority of these are pensioner

households 65 per cent. of whom pay no income tax or only pay income tax at 10 per cent., and all of whom benefit from higher age related income tax allowances. The Government have increased the aged personal allowances by at least 7.7 per cent. in real terms since 1997. No pensioner aged 65 or over will pay income tax on income of less that £131 a week in 2004–05.

Council tax benefit (CTB) exists to help those on low incomes with their council tax bills. However, many of those eligible for CTB do not claim their entitlement. The Government have therefore been running a campaign alongside local councils to boost take-up. A tailored claim form has been introduced for pensioners; the restriction on the amount of CTB for those people living in Band F, G or H properties was removed in April 2004.

Council tax consumes a greater proportion of the incomes of older pensioners—who have little or no opportunity to increase their incomes—than it does for other households. Alongside CTB the Government believe it is right to help older pensioners with their council tax so that pensioner households with someone aged over 70 will this year receive a £100 payment to help with their council tax bills. This is in addition to the winter fuel payment of £200 for all over 60s households, £300 for over 80s households. Furthermore the Government have introduced the pension credit, increased the basic state pension by the higher of 2.5 per cent. or price inflation, introduced free TV licences for households with someone aged over 75 or over—and the free eye test, free prescriptions and concessionary travel for those aged over 60.

Economic Inactivity

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Havant (Mr. Willetts) of 26 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 746W, if he will break down the figures by region, giving *(a)* total numbers and *(b)* percentages of the total in each case. [173310]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Jim Cousins, dated 18 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment. (173310)

I am placing in the House of Commons Library a table giving estimates of the number and the percentage of men aged 50 to 64 years and women aged 50 to 59 years not in employment for each region. This table covers the three month periods ending February each year from 1998 to 2004, the most recent year for which this information is available.

Estimates are taken from the Office for National Statistics' Labour Force Survey (LFS). As with any statistical sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

Financial Services Authority

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what charges the Financial Services Authority will *(a)* incur and *(b)* charge following the introduction of the Insurance Mediation Directive. [173761]

Ruth Kelly: The Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 requires the FSA to publish a cost-benefit analysis of its proposed rules and guidance, which includes the direct costs to the FSA incurred as a result of introducing and implementing the proposals. The FSA has published a cost-benefit analysis in each of its consultation papers, which are available from the website, www.fsa.gov.uk.

The fees charged are a matter for the FSA. Application fees for insurance intermediaries have been set following consultation with the industry and are based on the volume of business undertaken. Up to 50 per cent. discount is offered for an early application together with further discount if the application is made electronically. Smaller intermediaries seeking authorisation could pay a fee of only £500 if they take advantage of the early application deadline of 31 May 2004. If a firm is already authorised by the FSA for other regulated activities, the application fee it would pay for IMD activities is halved. The periodic annual fee which will be charged by the FSA for ongoing supervision of authorised intermediaries following the commencement of regulation has not yet been set and will be the subject of a forthcoming consultation this summer, but the FSA has indicated that the minimum periodic fee for a full year of mortgage/general insurance regulation will be in the region of £750.

ICT Training

Mr. Simon: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his targets are for improving the information and communication technology (ICT) skills base of staff within *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies; and what method he uses to certify the competence levels achieved by staff receiving training in ICT. [173714]

Ruth Kelly: In the departments and agencies responsible to the Chancellor of the Exchequer each individual's ICT expertise is developed in accordance with the role requirement. This is assessed by each organisation's performance management process and personal targets are set and monitored.

Income Tax

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many senior citizens in *(a)* Leyton and Wanstead constituency, *(b)* the London borough of Redbridge area and *(c)* the London borough of Waltham Forest area qualified for the 10p rate of income tax in each year since its introduction. [174187]

Dawn Primarolo: The requested information is given in the following table.

Number of pensioner taxpayers

Number: Thousand

	2000–01	*2001–02*
(a) Leyton and Wanstead constituency	—	4
(b) London Borough of Redbridge	15	19
(c) London Borough of Waltham Forest	14	12

All income taxpayers benefit from the 10p starting rate. In the Survey of Personal Incomes the sample size of pensioners living in Leyton and Wanstead

constituency is relatively small compared to other constituencies so a reliable estimate cannot be given for 2000–01. All estimates should be treated with caution because of sampling variation. Estimates are based on the 2000–01 and 2001–02 Survey of Personal Incomes. Figures for 1999–2000 are currently not available.

Iraq

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost was of *(a)* preparations for the invasion of Iraq, *(b)* the invasion itself and *(c)* the subsequent occupation in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) 2003–04; and what the estimate of costs is for (A) this financial year and (B) each subsequent financial year. [174156]

Tom Cox: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost of the United Kingdom's involvement in Iraq has been since the commencement of military operations. [174352]

Mr. Boateng: The Chancellor set aside £3 billion in Budget 2003 as a Special Reserve to cover the cost of operations in Iraq, £1 billion was drawn down by the Ministry of Defence in the Spring Supplementary Estimate for 2002–03.

The remaining £2 billion of this Special Reserve was carried forward to 2003–04. The Ministry of Defence drew down £1,539 million in the 2003–04 Winter and Spring Supplementary Estimates.

In the PER 2003 the Chancellor announced a further £500 million for the Special Reserve in the financial year 2003–04 and a further £300 million for 2004–05 as a prudent allowance to cover Iraq and our continuing international commitment to the war on terrorism.

Labour Statistics (London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the *(a)* change and *(b)* percentage change was in full-time permanent jobs in Greater London, broken down by borough, from 1997 to 31 December 2003; [173248]

(2) how many new jobs have been created in London, broken down by borough, since 1997. [173249]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Simon Hughes, dated May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about full-time jobs and jobs created in Greater London. I am replying in his absence. (173248,173249)

While statistics of jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes in numbers of jobs from year to year.

The attached table shows the information requested, relating to all jobs and full-time jobs in Greater London, by borough, for 1997 and 2002, which is the latest year for which figures are available.

Information is not available about whether the jobs were permanent.

Total number of employee jobs [1] and net change in employee jobs for 1997 and 2002
Greater London, by borough

Thousand

	1997		2002	
	Full-time	*Total*	*Full-time*	*Total*
Borough				
Barking and Dagenham	37.4	49.9	35.6	45.8
Barnet	72.6	106.9	74.7	107.1
Bexley	38.5	56.9	45.8	65.3
Brent	70.6	94.7	77.3	100.9
Bromley	57.8	91.6	67.8	96.9
Camden	180.0	230.7	203.2	259.4
City of London	248.1	283.1	270.6	312.0
Croydon	86.6	123.8	94.4	131.3
Ealing	83.1	113.0	88.5	117.1
Enfield	60.3	84.8	65.2	91.5
Greenwich	40.7	57.8	39.0	60.4
Hackney	61.8	80.1	70.4	90.7
Hammersmith and Fulham	65.1	85.6	80.0	103.1
Haringey	39.4	58.3	42.1	60.4
Harrow	44.6	63.3	47.7	67.6
Havering	45.6	67.7	52.1	75.4
Hillingdon	111.8	141.8	127.0	162.9
Hounslow	87.7	115.3	95.0	122.1
Islington	106.3	135.6	118.3	149.9
Kensington and Chelsea	83.7	117.1	86.5	119.9
Kingston-upon-Thames	54.0	75.4	46.5	67.5
Lambeth	72.8	99 5	86.4	119.4
Lewisham	35.8	55.4	38.0	61.5
Merton	42.2	61.2	50.5	68.2
Newham	43.7	58.7	46.4	63.7
Redbridge	41.1	61.5	46.2	68.2
Richmond-upon-Thames	41.9	61.1	46.7	65.3
Southwark	106.4	134.0	112.6	144.2
Sutton	40.5	57.3	42.6	62.6
Tower Hamlets	93.9	118.3	119.2	147.4
Waltham Forest	33.6	27.3	33.5	55.6
Wandsworth	64.2	91.9	74.1	105.6
Westminster, City of	412.5	541.9	424.2	554.2
Total	2,702.8	3,619.9	2,946.6	3,921.5

Change from 1997 to 2002

	Absolute (Thousand)		*Percentage*	
	Full-time	*Total*	*Full-time*	*Total*
Borough				
Barking and Dagenham	-1.8	-4.2	-4.8	-8.3
Barnet	+2.2	+0.3	+2.9	+0.2
Bexley	+7.3	+8.4	+18.8	+14.6
Brent	+6.7	+6.3	+9.4	+6.6
Bromley	+10.1	+5.3	+17.4	+5.7
Camden	+23.3	+28.7	+12.9	+12.4
City of London	+22.6	+28.9	+9.1	+10.2
Croydon	+7.9	+7.6	+9.1	+6.1
Ealing	+5.4	+4.2	+6.4	+3.7
Enfield	+5.0	+6.8	+8.1	+8.0
Greenwich	-1.8	+2.7	-4.3	+4.6
Hackney	+8.6	+10.7	+13.9	+13.3
Hammersmith and Fulham	+15.0	+17.6	+23.1	+20.5
Haringey	+2.7	+2.1	+6.7	+3.5
Harrow	+3.2	+4.3	+7.2	+6.8
Havering	+6.5	+7.8	+14.1	+11.4
Hillingdon	+15.3	+21.2	+13.6	+14.9
Hounslow	+7.4	+6.8	+8.4	+5.9
Islington	+12.0	+14.3	+11.3	+10.5
Kensington and Chelsea	+2.8	+2.9	+3.3	+2.4

Change from 1997 to 2002

	Absolute (Thousand)		*Percentage*	
	Full-time	*Total*	*Full-time*	*Total*
Kingston-upon-Thames	-7.5	-7.9	-13.9	-10.5
Lambeth	+13.6	+20.0	+18.7	+20.0
Lewisham	+2.2	+6.1	+6.0	+10.9
Merton	+8.3	+7.1	+19.6	+11.6
Newham	+2.8	+5.0	+6.3	+8.5
Redbridge	+5.1	+6.8	+12.4	+10.9
Richmond-upon-Thames	+4.8	+4.2	+11.5	+6.8
Southwark	+6.3	+10.2	+5.8	+7.6
Sutton	+2.2	+5.3	+5.2	+9.2
Tower Hamlets	+25.4	+29.2	+27.0	+24.6
Waltham Forest	-0.1	+8.3	-0.3	+17.6
Wandsworth	+10.0	+13.8	+15.5	+15.0
Westminster, City of	+11.7	+12.4	+2.8	+2.3
Total	+243.8	+301.7	+9.0	+8.3

[1] Employee jobs only, not self-employed jobs.
Sources:
1997: Annual Employment Survey (rescaled).
2002: Annual Business Inquiry (ABI)

Local Education Partnerships

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the VAT status is of supplies made to local education partnerships. [173138]

John Healey: The VAT status of the supplies made to local education partnerships will depend on the nature of those supplies of goods and services, which may be standard-rated, reduced-rated, zero-rated or exempt for VAT purposes.

The Government are currently consulting on the precise structure of local education partnerships but, to the extent that they undertake business activities, they will, in the normal way, be able to recover any VAT they incur on purchases that relate to their taxable business activities.

Oil Prices

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the impact on the economy of an increase in the price of oil of $10 a barrel above base case assumptions lasting for a year with particular reference to *(a)* GDP growth, *(b)* export growth, *(c)* inflation, *(d)* unemployment and *(e)* the fiscal deficit. [174109]

Ruth Kelly: Such effects were discussed in Box A3 of pre-Budget report 2000 (page 153, Cm 4917).

Private Finance Initiative

Mr. Reed: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the effects of *(a)* lowering the minimum threshold for private finance initiatives (PFI) projects below £20 million in the case of sport and leisure facilities and *(b)* increasing PFI credits to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in order to enable more PFI projects for sport and leisure facilities. [174053]

Mr. Boateng: The Treasury is currently in consultation with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport regarding the allocation of PFI credits and the establishment of an appropriate minimum threshold for PFI projects. Final decisions will be made as part of the Spending Review 2004 process.

Population Growth

Tony Wright: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the latest projection of UK population growth up to 2050 is. [174350]

Ruth Kelly: The estimated population of the United Kingdom at the middle of 2002 (the latest date available) is 59.232 million. According to the Government Actuary's 2002-based projections, it is projected to increase to 65.454 million by 2050, an increase of 6.2 million (10.5 per cent).

Sealskin

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many instances of the *(a)* import and *(b)* export of (i) whitecoat and (ii) blueback sealskin and sealskin apparel, in contravention of the EU trade embargo have been discovered in each of the last three years in (A) the UK and (B) the remainder of the EU. [173213]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave him on 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 484W.

HM Customs and Excise have not made any seizures relating to the import or export of whitecoat or blueback sealskin or apparel in contravention of EU Directive 83/129 in the last three years. Customs' central records do not include information about other member states' imports or exports.

Tax Credits

Mr. Webb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many child and working tax credit appeals against awards have been *(a)* lodged and *(b)* heard; and how many of the appeals were found in (i) favour of the appellant and (ii) against the appellant in each of the last 12 months; [172949]

(2) what the average waiting time was from receipt of the appeal, for a child and working tax credit appeal to be heard, in each of the last 12 months. [172950]

Dawn Primarolo: Up to the end of April 2004 Inland Revenue submitted to the Appeals Service about 1,300 written appeals against tax credit decisions.

I understand from the Appeals Service that about 265 appeals had been heard by a tribunal by the end of March 2003. Others appeals were settled without a tribunal hearing, were withdrawn, struck out, not accepted as duly made or were outstanding.

The number of appeals heard by tribunals in each month to March 2004 are as follows:

Month	*Number of appeals heard by tribunals*[1]
June 2003	5
July 2003	15
August 2003	15
September 2003	15
October 2003	15

Month	Number of appeals heard by tribunals[1]
November 2003	15
December 2003	15
January 2004	35
February 2004	60
March 2004	75
Total to March 2004	265

[1] Rounded to the nearest 5 cases.

About 10 of these cases were found in favour of the appellant.

For cases going to tribunal hearing, the estimated average time between submission to the Appeals Service and the hearing is about 11 weeks.

Unemployment (Oldham, West and Royton)

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the level of unemployment was in Oldham and West Royton in each year since 1997. [170902]

Ruth Kelly: I refer my right hon. Friend to the answer I gave to him on 6 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1737W.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Community Radio Stations

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry for what reason community radio stations have to pay for music rights for both a radio and a restricted services licence. [171382]

Ms Hewitt: Copyright provides creators and producers of music and sound recordings with a range of rights to control exploitation of their material. This may include any communication to the public, such as in radio broadcasts delivered to any audience, either as a restricted service or otherwise; and by any technical means. The rights granted to copyright owners encourage and reward creativity and investment in the production of more copyright material for the benefit of us all. They are, moreover, necessary to comply with EC law, and are also generally required by international conventions under which UK copyright material is protected in other countries.

Advisers/Consultants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much her Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies spent on external consultants and advisers in each of the last three years. [171875]

Ms Hewitt: The record expenditure for the Department, including the Small Business Service, on consultancy was as follows.

	£ million
2001–02	55
2002–03	52

Due to a change in the Department's accounting system during 2003–04, consistent information for that year could be obtained only at disproportionate cost, as would information on our many NDPBs.

I have asked the Chief Executive of the Executive agencies to respond directly to the hon. Member.

Letter from Roger Heathcote to Bob Spink, dated 18 May 2004:

You asked the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, how much her Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies spent on external consultants and advisers in each of the last three years. I have been asked to reply on behalf of the Employment Tribunals Service.

The Employment Tribunals Service has spent the following amounts on external consultants and advisers in each of the last three years:

	£
2001–02	119,255
2002–03	457,757
2003–04	441,838

Letter from Claire Clancy to Bob Spink, dated 18 May 2004:

I am responding to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on behalf of Companies House, which is an Executive Agency of the DTI.

Expenditure on external consultants and advisers in each of the last three years was as follows:

	£
2001–02	2,496,317
2002–03	3,700,207
2003–04	3,609,492

Letter from Desmond Flynn to Bob Spink, dated 18 May 2004:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply directly on behalf of The Insolvency Service in respect to your question (2003/2900) asking how much money has been spent on external consultants and advisers in each of the last three years.

The Insolvency Service Executive Agency of the Department of Trade and Industry spent the following amounts on external consultants and advisors in the last three years:

	£
2001–02	Nil
2002–03	Nil
2003–04	34

The £34,000 spent in 2003/04 was broken down to £18,000 on a Race Equality Impact Study and £16,000 on our Help Line.

Letter from Dr. J W Llewellyn to Bob Spink, dated 18 May 2004:

The Secretary of State for Trade & Industry has asked me to reply on behalf of the National Weights & Measures Laboratory (NWML) to your question regarding the total amounts spent on external Consultants and Advisers in each of the last three years.

Please see the total amount spent per year as listed below:

	£
2001–02	80,290
2002–03	71,010
2003–04	68,119

Letter from Ron Marchant to Bob Spink, dated 18 May 2004:

I am replying to this parliamentary question, tabled on 6 May 2004, concerning how much the Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies spent on external consultants and advisers in each of the last three years.

The Patent Office response is:

	£
2001–02	53,000
2002–03	69,000
2003–04	32,000

Animal Rights Activists

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she last met the Home Secretary to discuss the effect on inward investment in the pharmaceutical research industry of the activities of animal rights activists; and if she will make a statement. [168983]

Ms Hewitt: Government is determined that companies and other organisations should not be prevented from carrying out their legitimate activities by intimidation and harassment from animal rights extremists. Ministers and officials from the DTI have frequent meetings with colleagues in the Home Office, and in other Government Departments, to discuss the impact of animal rights extremism on biomedical research in the UK, including the pharmaceutical industry.

We have made a number of changes to strengthen the law to deal with extremists. The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 strengthened police powers to deal with smaller, intimidatory protests and office occupations by extremists. Government has funded a new police unit to provide tactical guidance on policing extremists. A National Forum on policing and prosecution of animal rights cases has been set up to work on improving both operational policing and legislative measures. We are also considering as a matter of urgency what further legislation may be necessary.

Miners' Compensation

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the total deductions made from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease compensation payments by *(a)* solicitors, *(b)* call farming agents and *(c)* the National Association of Colliery Overmen, Deputies and Shotfirers South Wales. [173026]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* I regret that such information is not required to be submitted by claimants' representatives to Government.

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what level of compliance with the recent Law Society guidance on repayment of deductions from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease compensation payments has been achieved. [173028]

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many instances have been *(a)* notified to the Department and *(b)* identified by the Department of claims under the Coalminers Compensation Scheme whch have required additional costs outwith those paid by the Department under the claims handling agreement. [172983]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* The Department has been advised by the Law Society that they have received 182 complaints in relation to claims by former miners and their families. Of these 98 have now been closed resulting in nearly £14,000 being repaid to claimants.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many claims handling agreements there are under the Coalminers Compensation Scheme; on what dates they were signed; and by whom. [172982]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave him on 10 May, *Official Report*, column 77W.

Combined Heat and Power

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she last visited a combined heat and power station. [171032]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* Government Ministers and officials meet regularly with the Combined Heat and Power Association and members of the industry, and have visited a number of CHP schemes.

Employment Agencies

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans her Department has to *(a)* license UK employment agencies and *(b)* implement the EU Temporary Agency Workers Directive. [172442]

Mr. Sutcliffe: *(a)* The DTI has no plans to reintroduce licensing arrangements for the private recruitment industry and there is no general support for such a proposal. Licensing schemes, particularly those where a fee is demanded, are burdensome for business and that burden falls especially heavily on small enterprises: The licensing arrangements required by the Employment Agencies Act 1973, which were repealed in 1995 proved not to be effective and were replaced by a new power, introduced under the 1973 Act, to prohibit unsuitable persons from running employment agencies and employment businesses for up to 10 years. The Government does not hesitate to make use of this power where this is warranted.

(b) The proposed Temporary Agency Worker Directive is still under negotiation in the Council of Ministers, though no formal discussions have taken place since the June 2003 Employment Council. From the point where final agreement is achieved on the proposal, implementation is likely to take two to three years.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps her Department is taking to prevent employment agencies from levying upfront charges for finding work for clients. [172446]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government recently introduced the Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Businesses Regulations 2003. These include a new requirement that an employment agency can only charge a fee, for providing work-finding services for people in certain occupations in the entertainment, modelling and sports sectors, out of the work-seekers' earnings in any such employment that the agency has found for them. This requirement has outlawed the practice of unscrupulous agencies, which took money from workers in the entertainment and modelling sectors but offered little or no work.

In addition, the DTI's Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate follows up every complaint it receives concerning breaches of the Employment Agencies legislation by visiting the agencies' premises to inspect their records. On top of this, the Inspectorate undertakes proactive spot checks and follows up evidence passed to it by other enforcement bodies.

Employment Rights

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to her answer of 5 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1635W, on employment rights advice booklets, which organisations were present at the practitioner group meeting of 19 June 2003. [172913]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The following organisations attended:

Commission for Racial Equality

British Retail Consortium

Maternity Alliance

Engineering Employers Federation

Equal Opportunities Commission

Advice, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas)

Pattinson Brewer

West Midlands Employment and Low Pay Unit

Small Business Service

European Research Council

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what the aims and objectives are of the proposed European Research Council; and what areas of competence it will have; [173640]

(2) from which budget the costs of the proposed European Research Council (ERC) will be met; and to what purpose those funds would be put were the ERC not to be established; [173641]

(3) what the proposed *(a)* reporting structures and *(b)* organisational controls are for the proposed European Research Council; [173642]

(4) when she expects a decision to be made on *(a)* the creation of a European Research Council (ERC) and *(b)* the UK participation in the ERC; and if she will make a statement; [173643]

(5) what the *(a)* total cost and *(b)* UK contribution to the proposed European Research Council will be; [173644]

(6) which *(a)* people and *(b)* organisations are involved in assessing the implications of the UK's membership of the European Research Council; [173645]

(7) what co-ordination is envisaged between the UK research councils and the proposed European Research Council; [173646]

(8) in what areas of research the European Research Council will be involved. [173885]

Ms Hewitt: The possible establishment of a European Research Council is still at an early stage, and no proposal has yet been made by the European Commission. The Government are currently consulting about the matter as part of their overall consultation on Framework Programme 7. A copy has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Export Licensing

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the operation of the *(a)* Joined-up and more Efficient Working on Export Licensing (JEWEL) and *(b)* SCOPE programmes. [170988]

Nigel Griffiths: The JEWEL review was completed at the end of 2003. The recommendations of the review, now being implemented, included, among other things:

a joint mission statement "promoting global security through strategic export controls, facilitating responsible exports", together with guiding principles which focus on transparency and customer service, securing a common agenda across all Government Departments;

a series of measures to improve the guidance and training for exporters in completing licence applications;

a new published performance target to process 95 per cent. of all standard-type licence applications within 60 working days. This will sit alongside the current target of processing 70 per cent. of applications within 20 working days. The average time taken to process licences which have taken more than 20 days will be published;

a new joint-working procedure across Government Departments; and as far as is practicable, common IT systems between the Departments involved in the licensing process.

As regards *(b)*, the operation of SCOPE, lead responsibility for this project rests with my hon. Friend, the Minister for the Cabinet Office.

National Minimum Wage

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many workers in Liverpool, West Derby have benefited from the national minimum wage. [173663]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to provide estimates specifically for the constituency of Liverpool, West Derby. However, based on the Office for National Statistics Low Pay data released in 2003, the DTI estimates that around 140,000 people in the north west stood to benefit from the introduction of the national minimum wage in April 1999. Between 130,000 and 160,000 people were expected to have benefited from the October 2003 uprating of the national minimum wage.

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many workers in Blackpool, South have benefited from the national minimum wage. [173064]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to provide estimates specifically for the constituency of Blackpool South. However, based on the Office for National Statistics' Low Pay data released in 2003, the DTI estimates that around 140,000 people in the North West stood to benefit from the introduction of the National Minimum Wage in April 1999. Between 130,000 and 160,000 people were expected to have benefited from the October 2003 uprating of the National Minimum Wage.

Science Funding

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the *(a)* mechanism and *(b)* criteria are for the allocation of the departmental science programme funds; and who in the Department is responsible for allocating the funds. [172096]

Ms Hewitt: Details of the allocation of the department's present Science Budget are set out in the publication "Science Budget 2003–04 to 2005–06" published in December 2002, a copy of which is available in the Libraries of the House.

The publication sets out the objectives of the Science Budget and the drivers for the allocation of funds.

Allocations are approved by me on the advice of the Director General of the Research Councils.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will break down by budget heading the expenditure of the departmental science programmes in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04. [172098]

Ms Hewitt: The information is as follows.

(a) Actual expenditure for 2002–03 from the Science Budget was as follows:

£000

	2002–03 Resource	*Capital*	*Total*
MRC[1]	340,867	19,589	360,456
BBSRC[2]	249,953	2,676	252,629
NERC[3]	224,006	17,907	241,913
EPSRC[4]	507,019	3,407	510,426
PPARC[5]	246,231	2,755	248,986
ESRC[6]	77,736	182	77,918
CCLRC[7]	23,168	19,414	42,582
Research Councils Pension Scheme	28,450	—	28,450
Royal Society	28,783	—	28,783
Royal Academy of Engineering	4,770	—	4,770
SRIF[8]	190,402	—	190,402
Diamond Synchrotron	489	14,366	14,855
Higher Education Innovation Fund	22,791	—	22,791
PSRE Fund[9]	4,977	—	4,977
CMI	10,705	—	10,705
Other[10]	34,455	—	34,455
Total	1,994,802	80,296	2,075,098

[1] Medical Research Council
[2] Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council
[3] National Environmental Research Council
[4] Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council
[5] Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council
[6] Economic and Social Science Research Council
[7] Council for the Central Laboratory of the Research Councils
[8] Science Research Investment Fund
[9] Public Sector Research Establishment
[10] Includes expenditure on nuclear fusion and residual expenditure on closed schemes.

Notes:
1. Expenditure includes funding brought forward from previous years, under "End-year Flexibility" arrangements. In addition, some Research Councils were given transfers from central budgets.
2. Abbreviations used are as follows.

(b) The actual expenditure figures for 2003–04 are yet to be finalised and audited.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the resource budget for the departmental science programmes *(a)* was for each year since 1995 and *(b)* is for 2004–05; and if she will make a statement. [172099]

Ms Hewitt: Resource budgets were first introduced in 2001–02, and information on a comparable basis is not available prior to that date. The budgets for 2001–02 to 2004–05 are as follows:

£000

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
MRC[1]	389,887	416,097	429,875	458,080
BBSRC[2]	224,474	244,104	265,032	287,872
NERC[3]	236,778	253,572	264,102	280,237
EPSRC[4]	439,331	464,972	468,524	491,714
PPARC[5]	216,946	232,071	250,770	266,470
ESRC[6]	75,352	83,756	94,584	104,074
CCLRC[7]	40,847	44,770	119,018	129,488
Research Council Pension Scheme	26,970	28,450	29,740	31,140
Royal Society	25,945	28,745	29,245	31,045
Royal Academy of Engineering	4,270	4,270	5,270	5,600
Roberts review			6,000	18,020
SRIF/University research capital[8]	125,000	125,000	250,000	296,570
Diamond synchrotron	20,000	20,000	25,361	84,081
Large Facilities and RC Institutes (unallocated)		34,000	52,500	68,550
Higher Education Innovation Fund	20,000	20,000	50,000	60,305
PSRE Fund[9]	10,000			4,655
CMI[10]	14,000	14,000	14,000	14,000
Other[11]	28,266	42,063	24,364	46,364
Total	1,898,066	2,055,870	2,378,385	2,678,265

[1] Medical Research Council
[2] Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council
[3] National Environmental Research Council
[4] Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council
[5] Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council
[6] Economic and Social Science Research Council
[7] Council for the Central Laboratory of the Research Councils
[8] Science Research Investment Fund
[9] Public Sector Research Establishment
[10] Cambridge/MIT Institute

[1] Includes unallocated provision and contingency
Notes:
1. Figures include resource and capital budgets.
2. Abbreviations used are as follows.

Workers' Rights (South Ribble)

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the benefits of the EU Social Chapter for the residents of South Ribble. [172137]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The residents of South Ribble have benefited from the EU Social Chapter by having their employment rights extended to include:

the right to Parental Leave which gives parents the right to 13 weeks unpaid leave at the birth or adoption of a child;

the entitlement of part-time workers to the same pro-rata terms and conditions of employment as full time workers, thereby removing any discrimination and improving the quality of part-time jobs;

the provision that once a prima facie case has been made in an employment tribunal claim, the burden of proof is placed on the defendant (usually the employer), who will need to demonstrate that sex discrimination has not occurred;

rights under the Fixed Term Work Directive that provide equal treatment and prevent abuse of fixed term contracts;

rights under the European Works Council Directive which requires companies with at least 1,000 employees in total and at least 150 workers in each of the two member states, to establish structures for consulting workers on issues that affect them and;

in addition, the Information and Consultation of Employees Directive to be implemented in the UK by March 2005, establishes a right to new minimum standards for work force communication and involvement in large firms.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Departmental Annual Report

Norman Lamb: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much the production of the Lord Chancellor's Departments' 2003 annual report cost; how many copies were printed; how many copies of it were sold at its cover price; to whom copies of the report have been provided free of charge; and how many copies were provided free of charge. [171149]

Mr. Leslie: The Annual Report 2003 for the Lord Chancellor's Department (LCD) cost the Department £32,519. This was divided between The Stationery Office Ltd (TSO) and the Central Office of Information. The LCD received 615 copies of the Report under the terms of its contract with TSO. These were distributed free of charge within the Department, its agencies and Non Departmental Public Bodies, and to stakeholders. I understand that TSO have sold 428 copies of the Report. The Report can be read free of charge on the Department for Constitutional Affairs' website. Web visits to the Report since May 2003 number at approximately 2,300.

Fine Enforcement

John McDonnell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans he has to employ additional trained staff to assist defendants with completing means inquiry forms. [173121]

Mr. Leslie: One of the key measures in the Courts Act 2003 is the introduction of Fines Officers who will lead on collecting and enforcing financial penalties. Among other things they and their teams will help defendants complete means enquiry forms. The Fines Officer role is currently being piloted at six Magistrates' Courts Committees, namely Cambridgeshire, Cheshire, Cumbria, Devon and Cornwall, Gloucestershire and South Yorkshire.

John McDonnell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs in what circumstances a fine imposed by a magistrates' court in England and Wales is written off. [173122]

Mr. Leslie: Fines will no longer be written off. They will be pursued until they are paid. The new policy to deliver this was introduced on 5 January 2004. There are very limited circumstances for the administrative cancellation of a fine, for example, if the defendant has died or has been sent to a mental health institution for more than 12 months.

John McDonnell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs at what percentage of courts in England and Wales it is possible to make regular cash payments to court staff following the imposition of a fine. [173123]

Mr. Leslie: Data on the percentage of courts in England and Wales where it is possible to make regular cash payments is not held centrally. Magistrates' Courts Committees provide a range of convenient payment methods to offenders including cheque, credit card, debit card, postal order, cash deposit boxes, 'Paypoint' and 'Girobank' but not all have cash offices in every court. Maintenance of cash desks can be expensive and a balance needs to be struck between the need to secure prompt payment and the cost effectiveness of the method chosen.

John McDonnell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the average annual salary of a Magistrates' Court Enforcement Officer is in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* the rest of England and Wales. [173124]

Mr. Leslie: Information obtained from Greater London Magistrates' Courts Authority indicates that the current average salary for Civilian Enforcement Officers is around £19,000 and a sample survey of 29 Magistrates' Courts Committees (excluding Greater London) indicates that the current salary for Civilian Enforcement Officers is around £15,000.

Magistrates Courts

John McDonnell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what discussions he has had with the police about the provision of verifiable information in respect of summonses of individuals to appear at magistrates' courts in England and Wales. [173125]

Mr. Leslie: My officials have met representatives of the Association of Chief Police Officers, and other prosecuting agencies, to find ways of improving the information available to the courts in relation to summonses. I am now looking to put in place a national minimum standard.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what funding the Government makes available to *(a)* improve holding cells and *(b)* build new cells at magistrates' courts in Lancashire. [173770]

Mr. Leslie: My Department does not have direct control over the works to be carried out at each Magistrates' Court. Each Magistrates' Courts Committee bids annually for 80 per cent. of funding from the Department for works which they have assessed as being a priority, they also have to seek approval from their local authority for the remaining 20 per cent.

During the last financial year Lancashire Magistrates' Courts Committee submitted one bid to refurbish the custody area at Blackburn Magistrates' Court. This was approved at a cost of £45,000.

In the current financial year, three further bids in respect of custody area improvements were submitted from the Magistrates' Courts Committee, all three bids have been approved. At Preston Magistrates Court, security improvements will be undertaken and interview facilities provided at a cost of £21,840. At Blackburn Magistrates' Court, as part of a general upgrade costing £138,400 the cell area will be refurbished. At Accrington, Chorley and Fleetwood Magistrates' Courts, the custody areas will be refurbished at a cost of £13,440.

Voting Rights (Expatriates)

Bob Spink: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what representations he has received on voting rights for expatriates; and what plans he has to change them. [173081]

Mr. Leslie: The Government has no plans to change current arrangements given that they were considered folly and relatively recently in debate during the passage of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 when the decision was made to reduce the period of voters' eligibility. Since that time my predecessor and I have received 12 letters from MPs and two Parliamentary Questions on this subject.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adult Education

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) when he will announce his decision on the funding arrangements and provision for non-accredited learning programmes under the Adult and Community Learning scheme; [174035]

(2) what the timescale is for making a decision on the funding mechanisms for adult and community learning provision for non-accredited learning programmes. [173928]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We have agreed with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), the national budget for adult and community learning for 2004–05, of £207.4 million, up from £206 million in 2003–04. This fulfils the commitment to safeguard opportunities for lifelong learning not leading to qualifications, set out in the Skills White Paper "21st Century Skills: Realising Our Potential".

In the summer we and the LSC intend to consult on proposals to integrate adult and community learning more fully into post-16 learning and skills provision, including, where appropriate, funding such provision through the LSC's funding formula. Decisions will be made in the autumn, with initial allocations of budgets to local LSCs in December 2004.

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will reform financial support for adults to encourage learning. [173894]

Alan Johnson: In July 2003, we announced in our Skills Strategy White Paper "21st Century Skills" an increase in the financial support to help adults in further education with the costs of learning through a new adult learning grant. The grant is available on a pilot basis in 10 local Learning and Skills Council areas. We plan to double the size of the current pilot from September by making the adult learning grant available across the South-East and North-East regions. We are also considering how other existing funds for supporting adult learners in further education and training can best support the priorities of the Skills Strategy.

Proposals for improving the package of financial support for undergraduates were announced in January at Commons Second Reading of the Higher Education Bill. This includes introduction of a non-repayable grant of up to £2,700 each year for students from lower income backgrounds. We are improving the package of support for part-time students, many of whom are mature. In 2004–05 part time students on low incomes will be able to get a grant of up to £575 for fees and a grant of up to £250 for course costs. We will continue to provide additional, targeted financial support for vulnerable students, through Higher Education institutions, to ensure that more of them are able to access and remain in higher education.

Adult Literacy and Numeracy

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what public funding has been spent on adult *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy in Wirral, South in each of the last five years. [173623]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The estimated total spend on "Skills For Life" (the Government's strategy for literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners from pre-entry level up to and including level 2) and on Key Skills (essential skills of communication, application of number and information technology), from April 2001 to July 2003, in the Greater Merseyside

Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area is set out in the table:

	Basic skills	*Key skills*
April 2001 to July 2001[1]	3,803	1,094
August 2001 to July 2002	6,575	1,564
August 2002 to July 2003	10,677	1,755

[1] The figures for April to July 2001 include costs incurred from August 2000 on learning aims continuing into April 2001.

Note:

Figures in £ thousands

From the information available to the LSC it has not been feasible to obtain estimates at constituency level or separate figures by subject without incurring disproportionate cost. Likewise it has not been feasible to obtain comparable figures for periods before.

Apprenticeships

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the Government's targets for the take up of *(a)* young apprenticeships, *(b)* apprenticeships and *(c)* advanced apprenticeships over the next three years. [173747]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Currently the Government have a PSA target for first time entry of 28 per cent. of 16 to 21-year-olds to apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeship to be met in 2004/05. At present we are on course to meet the target. Targets for the next Spending Review period from 2004, if they are to apply, are under discussion and will be published in a White Paper in July.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how prospective *(a)* young apprenticeship, *(b)* apprenticeship and *(c)* advanced apprenticeship trainees will be matched up with appropriate employes. [173750]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: For Young Apprenticeships, local Partnerships, involving schools, colleges and businesses will be responsible for the decision on matching pupils with employers. In doing so, they will take account of: the needs and maturity of the pupils; the demands of the programme of study; and the availability and suitability of placements with employers. Local Partnerships will be assisted in their search by relevant bodies such as the Sector Skills Councils and will make available to pupils access to local advice and guidance services.

For apprenticeships post 16 local Learning and Skills Councils will work closely with Connexions Partnerships to match young people with suitable employers and vice versa. To support the current national Apprenticeship marketing campaign the LSC has introduced a lead co-ordinating system across England for Apprenticeships, currently working with over 800 local and national learning organisations who are responsible for managing the interest from employers and in turn, matching this with potential young people.

In the longer term we will set up a clearing house system run by the LSC to match young people with employers more effectively.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the new apprenticeship schemes in the context of the recommendations of the Tomlinson report. [173751]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The 14–19 Working Group, chaired by Mike Tomlinson, has established an Apprenticeship Sub-Group, with the key objective to examine the relationship between Apprenticeships and the overall diploma framework. It is important to have a clear fit between the two.

The Apprenticeship Sub-Group, whose membership is drawn from Sector Skills Councils, learning providers and employers, the Adult Learning Inspectorate, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, the Learning and Skills Council and the Department for Education and Skills, will make recommendations to the main Working Group for inclusion in the Final Report due in the Autumn 2004.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what minimum criteria will be required to start *(a)* young apprenticeships, *(b)* apprenticeships and *(c)* advanced apprenticeships. [173752]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: For Young Apprenticeships the minimum entry criteria will be: good SATs in English, Mathematics and Science; good attendance and behaviour; and a demonstrable interest in the vocational area. Parents and guardians will also be asked to give their approval.

For Apprenticeships post 16 Sector Skills Councils will suggest minimum entry criteria related to the needs of their sector and the requirements of particular apprenticeship frameworks. As most apprentices are employed it will continue to be for employers to recruit according to their own entry criteria taking into account guidance from the relevant SSC.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much his Department has spent on advertising the new apprenticeships scheme; and how much it intends to spend in each of the next three years. [173753]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to the hon. Gentleman with this information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate his Department has made of the cost of re-naming and re-branding *(a)* foundation modern apprenticeships to apprenticeships and *(b)* advanced modern apprenticeships to advanced apprenticeships. [173754]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to the hon. Gentleman with this information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the funding streams available before the age of 16 for young apprenticeships students moving on to post-16 apprenticeships. [173755]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department will make available up to £3.5 million for the Young.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate his Department has made of the number of over 25s that will register for *(a)* apprenticeships and *(b)* advanced apprenticeships in each of the next three years. [173756]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Our Skills Strategy committed us to develop apprenticeships for adults to meet skills needs in response to employer demand. We are working with Sector Skills Councils that are either already licensed or expected to be so in the near future to trial appropriate provision. The overall number of participants will be subject to demand but we estimate that around 1,300 adults would be involved in initial sector trials in 2004/05. Sector agreements will determine numbers in the following two years.

Bootle Schools

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how much public funding was spent per pupil in Bootle in each of the last seven years; [172021]

(2) how much public funding was spent per pupil in Bootle in each of the last seven years. [172784]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than districts within an area. Bootle is a district of Sefton local education authority. The information for Sefton LEA is as follows:

Net Current Expenditure per pupil

	Pre-Primary Education	*Primary Education*	*Pre-primary and Primary*	*Secondary Education*	*Special*
1996–97	n/a	n/a	1,880	2,640	19,520
1997–98	n/a	n/a	1,890	2,630	20,190
1998–99	n/a	n/a	2,010	2,690	19,950
1999–2000	4,690	2,170	2,180	2,780	23,920
2000–01	16,780	2,330	2,410	3,010	26,120
2001–02	30,560	2,570	2,740	3,430	27,410
2002–03		2,840		3,640	

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from Sefton LEAs' Section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. Expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of the Section 52 outturn statement in 1999–2000. 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance.

2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

3. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.

4. The NCE per pupil figures for pre-primary and primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the pre-primary sector maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year and pupils who are educated in the maintained nursery and primary schools sector.

5. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.

6. The NCE per pupil figures for special schools relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained special schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained special schools sector.

7. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Career Development Loans

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which banks administer career development loans. [173825]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The banks presently involved in administering career development loans (CDLs) are, Barclays Bank plc, the Co-operative Bank plc and the Royal Bank of Scotland plc. Clydesdale Bank plc also administered CDLs until 15 October 2002.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what criteria are used to decide whether an application for a career development loan should be accepted. [173826]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The main criteria used by the participating banks to decide whether an application for a Career Development Loan (CDL) is accepted are as follows:

The CDL must be for vocational learning or education that lasts no longer that two years, or three years if it includes one year's practical experience.

Applicants must be aged 18 or over and live or intend to learn in Great Britain (i.e. England, Scotland or Wales).

Applicants who are not EU nationals or who are not permanent UK residents do not qualify for a CDL if there are any restrictions on their stay in the UK.

Applicants must intend to work in the United Kingdom (UK), the European Union (EU) or in Iceland, Norway or Liechtenstein, which are part of the European Economic Area (EEA), on completion of their course.

An employee of a CDL registered learning provider is not eligible for a CDL to support a course with that learning provider.

Applicants must satisfy the normal checks carried out by the banks as part of their lending decision process. This includes identity checks to prevent money laundering, and credit rating checks.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people have applied for career development loans in each year since their introduction; and how many of those applications were successful. [173849]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: My Department carries out periodic checks to monitor the rejection rates of Career Development Loan (CDL) applications by the banks. However, the banks do not retain a historic record of the number of applications. The latest figures from the checks by DfES show that the rejection rate is 30.6 per

cent. The attached table shows the number of people whose CDL applications were successful.

Number of career development loans made since their introduction

Calendar year	*Number of loans given*	*Comments*
1988	1,503	From start of programme in July 1988
1989	5,441	—
1990	7,833	—
1991	9,933	—
1992	10,739	—
1993	12,481	—
1994	15,148	—
1995	13,348	—
1996	11,992	—
1997	11,815	—
1998	11,935	—
1999	15,339	—
2000	18,955	—
2001	16,247	—
2002	17,463	—
2003	16,845	—
2004	4,870	As at 13 May 2004

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average value of a career development loan was in each year since their introduction. [173850]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The following table shows the average loan value for career development loans for each year since their introduction.

Career development loans average loan value since their introduction

Calendar year	*Average loan value (£)*
1988[1]	2,519
1989	2,409
1990	2,496
1991	2,658
1992	2,742
1993	2,889
1994	3,481
1995	3,635
1996	3,596
1997	3,851
1998	3,948
1999	3,863
2000	3,773
2001	4,012
2002	4,344
2003	4,292
2004[2]	3,843

[1] From start of programme in July 1988
[2] As at 13 May 2004

Careers Guidance

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when he will announce the findings of his Department's end-to-end review of careers guidance; and if he will present these findings in person to the House. [172648]

Margaret Hodge: I expect the review to conclude at the end of June. Guidance from the Office of Public Sector Service Reform and the Treasury on such reviews does not require reports to be laid before Parliament; and I do not expect to do so in this case.

Climate Change Awareness

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps he will take during 2004 in respect of schools, colleges and universities *(a)* to increase awareness of the dangers of global climate change and *(b)* to promote education about ways to reach the Government's target of cutting greenhouse gas emissions. [171257]

Mr. Miliband: The Department will continue to fund the Met Office's educational programme which provides information to schools about the science of climate change and is this year developing a Climate Change Module for key stages 3 and 4.

The Department is funding the Association for Science Education and the Development Education Association to develop "Global Dimension in Science" modules for our new national network of Science Learning Centres, which will train science teachers to teach about climate change from this Autumn.

In the post-16 sector, the Learning and Skills Council produced a toolkit for education for sustainable development in November last year, and is planning to produce a strategy for sustainable development this summer.

In higher education, the Department's sustainable development action plan asked the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to signal to the university.

Connexions

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the *(a)* role and *(b)* responsibilities of non-executive members of Connexions partnership boards are. [172593]

Margaret Hodge: Specific roles and responsibilities for non-executive members are determined by the board of each Connexions partnership. In general, the role of non executive board members is to represent their sectors (for example local authorities). They are responsible for monitoring Connexions Services as it affects their locality, and they contribute towards the development of the strategy for the partnership.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills for what reasons his Department did not inform Parliament of its decision to launch an end-to-end review of the provision of careers services within Connexions. [172594]

Margaret Hodge: The end to end review of careers education and guidance is one of a series of reviews commissioned by the Department for Education and Skills. They form part of the regular business of the Department and as such would not routinely be reported to Parliament.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much has been spent by Connexions partnerships on seeking legal advice since the Department opted to reduce the amount it would offset against partnerships' VAT costs. [172595]

Margaret Hodge: This information is not collected centrally.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what conclusions his Department drew from the Connexions VAT guidance workshop held on 20 April; and if he will make a statement. [172649]

Margaret Hodge: The workshop confirmed that many Connexions partnerships are considering their current structures and would find further guidance on the VAT implications of different delivery models helpful. This is being produced jointly with HM Customs and Excise and will be issued to partnerships shortly.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps his Department is taking to ensure best value reviews are carried out by Connexions partnerships before implementing structural changes. [172651]

Margaret Hodge: All partnerships, are required to apply Best Value principles to inform judgments on the effectiveness, efficiency and economy of when employing contractors or when taking decisions on structural changes. Comprehensive guidance on the application of Best Value to Connexions services was issued to partnerships in the autumn of 2003. The guidance was supported by as a series of regional training seminars. More recently, the Director of the Supporting Children and Young People Group has written to Chief Executives underlining the importance of transparent and robust decisions on cost-effectiveness informing any decisions to make structural changes.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the implications of a Connexions partnership adopting a dual lead body model for private providers of the service. [172658]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 12 May 2004]:* The adoption of lead body arrangements is one option for Connexions Partnerships in looking to become more tax efficient. While we do not envisage any legal/structural problems with a dual or multiple lead body structure, we have advised Partnerships considering this option that there would need to be clear agreements about roles and responsibilities. We would also wish to be reassured that this would not result in greater overall spend on core administration costs and/or possible duplication of head office functions. We have advised Government Offices to assess individual Partnership plans on their own local merits. Guidance on the different delivery models is being produced jointly with HM Customs and Excise and will be issued to Partnerships shortly.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent guidance has been issued by his Department to the Kent and Medway Connexions partnership board. [172659]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 12 May 2004]:* Officials have provided both verbal and written advice to the Senior Management and Board of Kent and Medway Connexions partnership on the various options they might consider for becoming more tax efficient. In addition, the Director of the Supporting Children and Young People Group has recently written to the Chief Executive, copied to the Chair of the Board, underlining the importance of transparent and robust decisions on cost-effectiveness informing any decisions on structural changes.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether his Department has issued guidance to Connexions partnership boards concerning adopting dual lead body models. [172660]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 12 May 2004]:* Guidance on the different delivery models is being produced jointly with HM Customs and Excise and will be issued to partnerships shortly.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether his Department has issued guidance on the use of consortium models to Connexions partnerships. [172662]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 12 May 2004]:* Guidance on the different delivery models, including consortia, is being produced jointly with HM Customs and Excise and will be issued to Partnerships shortly.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills for what reasons his Department decided to reduce the amount it would offset against Connexions partnerships' VAT costs; and where the money saved will be spent. [172668]

Margaret Hodge: The additional funding that had been set aside to help partnerships meet their transitional VAT costs was reduced in order to provide a vital contribution to the successful implementation of "Every Child Matters". The funding will help to fund improved services for children and young people, including through the creation of a Children's Commissioner and establishing a Safeguarding Children's Board in each local authority.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether his Department undertook research into the possible effects upon private providers before making the decision to reduce the amount it would offset against Connexions' VAT costs; and if he will make a statement. [172669]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* The Department sought advice from Her Majesty's Customs and Excise (HMCE). We are not directing Connexions partnerships to choose one delivery model over another. The decision about what tax efficiency means for each partnership, is the responsibility of individual boards. Establishing a tax efficient delivery model will not of itself affect the relationship with private sector companies. The Department remains in discussion with representatives from Connexions service providers and HMCE and will continue to consider any issues that they bring forward.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action his Department intends to take to safeguard the future of the private sector in the provision of Connexions services to young people. [172670]

Margaret Hodge: Connexions partnerships are private companies with obligations to their individual boards. As such the Department is unable to become directly involved in individual decisions. However, as partnerships consider their future structures we are providing guidance and support about the most tax

efficient model and highlighting a need to carry out cost-effectiveness reviews for changed structures. A change in structure need have no impact on the use of private providers as sub- contractors. An increasing number of partnerships are moving to a 'lead body' model leaving private sector careers contracts in place.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether it is his Department's policy to phase out the sub-contracting model of the Connexions partnership. [172672]

Margaret Hodge: The Department does not have a policy to phase out the sub-contracting model.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what impact his Department's decision to reduce the amount it will offset against Connexions partnership's VAT costs has had on preparations for the setting up of children's trusts; and if he will make a statement. [172674]

Margaret Hodge: The £25 million reduction in subsidy for VAT support of Connexions partnerships will be used to implement aspects of the Green Paper 'Every Child Matters'. The funding will support, among other services, the establishment of a Children's Commissioner and the development of Local Safeguarding Children Boards. These are significant elements in the strategy for providing better outcomes for children, young people and their families. They will work with Childrens Trust as they emerge.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many of the Connexions partnerships which have opted to move to direct delivery since the commencement of the financial year 2004–05 undertook best value assessments of alternative operational models before reaching their decision. [172677]

Margaret Hodge: All three Connexions partnerships that have opted to move to direct delivery since the start of this financial year have undertaken best value assessments.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills to whom Connexions partnerships are accountable. [172849]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* All Connexions partnerships are accountable to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. Performance is monitored and supported through Ofsted inspections, Government Office reviews and Management information provided to Supporting Children and Young People's Group in the DfES.

Early Years Education

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to introduce requirements for qualifications for those working in early years settings; and if he will make a statement. [172344]

Margaret Hodge: The national standards for under 8s day care and childminding require that the manager in a registered early years setting, and all supervisors where full day care is provided, have at least a level 3 qualification appropriate to the post. In addition, at least half of all other childcare staff should hold a level 2 qualification appropriate for the care or development of children. There are currently no plans to change these requirements.

Education Finance

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was spent per pupil in Manchester, Gorton in each of the last seven years. [167449]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than districts within an area. Manchester Gorton is a district of Manchester local education authority. The information for Manchester LEA is as follows:

Net current expenditure per pupil

	Pre-primary education	*Primary education*	*Pre-primary and primary*	*Secondary education*	*Special*
1996–97	n/a	n/a	1,970	2,950	15,370
1997–98	n/a	n/a	1,970	2,870	14,920
1998–99	n/a	n/a	2,120	3,060	16,590
1999–2000	10,230	2,250	2,280	3,220	17,630
2000–01	16,430	2,540	2,580	3,520	19,370
2001–02	15,320	2,950	2,980	4,000	21,000
2002–03	—	3,100	—	4,190	—

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from Manchester LEA's Section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. Expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of the Section 52 outturn statement in 1999–2000. 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance.

2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA. Figures are rounded to the nearest £10.

3. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.

4. The NCE per pupil figures for pre-primary and primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the pre-primary sector and maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained nursery and primary schools sector.

5. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.

6. The NCE per pupil figures for special schools relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained special schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained special schools sector.

7. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the eligibility criteria are for the education maintenance allowance (EMA) to be introduced in September; whether students aged under 16 years studying academic or vocational courses in further education for more than 12 hours of guided learning per week will be eligible for the EMA; and whether 15 to 17 year olds in further education are eligible for any other financial assistance. [172041]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* A young person will be entitled to receive EMA under the national scheme if they:

are a UK citizen; or

a citizen of an EEA country with at least three years' continued residence in the UK; or

have been granted Refugee status or Indefinite Leave to remain or Temporary Protection in the UK;

reach the age of 16 between 31 August 2003 and 1 September 2004 and enter full time education in the 2004–05 academic year in September 2004;

live in a household with an annual income of £30,000 or less; and

undertake at least 12 hours of guided learning on further education courses at, or provided by, a recognised educational institution in England (for example, school sixth forms, a sixth form college or FE college. The chosen course can be either academic or vocational.

Young people who have skipped a year and are 15 when taking up further education are not eligible on the grounds of age. EMA is not based on the academic level a pupil reaches: it is targeted at those who have reached the end of their compulsory school education.

Young people in further education aged 16 and over who are not eligible for EMA may be eligible for other financial assistance. This includes the Learner Support Fund, Connexions Card, Dance and Drama Awards, Care to Learn and other discretionary support made through colleges and schools. Young people aged 15 but in further education may receive support from their local authority.

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate he has made of the uptake of the educational maintenance allowance in *(a)* Leeds and *(b)* Elmet constituency. [173393]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* Leeds is an EMA pilot area and at present there are 4,764 students in receipt of EMA. We estimate that the number of recipients will be broadly similar after the launch of the national scheme in September. Across Yorkshire and Humberside as a whole, around 24,000 16-year-olds will be eligible for EMA.

We are unable to provide forecasts for numbers down to constituency level.

Education Services

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Bootle have benefited from the National Childcare Strategy. [172681]

Margaret Hodge: I refer my hon. Friend to the replies given on 29 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1265W and on 11 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 291W.

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many passes at A-Level were achieved by students in *(a)* the County of Essex in each year from 1980 to 1997 and *(b)* the County of Essex and the unitary authorities of Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock in each year from 1998 to 2003. [173328]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows the number of A level (or equivalent) passes achieved by 16 to 18 year old A level (or equivalent) candidates in the years 1992 to 2003.

	Essex			*Southend*			*Thurrock*		
	Candidates	*Passes*	*Average*	*Candidates*	*Passes*	*Average*	*Candidates*	*Passes*	*Average*
1992	6,657	13,773	2.1	—	—	—	—	—	—
1993	6,656	15,513	2.3	—	—	—	—	—	—
1994	6,601	15,716	2.4	—	—	—	—	—	—
1995	6,368	16,040	2.5	—	—	—	—	—	—
1996	6,213	15,977	2.6	—	—	—	—	—	—
1997	6,691	17,635	2.6	—	—	—	—	—	—
1998	6,419	17,107	2.7	898	2,441	2.7	640	1,410	2.2
1999	6,418	17,194	2.7	1,098	3,086	2.8	617	1,364	2.2
2000	6,497	17,702	2.7	982	2,841	2.9	659	1,393	2.1
2001	6,369	17,796	2.8	1,038	2,967	2.9	651	1,451	2.2
2002	6,271	19,556	3.1	1,039	3,418	3.3	804	1,841	2.3
2003	6,428	20,783	3.2	1,197	3,673	3.1	698	1,834	2.6

Notes:
1. Age is at the beginning of academic year.
2. The table includes A level candidates in maintained schools and Further Education Sector colleges. Candidates in independent schools are not included.
3. We do not have comparable information at Local Education Authority level for years earlier than 1992.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many primary school closures there were in Greater London, broken down by local education authority, in each year since 1997. [173254]

Mr. Miliband: The numbers of primary school closures in Greater London during the calendar years 1997 to 2003 are shown in the table. The figures include schools that closed as a result of the amalgamation or merger of two or more schools; schools that have closed but re-opened as voluntary schools with a religious character; and schools that have closed in local education authorities that have moved from a three-tier to a two-tier system.

Primary school closures in Greater London by calendar year

Local education authority	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Barking and Dagenham	—	4	2	—	—	—	—
Barnet	—	2	2	—	1	—	—
Bexley	—	—	2	—	—	—	6
Brent	—	2	2	—	—	—	—
Bromley	—	—	2	1	—	—	2
Camden	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
City of London	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Croydon	2	2	2	2	—	—	2
Ealing	—	2	—	—	—	—	1
Enfield	2	—	—	2	—	—	—
Greenwich	4	2	—	2	5	2	—
Hackney	2	—	—	1	1	2	2
Hammersmith and Fulham	—	1	—	—	—	2	1
Haringey	4	2	4	8	—	2	—
Harrow	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Havering	—	4	2	2	—	1	1
Hillingdon	2	—	4	—	—	1	
Hounslow	—	—	—	—	9	—	—
Islington	4	4	5	—	1	1	—
Kensington and Chelsea	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kingston upon Thames	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lambeth	7	2	5	2	4	3	2
Lewisham	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Merton	—	—	—	—	—	10	—
Newham	—	2	2	—	—	—	1
Redbridge	2	2	2	1	10	—	—
Southwark	1	2	—	1	—	—	—
Sutton	—	—	—	—	—	1	2
Tower Hamlets	—	2	4	—	2	3	2
Waltham Forest	—	—	—	—	—	2	7
Wandsworth	—	2	1	2	—	—	—
Westminster	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Greater London	30	38	41	26	33	30	30

Source:
DfES

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many *(a)* Pakistani, *(b)* black African, *(c)* Bangladeshi, *(d)* white, *(e)* Indian, *(f)* Chinese and *(g)* black Caribbean (i) males and (ii) females achieved (A) level 2 or above at Key Stage 1, (B) level 5 or above at Key Stage 3 and (C) level 4 or above at Key Stage 2 in (1) English, (2) mathematics and (3) science in each year since 1994 in Greater London, broken down by borough; [173256]

(2) how many *(a)* black Caribbean, *(b)* Pakistani, *(c)* black African, *(d)* Bangladeshi, *(e)* white, *(f)* Indian and *(g)* Chinese (i) males and (ii) females achieved five A*–C grades at GCSE in each year since 1994 in Greater London, broken down by borough. [173255]

Mr. Miliband: I will answer these questions together.

Prior to 2002 national level analyses by pupil characteristic were not possible. In January 2002 the Annual Schools' Census (ASC) introduced a major change in that maintained primary, secondary and special schools reported data at an individual pupil level for the first time. The introduction of the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) in 2002 meant that for the first time pupil characteristic information could be matched to pupil attainment data, allowing comparisons of the performance of different groups of pupils.

The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the staying-on rate at 16 years was for Greater London, broken down by local education authority, in each year since 1997. [173258]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Participation estimates of education and training by 16-year-olds for the academic year 2001/02 (the latest available) are shown in Table A for local education authorities (LEAs) in Greater London.

For Inner London, participation in education and training is only shown as a total because participation estimates for individual Inner London LEAs cannot be estimated reliably. This is due to considerable numbers of pupils who attend independent schools in an LEA other than the one in which they reside.

The figures in the table are produced using post-Census population estimates. Historic population estimates are not available on a comparable basis; and correspondingly, these estimates cannot be compared with those published previously.

Table A: Participation in education and training by 16 year olds in Greater London by LEA for the academic year 2001/02

	Full-time education	*Total education and training*[1]
Greater London	74	82
Inner London	73	81
Outer London	75	82
Barking and Dagenham	56	63
Barnet	76	82
Bexley	68	78

Table A: Participation in education and training by 16 year olds in Greater London by LEA for the academic year 2001/02

	Full-time education	*Total education and training*[1]
Brent	77	82
Bromley	77	82
Croydon	77	83
Ealing	76	81
Enfield	75	83
Greenwich	68	79
Harrow	85	90
Havering	71	80
Hillingdon	75	84
Hounslow	70	78
Kingston upon Thames	80	85
Merton	70	77
Redbridge	81	86
Richmond upon Thames	92	97
Sutton	76	84
Waltham Forest	78	87

[1] Includes participation in full-time education, part-time education and Government supported work based learning (WBL).

Source:
DfES Statistical Bulletin 01/2004, published 26 February 2004.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what public funding has been spent on adult *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy in Tamworth constituency in the last 10 years. [173284]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The estimated total spend on Skills For Life (the Government's strategy for literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners from pre-entry level up to and including level 2) and on Key Skills (essential skills of communication, application of number and information technology), from April 2001 to July 2003, in the Staffordshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area is set out in the following table.

£ thousands

April 2001 to July 2001[1]		*August 2001 to July 2002*		*August 2002 to July 2003*	
Basic skills	*Key skills*	*Basic skills*	*Key skills*	*Basic skills*	*Key skills*
2,341	786	3,123	1,006	4,899	2,063

[1] The figures for April to July 2001 include costs incurred from August 2000 on learning aims continuing into April 2001.

From the information available to the LSC it has not been feasible to obtain estimates at constituency level or separate figures by subject without incurring disproportionate cost. Likewise it has not been feasible to obtain comparable figures for periods before April 2001 when the Skills for Life strategy was launched and the LSC was formed, but information shows it was considerably less than at present.

Education/Employment Statistics (Bootle)

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many residents of Bootle have undertaken apprenticeships in each of the last five years. [172782]

Alan Johnson: The information requested is not available at parliamentary constituency level. Nor is the information available on a consistent geographical basis over the last five years. However, the table shows the number of starts on Advanced Modern Apprenticeships and Foundation Modern Apprenticeships in Greater Merseyside Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area between April 2001 and the end of July 2003, as well as the number of starts from April 98 to March 2001 in the four TECs that amalgamated to become Greater Merseyside LSC.

Time period—TEC/LSC	*Advanced MAs*	*Foundation MAs*
April 1998 to March 1999		
CEWTEC *	1,400	300
Merseyside	2,400	1,200
St. Helens CCTE	300	100
North and Mid Cheshire *	1,200	200
April 1999 to March 2000		
CEWTEC *	1,000	900
Merseyside	2,600	3,500
St. Helens CCTE	300	400

Failing Schools

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools in Wirral, South deemed to be failing since 1997 have since reached satisfactory standards. [173630]

Mr. Miliband: No schools in Wirral, South have been found to be failing since 1997.

FE Colleges

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps he is taking to assist *(a)* recruitment and *(b)* retention of staff in further education colleges. [173896]

Alan Johnson: Further education colleges are independent corporations which set their own pay and recruitment arrangements. However, we are increasing the total funding for FE by £1.2 billion between 2002–03 and 2005–06 (19 per cent. in real terms) and increasing flexibility in the use of this money. This will give colleges more scope to meet local recruitment and retention needs.

We also support colleges through the following specific recruitment and retention initiatives:

In designated shortage subject areas: Golden Hellos (one-off payments) to new teachers (1,961 individuals benefited to date) and Repayment of Teacher Loans over 10 years (233 benefited to date).

A pilot Training Bursary Scheme of £6,000 is in place to attract new staff into the profession (6,655 benefited to date and 2,000 allocated for 2004–05).

The newly launched Key Worker Living programme provides eligible FE teachers with equity loans to help with high housing costs in London, the South East, and Eastern regions.

Through the new Centre for Excellence in Leadership, the Leadership Development Framework, and the Work Shadowing Scheme, development opportunities are being extended, to ensure that talented staff are able to advance their careers.

Further Education Colleges (Salford)

Ian Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people in the Eccles constituency he expects to stay in education as a result of the introduction of education maintenance allowances;

and if he will provide additional funding to further education colleges in the City of Salford to support additional students. [173132]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The DfES does not hold information on student numbers for individual constituencies. However, we estimate that there will be about 3,900 extra sixteen year olds in the North West Region in further education this September who would not be participating without EMA. Salford is an EMA pilot area and at present there are 1,200 students in receipt of EMA.

The 2002 Spending review settlement allows for an expansion in the numbers of young people in FE. The additional funding takes account of the impact of EMA in further education colleges.

Higher Education (North West)

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent discussions he has had on the links between industry and higher education which relate to the development of the Omega site in Warrington; and if he will make a statement. [171015]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Secretary of State has not been involved in any discussions on this issue. The Learning and Skills Council and Warrington Borough Council have been chairing a working group looking at skills needs in relation to the site (the Omega Skills Challenge Group). The group includes representatives of local higher education institutions. This is a prudent measure, and does not pre-empt any decision on the planning application to develop the site.

Housing Costs

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assistance is given to schools in areas where the cost of housing has been identified as a barrier to recruiting staff, with particular reference to *(a)* newly qualified teachers, *(b)* experienced staff and *(c)* senior managers. [173897]

Mr. Miliband: The overall school and LEA funding system recognises the higher costs of recruiting and retaining staff in some areas by giving these LEAs, including inner London LEAs like Greenwich, additional resource through an Area Cost Adjustment.

Teachers in London, the South East and Eastern regions will now be potentially eligible for assistance with housing costs through the new Key Worker Living Scheme.

Teachers are able to apply for this new scheme which builds on the foundations laid by the Starter Homes Initiative which since September 2001 has been helping key workers to buy homes in areas where high house prices undermine recruitment and retention.

We have identified the need to assist those potential future leaders who wish to remain in London but may have otherwise chosen to leave as a result of prohibitive housing costs. Over the next two years we will be aiming to assist 1,000 of these teachers by offering equity loans of up to £100,000 to help them purchase property within travelling distance of their schools. In addition, there will also be another strand to the scheme which will make available equity loans of up to £50,000 to qualifying experienced teachers. Finally, newly qualified teachers will not be excluded and will be eligible to receive support through the Shared Ownership and Intermediate Renting strands of the new scheme.

The statutory pay arrangements for teachers give significant discretion to schools to award recruitment and retention incentives and benefits to any grade of teacher where they consider the circumstance justify it.

Liverpool Schools

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many *(a)* new local authority schools and *(b)* school extensions and modernisations in Liverpool have been sanctioned by his Department since 1997; and at what cost; [173664]

(2) what the total amount of financial aid provided to Liverpool City Council by his Department in terms of grants and the funding of capital projects was in each year since 1997. [173661]

Mr. Miliband: We do not hold information on details of investment in school buildings. The majority of capital funding is now allocated to local authorities and schools by needs-related formulae. Investment decisions are made locally in line with priorities agreed in the authority's asset management plan. Information on details of investment may be held locally. The following table shows capital allocations in total and by programme given by the Government to Liverpool local education authority since 1997–98.

Capital allocations to Liverpool LEA

£000

Type	*Funding type*	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*
Additional NDS Grant (615)	Grant	—	—	—	—
Assistance with AMPs	Grant	—	—	66	—
Basic L C Vap	Grant	—	—	—	—
Basic Need	Supported Borrowing	4,957	6,832	5,954	4,968
City Learning Centres	Grant	—	—	800	2,663
Class Size initiative	Grant	—	85	224	236
Condition	Grant	—	—	—	—
Devolved Formula	Grant	—	—	—	3,528

Capital allocations to Liverpool LEA

£000

Type	*Funding type*	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*
Early Excellence Centre	Grant	—	—	—	—
Energy	Grant	—	155	—	—
Modernisation (Primary)	Grant	—	—	—	—
Modernisation LEA	Grant	—	—	—	—
Modernisation LEA	Supported Borrowing	—	—	—	—
Modernisation VA	Grant	—	—	—	—
NDS 1	Grant	1,275	—	—	—
NDS 2	Grant	—	4,016	—	—
NDS 3	Grant	—	—	2,735	—
NDS 4	Grant	—	—	—	8,671
Nursery Provision	Grant	—	—	—	78
Pathfinder Schools	Grant	—	—	—	—
Private Finance Initiative	PFI Credits (Signed)	—	—	—	86,800
School Labs	Grant	—	—	—	296
School Security	Grant	131	162	169	165
Schools Access Initiative	Supported Borrowing	45	105	200	280
Seed Challenge	Grant	—	—	—	295
Specialist Schools	Supported Borrowing	—	—	—	100
Staff Workspace	Grant	—	—	—	—
Supplementary Credit Approvals	Supported Borrowing	3,089	2,738	2,160	1,050
Supplementary NDS for VA Schools	Grant	—	—	—	164
Targeted Capital Funding	Supported Borrowing	—	—	—	—
Voluntary Aided School Grant	Grant	5,809	5,137	1,406	2,272
Total		15,306	19,230	13,714	111,566

Type	*Funding type*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*[1]	*2005–06*[1]
Additional NDS Grant (615)	Grant	200	—	—	—	—
Assistance with AMPs	Grant	—	—	—	—	—
Basic L C Vap	Grant	190	1,089	1,390	—	—
Basic Need	Supported Borrowing	2,946	994	253	468	937
City Learning Centres	Grant	2,948	—	—	—	—
Class Size initiative	Grant	151	17	—	—	—
Condition	Grant	2,386	3,435	4,518	—	—
Devolved Formula	Grant	2,859	4,339	6,671	3,461	—
Early Excellence Centre	Grant	377	—	—	—	—
Energy	Grant	—	—	—	—	—
Modernisation (Primary)	Grant	—	—	—	1,528	—
Modernisation LEA	Grant	—	—	—	1,051	—
Modernisation LEA	Supported Borrowing	—	1,100	1,740	2,101	3,170
Modernisation VA	Grant	—	480	1,189	2,334	1,372
NDS 1	Grant	—	—	—	—	—
NDS 2	Grant	—	—	—	—	—
NDS 3	Grant	—	—	—	—	—
NDS 4	Grant	—	—	—	—	—
Nursery Provision	Grant	—	—	—	—	—
Pathfinder Schools	Grant	—	149	—	—	—
Private Finance Initiative	PFI Credits(Signed)	—	—	3,800	—	—
School Labs	Grant	296	—	—	—	—
School Security	Grant	115	98	—	—	—
Schools Access Initiative	Supported Borrowing	465	703	1,129	561	545
Seed Challenge	Grant	333	584	575	564	—
Specialist Schools	Supported Borrowing	100	100	—	—	—
Staff Workspace	Grant	—	109	241	—	—
Supplementary Credit Approvals	Supported Borrowing	916	—	—	—	—
Supplementary NDS for VA Schools	Grant	9	—	—	—	—
Targeted Capital Funding	Supported Borrowing	4,950	—	1,200	3,157	—
Voluntary Aided School Grant	Grant	2,756	2,168	—	—	—
Total		21,997	15,365	22,706	15,225	6,024

[1] More allocations to be made.

LSC-funded Provision

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what monitoring of *(a)* geographical distribution of funding and *(b)* equal opportunity the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) carries out in order to ensure that it provides potential students with equal and fair access to LSC-funded provision. [174034]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department allocates funds for education and training in the post-16 learning and skills sector to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The LSC decides on allocations at individual college and regional level. Information about these allocations is not collected by the Department. This is a matter for the LSC. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to the hon. Gentleman with this information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the House Library.

The LSC's equal opportunities remit was established by the Learning and Skills Act 2000. The Council is required to publish an annual report on the arrangements it has made during the year, how effective they were and the plans for the following year. A copy of the report must be sent to the Secretary of State. The last such report was published in November 2003 and a copy of the Department's response is available via the Department's website.

Maths and English Tests

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of 11-year-old pupils in Wirral, South reached level four in *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English in each of the last seven years. [173631]

Mr. Miliband: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 34W.

Modern Apprenticeships

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what targets he has set for the number of small and medium-sized enterprises engaged with the Modern Apprenticeship scheme in *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05; what measures he has developed for assessing employer engagement in Modern Apprenticeships; and if he will make a statement. [169470]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* We have not set any targets for the number of SMEs to be engaged in Apprenticeships. The "Learning and Training at Work" survey assesses employer involvement in apprenticeships by firm size and sector. The last survey in 2002 revealed that 5 per cent. of employers were involved in Advanced Modern Apprenticeships and 4 per cent. were involved in Foundation Modern Apprenticeships. This equates to around 36,000 employers of which two-thirds are SMEs. The Department and Learning and Skills Council are considering the most effective way to collect data on employer involvement in the future.

It is crucial, however, to the success of Apprenticeships and in meeting the high demand from young people, that more employers, including SMEs, are involved. Therefore on 10 May 2004, a television advertising campaign started directed at engaging with more employers and there will be direct marketing to employers of all sizes. The Modern Apprenticeship Task Force, chaired by Sir Roy Gardner, has increasing employer engagement as its primary function and good progress is being made. The taskforce is due to report in autumn 2004.

New Deal for Schools

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how much funding each school in Wirral, South has received from the New Deal for Schools; [173628]

(2) how much public funding has been spent on repairing schools in Wirral, South in each year since 1997. [173626]

Mr. Miliband: Table A shows the schools in the Wirral, South constituency which benefited from investment through the New Deal for Schools programme, which ran between 1997–98 and 2000–01.

The majority of capital support is now allocated to schools and local education authorities by formula, and they decide how to invest it in line with their asset management plans. The Department does not, therefore, have complete information about capital investment at constituency level; this should be held at local authority level.

Table B sets out the capital support provided by the to the Wirral local education authority and its schools since 1997–98, in total and by programme (including all allocations through NDS listed in table A).

Table A: NDS Allocations to schools in the Wirral, South constituency

	School	*Project*	*Package*	*Funding (£)*
1997/98	Barnston Primary School	Continuation of roofing and structural repairs	LEA-wide grant	[1]375,000
	Bebington High School	Continuation of roofing and structural repairs	LEA-wide grant	[1]375,000
1998/99	Church Drive Primary School	Chimney stack repairs, bay window repairs/replace		28,600
	Wirral Grammar School for Girls	Replacement of fume cupboards etc, external guttering, structural repairs to two room, fire precautions		104,500
	Barnston Primary School	Remove lagging (asbestos) boiler house		2,200
	Brookhurst Primary School	Frame renewal and repair		66,000
	Millfields Primary School	Frame renewal, boundary fence provision		66,000
1999/2000	Higher Bebington Junior School	Heating boiler plant repairs	Project including 13 schools	[2]340,900
	Higher Bebington Junior School	Repair element structure	Project including 15 schools	[2]1,289,200
	Grove Street Primary School	Repair element roofing	Project including 17 schools	[2]950,300

Table A: NDS Allocations to schools in the Wirral, South constituency

	School	Project	Package	Funding (£)
	Grove Street Primary School	Repair element structure	Project including 15 schools	[2]1,289,200
	Mendell Primary School	Repair element roofing	Project including 17 schools	[2]950,300
	Raeburn Primary School	Repair element structure	Project including 15 schools	[2]1,289,200
	South Wirral High School	Repair element roofing	Project including 17 schools	[2]950,300
2000/01	Mendell Primary School	Temporary mobile accommodation to be replaced by permanent new build	Project including nine schools	[2]1,955,856
	Raeburn Primary School	Temporary mobile accommodation to be replaced by permanent new build	Project including nine schools	[2]1,955,856
	Barnston Primary School	Temporary mobile accommodation to be replaced by permanent new build	Project including nine schools	[2]1,955,856

[1] NDS one grant was allocated for Wirral LEA wide projects, part of which was used for work at each of two schools in the Wirral, South constituency. The LEA will be able to say how much was allocated to each school.
[2] Allocations shown are the totals for packages of projects within Wirral LEA which included the schools shown that are in the Wirral, South constituency. The LEA will be able to say how much was allocated to each school.

Table B: Capital allocations: Wirral LEA

Figures in £000

	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Assistance with AMPs			42				
Basic L C Vap					61	348	453
Basic Need	1,468	632	1,793	1,068	344	110	251
City Learning Centres				10	2,200		
Class Size initiative		211	899	651	66	91	
Condition					2,076	3,108	4,009
Devolved Formula				2,336	1,922	2,906	4,590
Early Excellence Centre		195	66				
Energy		104					
Modernisation LEA						1,332	2,291
Modernisation VA						235	620
NDS1	375						
NDS2		1,902					
NDS3			2,712				
NDS4				3,956			
Nursery Provision				70			
Outside Toilets		36	9				
Private Finance Initiative				58,500			
School Labs				224	224		
School Security	83	103	109	108	76	65	
Schools Access Initiative	30	70	150	210	349	493	726
Seed Challenge				217	247	424	421
Specialist Schools				100	200	200	
Staff Workspace						84	176
Supplementary Credit Approvals	55	684					
Supplementary NDS for VA Schools				146			
Targeted Capital Funding					600		1,316
Targeted Capital Funding -VA							3,921
Voluntary Aided School Grant	399	682	937	341	352	763	
Total	2,410	4,619	6,717	67,937	8,717	10,159	18,774

Prison Education

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which contract holders for prison education have advised his Department that they do not wish to provide services beyond the lifetime of the current contract. [172422]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: To date neither HM Prison Service nor DfES has received any communication from existing contractors to advise of their intention not to an accept offer to extend their contract(s).

School Expulsions

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils have been expelled from *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools in each year since 1997. [172810]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is given in the table which shows data up to 2001/02, the latest available.

Number of permanent exclusions in primary and secondary schools England: 1997/98–2001/02[1]

	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	2000/01[1]	2001/02
Primary schools[2]					
Number of permanent exclusions	1,539	1,366	1,226	1,436	1,451
Percentage of permanent exclusions[3]	13	13	15	16	15
Percentage of school population[4]	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03
Secondary schools[2]					
Number of permanent exclusions	10,187	8,636	6,713	7,305	7,741
Percentage of permanent exclusions[3]	83	83	81	80	81
Percentage of school population[4]	0.33	0.28	0.21	0.23	0.24

[1] Permanent exclusions for 2000/01 are estimated as a number of local education authorities have not confirmed the data for their schools.
[2] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[3] The number of permanent exclusions expressed as a percentage of the total number in primary, secondary and special schools. The figures for special schools are not given in the table.
[4] The number of permanent exclusions expressed as a percentage of the number (headcount) of all pupils (excluding dually registered pupils in special schools) in January each year.
Source:
Annual Schools Census

School Inspections

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if he will make a statement on the model of inspection proposed by HM Chief Inspector of Schools in his recent letter to all primary schools in England; and what assessment he has made of the accordance of that model with his Department's guidelines on earned autonomy and staged intervention in schools; [173683]

(2) what plans he has to instruct Ofsted to use a range of electronic and other performance indicators to undertake a distance review of a school before deciding on the most appropriate way to carry out inspection; and if he will make a statement; [173684]

(3) what plans he has to instruct Ofsted to send single inspectors to validate *(a)* schools clearly demonstrating success in a range of existing performance indicators, *(b)* school self-evaluation systems and *(c)* the evaluation of other processes; [173685]

(4) what plans he has to introduce the principle of minimum notice to the school inspections process; what assessment he has made of its efficacy in the day-to-day performance of schools; and if he will make a statement; [173687]

(5) what plans he has to introduce a two-tier system of reporting on schools to provide for professional confidentiality and staff anonymity; and if he will make a statement. [173688]

Mr. Miliband: HM Chief Inspector, David Bell, recently conducted a consultation on proposals for changing the arrangements for school inspections. He has now submitted his proposals for change to the Secretary of State for consideration. We will publish our intentions shortly.

Schools (South Ribble)

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was spent per pupil in South Ribble in each of the last seven years. [171655]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than districts within an area. South Ribble is a district of Lancashire Local Education Authority. The information for Lancashire LEA is as follows:

Net current expenditure per pupil

	Pre-Primary	Education	Primary	Education	Pre-primary and Primary Secondary Education
1996–97	n/a	n/a	1,800	2,590	15,990
1997–98	n/a	n/a	1,820	2,630	17,320
1998–99	n/a	n/a	2,000	2,700	17,770
1999–2000	7,130	2,110	2,170	2,760	18,490
2000–01	11,030	2,330	2,440	2,910	18,770
2001–02	16,390	2,630	2,800	3,230	20,600
2002–03	—	2,900	—	3,400	—

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from Lancashire LEA's Section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–00 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. Figures up to and including 1997–98 figures are for Lancashire LEA prior to local government reorganisation. From 1998–99 onwards parts of Lancashire LEA became Blackpool and Blackburn LEAs. Expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of the Section 52 outturn statement in 1999–00. 1999–00 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance.

2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
3. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.
4. The NCE per pupil figures for pre-primary and primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the pre-primary sector and maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained nursery and primary schools sector.
5. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.
6. The NCE per pupil figures for special schools relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained special schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained special schools sector.
7. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Secure Children's Homes

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what plans there are to change the number of beds in local authority secure children's homes; and if he will make a statement; [172850]

(2) if he will list the secure children's homes in England; [172851]

(3) if he will make a statement on the future of secure children's homes in England. [172852]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* Officials have been working closely, both with the Youth Justice Board and the Association of Directors of Social Services, to consider the implications for local authority secure children's homes of the results of the Youth Justice Board's re-tendering exercise to determine the extent to which these homes will be used by the Youth Justice Board over the next two to five years for the placement of children through the youth justice system.

We understand that a few secure children's homes will now close on the basis that they will no longer be viable.

Officials are looking very closely at the demand, including any unmet need, for welfare placements in order to ensure that there are sufficient beds across the country for children who need to be placed in secure accommodation for welfare reasons.

Our aim is to achieve the best quality service for vulnerable children who, for whatever reason, need to be placed in secure accommodation.

The secure children's homes in England are as follows:

Stamford House
Orchard Lodge
Beechfield
Lansdowne
Leverton
Thornbury
Atkinson
Vinney Green
Swanwick Lodge
Clare Lodge
St. Johns
Earlswood
Lincolnshire
Sutton Place
Aldine House
Brunei
Watling House
Clayfields
Aycliffe
Kyloe House
Eastmoor
Barton Moss
Dyson Hall
Redbank
Redsands
Dales House
St. Catherines

Sure Start

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many mothers in each Greater London borough *(a)* are eligible for and *(b)* have taken up the Sure Start maternity grant. [173332]

Mr. Pond: I have been asked to reply.

The information is not available.

Note:

Social Fund data are held on the Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System (PBMIS). PBMIS does not hold data broken down by borough or for the Greater London area.

Truancy (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in the Tamworth constituency played truant from school in each of the last 10 years. [173286]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Vocational Training

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps the Government is taking to improve *(a)* vocational training courses and *(b)* work-based learning in the public sector. [172626]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Government supports a range of high quality learning opportunities to meet skills needs in the public sector. Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) in the public sector will ensure that publicly-funded learning meets the needs of the economy. As part of that, Apprenticeships will play a major role in providing the skills needed in the workforce. To complement this, the employer-led Apprenticeship Task Force, chaired by Sir

Roy Gardner, is making good progress in increasing employer engagement, including in the public sector, and is due to report in Autumn 2004.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Accountancy Services

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the *(a)* nature and *(b)* value was of all contracts, consultancies or other services placed with the accountancy firms (i) Deloitte & Touche, (ii) Ernst & Young, (iii) KPMG and (iv) PricewaterhouseCoopers since 2000–01 by the Department and its agencies. [166088]

Mr. Pearson: The nature and value of all contracts, consultancies or other services placed with the four firms listed since 2000–01 for the Northern Ireland Administration (including the Northern Ireland Office itself, but excluding non-departmental public bodies) was as follows:

Nature	*Value (£)*
Deloitte & Touche	
Management Advisory	3,347,476.35
Financial Advisory	1,789,127.00
Assurance	142,492.30
Human Resources	15,093.43
Internal Audit[1]	386,076.00
Research	583,110.18
Marketing	0.00
Miscellaneous	804,604.35
Total[2]	7,223,219.18
Ernst & Young	
Management Advisory	101,442.00
Financial Advisory	126,000.00
Assurance	0.00
Human Resources	0.00
Internal Audit	0.00
Research	0.00
Marketing	0.00
Total	227,442.00
KPMG	
Management Advisory	191,872.00
Financial Advisory	1,227,193.00
Assurance	800.00
Human Resources	30,638.00
Internal Audit	0.00
Research	194,317.50
Marketing	102,813.00
Total[3]	1,748,867.25
Pricewaterhouse Coopers	
Management Advisory	2,314,243.94
Financial Advisory	5,791,095.50
Assurance	589,706.69
Human Resources	1,616,008.00
Internal Audit	2,808.26
Research	736,466.70
Marketing	82,625.00
Miscellaneous	198,148.00
Total[4]	11,813,868.82

[1] Some of these contracts were let by DRD to procure services on behalf of other Departments.

[2] The value of all contracts awarded to Deloitte & Touche by DSD in 2000–01 was £79,789.57.
DOE awarded Deloitte & Touche £75,450 in IT projects.
These amounts were not categorised but are included in the Deloitte & Touche total.

[3] The value of all contracts awarded to KPMG by DSD in 2000–01 was £1,233.75.
This amount was not categorised but is included in the KPMG total.

[4] The value of all contracts awarded to Pricewaterhouse Coopers by DSD in 2000–01 was £179,731.70.
DOE awarded Pricewaterhouse Coopers £303,035.00 in IT projects.
These amounts were not categorised but are included in the Pricewaterhouse Coopers total.

Deloitte & Touche Miscellaneous—contracts which were not categorised as follows:

Young people—work in relation to religion and morals today;

Security Consultation;

Training;

Redesign of processes and acquisition of new IT system and related work;

Provision of technical advice about the development of improved IT services;

Provision of technical advice on the development of cross-cutting IT services to the six Criminal Justice Organisations (CJOs);

Review of Qualifications for Probation Officers; and

IT.

Pricewaterhouse Coopers Miscellaneous—contracts which were not categorised as follows:

Provision of work study practitioners;

Training; and

PFI course tailored specifically to Health Estates.

Age Weighted Pupil Unit

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland by what percentage funding for the Age Weighted Pupil Unit changed this year. [173203]

Mr. Gardiner: Funding under the Age Weighted Pupil Unit Factor within the Local Management of Schools funding formulae increased by 1.9 per cent. between 2003–04 and 2004–05. The amount of resources available for distribution under this factor reflects a drop in pupil numbers, the age profile of pupils, the resources required to fund other factors within the formulae and a 0.85 percentage point reduction in the level of Employers' Superannuation contributions for teachers, leading to lower costs in schools.

Allied Health Professionals

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken to facilitate allied health professionals in continuing professional development and training in Northern Ireland. [173585]

Angela Smith: The Department recognises the need for Health Care Professionals to update and maintain their professional competence through access to continuing professional development. In August 2002, the Department established a Centre for Professional Development for Allied Health Professionals. This centre provides a wide range of programmes, both profession specific and on a multi-professional basis, and representatives of relevant professions are involved in identifying priorities for training. The centre is in its early stages of development and the position will be kept under review.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which local health trusts have formally implemented the 1996 Enabling Agreement with regard to allied health professions. [173595]

Angela Smith: The following HSS Trusts have formally implemented the 1996 Enabling Agreement:

Altnagelvin HSS Trust
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust
Causeway HSS Trust
Craigavon Area Hospital HSS Trust
Greenpark Healthcare HSS Trust
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust
Newry and Mourne HSS Trust
North and West Belfast HSS Trust
South and East Belfast HSS Trust
United Hospitals HSS Trust.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* consultants and *(b)* clinical specialists he estimates will be appointed within the allied health professions in the next (i) 12 months and (ii) 12 to 24 months. [173618]

Angela Smith: Staffing is a matter for individual Health and Social Services Trusts taking into account factors such as service needs and available resources. Information is not held centrally on projected appointments to specific grades.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* clinical specialists and *(b)* consultants there are within the allied health professions. [173619]

Angela Smith: The information requested is as follows.

Number of clinical specialists employed within allied health professions in Health and Social Services (HSS) Trusts as at 31 March 2004
Figures are given as headcount unless otherwise indicated

HSS[1] Trusts	Physiotherapy	Occupational Therapy	Speech and Language Therapy	Radiography
Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust	0	0	0	10
Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust	0	0	8	0
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	3	0	0	12
Causeway HSS Trust	1	3	12	0
Craigavon and Banbridge Comm. HSS Trust	0	3	0	0
Craigavon Area Hospital HSS Trust	4	0	0	0
Down Lisburn HSS Trust	2	0	5	0
Foyle Community HSS Trust	0	0	12	0
Greenpark Healthcare HSS Trust	8	8	0	1
Homefirst Community HSS Trust	0	[2]2.00	[2]9.83	0
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust	[2]2.16	0	0	0
Newry and Mourne HSS Trust	2	2	5	2
North and West Belfast HSS Trust	4	2	16	0
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	[2]1.00	0	[2]9.20	[2]7.10
South and East Belfast HSS Trust	0	0	0	0
Sperrin Lakeland HSS Trust	0	0	0	8
Ulster Comm. and Hosp. Group HSS Trust	0	0	0	0
United Hospitals Group HSS Trust	3	0	0	13

HSS[1] Trusts	Orthoptics	Podiatry	Dietetics	Total
Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust	0	0	0	10
Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust	0	1	1	10
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	0	0	0	15
Causeway HSS Trust	0	0	0	16
Craigavon and Banbridge Comm. HSS Trust	0	0	0	3
Craigavon Area Hospital HSS Trust	0	0	0	4
Down Lisburn HSS Trust	0	0	0	7
Foyle Community HSS Trust	0	0	0	12
Greenpark Healthcare HSS Trust	0	0	1	18
Homefirst Community HSS Trust	0	[2]4.00	0	[2]15.83
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust	0	0	0	[2]2.16
Newry and Mourne HSS Trust	0	1	1	13
North and West Belfast HSS Trust	0	1	0	23
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	0	0	0	[2]17.30
South and East Belfast HSS Trust	0	0	0	0
Sperrin Lakeland HSS Trust	0	0	0	8
Ulster Comm. and Hosp. Group HSS Trust	0	0	0	0
United Hospitals Group HSS Trust	0	0	0	16

[1] Health and Social Services
[2] Whole-time Equivalent

There are no allied health profession consultants employed within any of the Health and Social Services Trusts.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what input frontline allied health professionals have in influencing departmental health policy locally. [173620]

Angela Smith: The Central Advisory Committee for the Allied Health Professions provides the formal mechanism for frontline allied health professionals to input consolidated advice to influence departmental health policy locally.

The present membership of the committee comprises of physiotherapists, occupational therapists, chiropodists/ podiatrists, dieticians, speech and language therapists,

radiographers, orthoptists, arts therapists, prosthetists and orthotists.

Alzheimer's Disease

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what percentage of his Department's health budget has been allocated to genetic research into the causes of Alzheimer's in each year since 2000; [173267]

(2) what plans he has to increase his Department's health budget allocation to genetic research into the causes of Alzheimer's in the current financial year. [173302]

Angela Smith: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has not allocated and is not currently planning to allocate any funding for research specifically into the potential genetic causes of Alzheimer's over the period in question. However, it is currently supporting a neurological research programme which is not classed as genetic research. The total budget for this five-year programme is £366,814, including initial funding of £21,913 in 2002–03, £52,570 in 2003–04 and there is a budget provision of £65,679 this year.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of his Department's health budget was spent on the development of treatment and care for Alzheimer's sufferers in each of the past three years; and if he will make a statement on the provision for those with Alzheimer's in Northern Ireland. [173273]

Angela Smith: The information requested is not available.

The Department recognises that, as people live longer, there will be a corresponding increase in the numbers who suffer from Alzheimer's disease and other dementia-related conditions. The needs of people with these conditions are currently being considered as part of the on-going Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability.

Arthritis

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what criteria are used to prioritise patients to receive new anti-TNF drugs for rheumatoid arthritis; and if he will make a statement. [173612]

Angela Smith: Priority is given to those patients who, having been assessed as suitable for treatment with anti-TNF drugs, have been on the waiting list for the longest time.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what obstacles prevent all rheumatoid arthritis sufferers deemed suitable for new anti-TNF drugs by their consultants from receiving them; and if he will make a statement. [173613]

Angela Smith: The decision on the appropriate treatment for an individual patient is a matter for the clinician concerned, in consultation with the patient. Ideally, all rheumatoid arthritis sufferers deemed suitable for anti-TNF drug treatment by their consultants should receive these medicines. However, rising demand, the high costs of these medicines and the infrastructure required to prepare and administer them, and limited health service resources result in some patients having to wait for this form of treatment. In the meantime they continue to receive conventional treatment for their condition.

Autism Services

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what funding has been provided for autism services in each of the past five years in the *(a)* Northern Board area and *(b)* rest of Northern Ireland. [173614]

Angela Smith: The information requested is not available centrally.

Bail

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many times defendants charged with murder in Northern Ireland have been released on bail in each year since 2000. [166440]

Mr. Leslie *[pursuant to his reply, 20 April 2004, Official Report, column 441W]:* I have been asked to reply.

The information contained in my previous answer was inaccurate. I apologise for this error, which was due to related charges of attempted murder and manslaughter being included in the annualised totals.

In 2001, 10 defendants on murder charges were released on bail.

In 2002, 11 defendants on murder charges were released on bail.

In 2003, 10 defendants on murder charges were released on bail.

Body Piercing and Tattooing

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland with what frequency inspections are carried out on body piercing and tattooing establishments in Northern Ireland; what the nature of such inspections is; and by whom they are carried out. [173811]

Angela Smith: Inspections of body piercing and tattooing establishments are in general carried out by Environmental Health Officers employed by district councils. The frequency of such inspections is a matter for each council and information on this is not held centrally.

Under Part V of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1985, district councils may control tattooing and ear-piercing practices in their districts. Inspections of these establishments are carried out to ensure the cleanliness and hygiene of the premises, the practitioners and the equipment used; inspections of establishments engaged in body piercing (other than ear piercing) are carried out to ensure compliance with the requirements of health and safety at work legislation.

Civil Partnerships

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many respondents were *(a)* in favour of and *(b)* against the Government's proposals

set out in the consultation document Civil Partnerships: A Legal Status for Committed Same Sex Couples in Northern Ireland. [170719]

Mr. Pearson: A report analysing the responses, containing statistical information and outlining the Government's approach to the issues raised by respondents to the consultation is being compiled and will be published within the next few weeks.

Departmental Expenditure (Entertainment)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his latest estimate is of the amount spent by his Department on entertainment in each year from 1996–97 to 2004–05. [169005]

Mr. Pearson: The estimated total spend by the 11 departments of the Northern Ireland Administration and the Northern Ireland Office on all forms of entertainment in each financial year from 1996–97 to 2004–05 is set out in the following table:

	Total (£)
1996–97	681,358
1997–98	668,280
1998–99	803,170
1999–2000	813,959
2000–01	841,778
2001–02	756,189
2002–03	865,859
2003–04[1]	852,548
2004–05[2]	908,622

[1] Provisional outturn
[2] Estimated outturn

Departmental Procurement

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of the *(a)* crockery, *(b)* cutlery and *(c)* glassware procured by his Department over the last five years is of British or Northern Ireland manufacture. [170805]

Mr. Pearson: As there is no requirement on departments to hold records on the country of origin of crockery, cutlery or glassware the information requested could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Early Retirement

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many employees in his Department took early retirement in the last financial year; and at what total cost. [171728]

Mr. Pearson: The number of employees, covered by the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) who took early retirement in the financial year ending 31 March 2004 totalled 307 at a cost of £9,746,601.87. Of these, 226 retired early on grounds of ill health at a cost of £5,527,899.53.

The figures reflect the amounts actually paid out during the financial year 2003–04. The total cost of enhancements to pension benefits and the additional compensation amounts paid in advance of normal age of retirement is only available at disproportionate cost.

The figures include those applicable to Next Steps Agencies and NDPB's, which are also members of the Scheme.

Education Department Budget

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland by what percentage the Department of Education's budget changed this year. [173204]

Mr. Gardiner: The Department of Education's budget is 7.9 per cent. higher than in 2003–04, reflecting a 43.2 per cent. increase in provision for schools infrastructure and an overall 4.2 per cent. increase on other budgets.

Emergency Cases

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what studies he has commissioned into speeding up the flow of emergency cases through local hospitals. [173604]

Angela Smith: Significant work is under way to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of processes for managing flows of emergency patients through hospitals. The Eastern Health and Social Services Board initiated the Improving the Flow of Emergency Admissions project at the Ulster Hospital in January 2003. Building on the lessons learned from this project, and the expertise and work of similar initiatives both in Northern Ireland and Great Britain, senior officials within my Department are progressing a Regional Programme to improve the flow of emergency admissions, ensuring that recognised best practice is implemented across all hospitals in Northern Ireland.

European Working Time Directive

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what action will be taken against health trusts that fail to meet the European Working Time Directive targets by August. [173592]

Angela Smith: Further to my reply of 11 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1519W, I can confirm that proposed action against employers who do not comply with the European Working Time Directive (EWTD), has not been indicated by the European Commission (EC) at this stage. The EC are currently considering responses to their public consultation on the implications of the Working Time Directive and subsequent legal rulings and action on failure to comply will only be determined after this.

However, the Department recognises the problems that will arise with the application of the full requirements of the EWTD and is working with HPSS employers and the BMA to ensure compliance.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which health trusts are compliant with the European Working Time Directive. [173593]

Angela Smith: Trusts are currently undertaking a monitoring exercise, which is looking at junior doctors working patterns and rest requirements for both New Deal and European Working Time Directive (EWTD). Responses are due with the Department by early June and a clearer picture will emerge at that stage.

However, the previous monitoring data indicated that 91 per cent. of junior doctors overall were already working and being trained in less than 56 hours per week, and so were meeting the EWTD requirements for August 2004 in terms of average weekly number of hours worked.

Front-Line Nurses

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what is being done to increase the involvement of front-line nurses in departmental policy formulation. [173601]

Angela Smith: Front-line nurses have a range of opportunities to contribute to Departmental policy including membership of The Central Nursing Advisory Committee, secondments to the Department's Nursing and Advisory Group, participation in professional forums established by Nursing Officers and Midwifery Advisors from the Nursing and Midwifery Advisory Group and through established consultation procedures.

Infant Deliveries

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the *(a)* mortality and *(b)* morbidity rates were for (i) normal vaginal deliveries, (ii) caesarean sections and (iii) other deliveries in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [173584]

Angela Smith: The small numbers of maternal deaths in Northern Ireland preclude any robust statistical analysis of maternal death by mode of delivery. Wider literature from within the United Kingdom does indicate that whilst mortality rates for mothers are low no matter how delivered, caesarean section does carry a slightly increased relative risk compared to that for all deliveries.

Mortality and morbidity sequela are difficult to separate from the primary reasons for performing the caesarean section and detailed information about this is not routinely available.

With regard to mortality and morbidity in infants, without differentiating the underlying reasons for sections (emergency or planned), it is impossible to establish any direct correlation between mode of delivery and the nature of the subsequent morbidity. The maturity of the infant at the time of the caesarean section is the most important element of its survival and development.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* normal vaginal, *(b)* caesarean section and *(c)* other deliveries there have been in each of the last 10 years. [173610]

Angela Smith: The information requested is contained in the table.

	Mode of delivery				
Year of birth	*(a) Normal vaginal*	*(b) Caesarean section*	*(c) Other*	*Not known*	*Total births (live and still)*
1994	—	—	—	—	—
1995	16,775	3,971	2,924	283	23,953
1996	17,055	4,167	2,988	294	24,504
1997	16,345	4,655	2,957	196	24,153
1998	15,656	4,991	3,088	126	23,861
1999	14,773	5,312	2,943	150	23,178
2000	14,706	5,786	2,974	111	23,577
2001	13,662	5,410	2,737	95	21,904
2002	13,251	5,568	2,700	48	21,567
2003	13,375	5,726	2,625	132	21,858

Note:
Figures for 1994 are unavailable.

Irish Language/Culture

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much funding his Department allocated to support for *(a)* the Ulster Scots culture and language and *(b)* the Irish culture and language in each of the last three years, expressed on a per capita basis of those who claim to identify with each. [171925]

Angela Smith: This information is not available in the format requested.

The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure jointly funds the Ulster-Scots Agency and the Irish Language Agency. The Ulster-Scots Agency has a statutory remit to promote Ulster-Scots language and culture. The Irish Language Agency has a statutory remit to promote the Irish language.

Funding is also available from departmental mainstream programmes for projects which may have an Irish or Ulster-Scots language or culture dimension which cannot be separated from the primary funding objectives.

Jurisdiction of the Visitor Scheme

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what representations he has received from *(a)* students and *(b)* higher education institutions regarding the (i) introduction of an independent adjudicator to hear student complaints and (ii) ending of the Jurisdiction of the Visitor Scheme. [173210]

Mr. Gardiner: On 8 April 2004, the Department for Employment and Learning launched its consultation on proposals to introduce variable deferred fees, access agreements and a review of the student complaints

system. The closing date for response is 30 June 2004 and, to date, no responses have been received from students or higher education institutions regarding the introduction of an independent adjudicator to hear student complaints or ending the jurisdiction of the Visitor Scheme.

Language Public Bodies

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the budget for the *(a)* North/South Language Body and *(b)* Ulster Scots Agency was in each year since its formation. [172762]

Angela Smith: The budget for the North/South Language Body and the Ulster-Scots Agency for each year since its formation is as follows:

£ million

	North/South Language Body	*Ulster-Scots Agency*
2000	7.879	0.667
2001	11.41	1.29
2002	11.97	1.42
2003	12.95	1.54
2004	14.603	1.704

Lough Erne

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will introduce bye-laws to control jet skis and powerboats in Lough Erne. [173270]

Angela Smith: Waterways Ireland has responsibility for the management, maintenance, development and restoration of the inland navigable waterways of Ireland principally for recreational purposes. The waterways under the remit of the body are the Barrow Navigation, the Erne System, the Grand Canal, the Lower Bann, the Royal Canal, the Shannon-Erne Waterways and the Shannon Navigation.

Bye-laws for the regulation of the navigations already exists for Lough Erne under statute law Lough Erne (Navigation) Bye-laws (Northern Ireland) 1978 and Lough Erne (Navigation) (Amended) Bye-laws (Northern Ireland) 1986.

Waterways Ireland is currently in the process of revising the bye-laws for all their waterways including introducing bye-laws for the Lower Bann. The process will address all aspects of the navigations including jet skis and powerboats and it is hoped to go to public consultation towards the end of 2004.

Love for Life

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the outcome of Love for Life's central funding bid to *(a)* the Department for Education and *(b)* the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety will be announced. [173274]

Mr. Gardiner: The Department of Education will not be providing central funding for the Love for Life programme. The Chief Executive of Love for Life was advised in writing of this decision on 11 May.

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety is not providing central funding to Love for Life. The Department is presently considering an application for project funding from Love for Life for a project on parent/child communication and the organisation has been asked for clarification on a number of points before a decision can be made.

Mental Health

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what guidelines are followed by health trusts wishing to purchase private houses in residential areas for the sole purpose of integrating people suffering from mental health problems; what facility is made for residents in the area to enable them to express their views on the proposals; and if he will make a statement. [173599]

Angela Smith: There is no specific guidance issued to Trusts regarding the purchase of private houses in residential areas for the sole purpose of integrating people suffering from mental health problems. However, the Department's Land Transactions Handbook gives practical advice to HSS Trusts regarding conducting land and property transactions.

Also, there is no specific advice issued to Trusts on what facility is made for residents in the area to enable them to express their views on the proposals. However, HSS Trusts are bound by planning law where facilities have more than six residents. In these cases, the Planning Service applies procedures for public consultation, when Trusts change the use of property or land, or develop new or existing premises.

Midwives

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many full-time midwives were employed in the NHS in Northern Ireland *(a)* in 1999, *(b)* in 1994 and *(c)* on 1 May. [173602]

Angela Smith: Figures for the number of full-time midwives employed within Health and Social Services (HSS) Trusts are given in the following table. The latest figures held are as at 31 March 2004. Figures have therefore been supplied as at 31 March 1994, 31 March 1999 and 31 March 2004.

Number of full-time midwives employed within HSS[1] Trusts as at 31 March 1994, 31 March 1999 and 31 March 2004

	Number
31 March 1994	666
31 March 1999	547
31 March 2004	492

[1] Health and Social Services.

In addition, as at 31 March 1994 there were 594 part-time midwives (WTE 369.82). As at 31 March 1999 there were 656 part-time midwives (WTE 432.10). As at 31 March 2004 there were 773 part-time midwives (WTE 502.86).

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to increase the number of midwives in *(a)* hospitals and *(b)* the community. [173603]

Angela Smith: Recruitment of midwives is a matter for individual employers on the basis of service need.

The Department introduced direct entry midwifery training in September 2003 with the first intake of 15 students and continues to provide opportunities for entry to an 18 month shortened programme for qualified nurses—40 nurses commenced a programme in November 2003.

The number of commissioned training places is reviewed annually.

Overseas Nurses

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many nurses from overseas were working for the NHS in Northern Ireland on the latest date for which figures are available. [173742]

Angela Smith: Overseas nurses are employed both within the private sector and the HPSS in Northern Ireland but information is only held in respect of HPSS employees. As at 31 March 2004, the total number of overseas nurses employed within health and social services trusts in Northern Ireland was 779. Figures are detailed by trust in the following table.

HSS[1] trust	*Number*
Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust	30
Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust	0
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	59
Causeway HSS Trust	14
Craigavon and Banbridge Community HSS Trust	0
Craigavon Area Hospital HSS Trust	50
Down Lisburn HSS Trust	55
Foyle Community HSS Trust	1
Greenpark Healthcare HSS Trust	67
Homefirst Community HSS Trust	20
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust	54
Newry and Mourne HSS Trust	4
North and West Belfast HSS Trust	0
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	228
South and East Belfast HSS Trust	0
Sperrin Lakeland HSS Trust	38
Ulster Community and Hospitals Group HSS Trust	114
United Hospitals Group HSS Trust	45
Total	779

[1] Health and Social Services.

Paramilitaries (Drugs Trading)

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of revenues received by *(a)* the Provisional IRA, *(b)* the official IRA, *(c)* the Irish National Liberation Army, *(d)* the Ulster Defence Association, *(e)* the Ulster Volunteer Force and *(f)* the Loyalist Volunteer Force from illegal dealing and trading in drugs in the last five years. [173480]

Mr. Pearson: The involvement of paramilitary organisations in organised crime, including trafficking and supply of drugs, has been documented by the Independent Monitoring Commission in its report of 20 April and by the Organised Crime Task Force in its "Threat Assessment and Strategy" which was published on 11 May 2004.

It is not possible, however, to estimate with any precision how much revenue paramilitary groups generate from dealing and trading in illegal drugs.

Queen's University

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many students began courses at Queen's University's Armagh campus in each year since its establishment. [173598]

Mr. Gardiner: The details of the numbers of students registered at Queens University Armagh campus each year between 1995–96 and 2203–04 is as follows:

	Credit Bearing Course	*Extra Mural Course (P/T)*
1995–96	63	n/a
1996–97	137	n/a
1997–98	219	n/a
1998–99	184	n/a
1999–2000	235	94
2000–01	227	193
2001–02	271	146
2002–03	285	28
2003–04	235	64

The credit-bearing course totals cover a range of largely part-time programmes including BA part-time, Master, diploma and certificate courses.

School Building

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what penalties will be imposed on contracts to build schools awarded through public private partnership if handover dates are not realised; and if he will make a statement. [171027]

Mr. Gardiner: The terms and conditions under which a private sector contractor delivers services to a school authority through public private partnership, are detailed in the contractual arrangements negotiated between the parties. A PPP contractor normally borrows from banks or other financial institutions in order to pay for the construction of school facilities. The penalty for a contractor failing to deliver school facilities by the target date, which is specified in the contract, is therefore the servicing of a substantial loan while receiving no payment from the school authority. A school authority could seek additional protection in the contract though this would most likely increase the project cost.

Should a delay be caused by a school authority, compensation may be payable to the contractor.

Schools Funding

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will provide *(a)* each primary school head teacher with a direct payment of £55,000 and *(b)* each secondary school head teacher with a direct payment of £180,000 to spend on school priorities in 2005–06; and if he will make a statement. [170144]

Mr. Gardiner: In his Budget Statement, the Chancellor announced allocations for English schools in 2005–06 (£55,000 for a typical primary school and £180,000 for a typical secondary school). These are not additional allocations but represent the continuation, at 2005–06 levels, of allocations being made available to English schools in 2004–05.

As in England, Northern Ireland schools benefit each year from an additional budget allocation over and above their Local Management of Schools (LMS) delegated budgets. There is on-going provision for this in my Department's baseline for 2005–06. As the 2005–06 allocations for English schools do not represent additions to planned allocations, the question of additional allocations for either English or Northern Ireland schools does not arise.

Speech Therapy

Mr. Hume: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average expenditure on speech therapy services per head of population in the primary and pre-primary school age group in each of the health trust areas in Northern Ireland was in the latest period for which figures are available. [173879]

Angela Smith: The information requested is not available.

Mr. Hume: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average waiting time for speech therapy services for children in the primary and pre-primary school age group in each of the health trust areas in Northern Ireland was in the latest period for which figures are available. [173880]

Angela Smith: Information on average waiting times for speech therapy services for children is not collected centrally.

Mr. Hume: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many primary and pre-primary school children are awaiting speech therapy services in each of the health trust areas in Northern Ireland. [173881]

Angela Smith: Information on the number of children awaiting speech therapy services is not collected centrally.

Mr. Hume: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the per capita expenditure on speech therapy services in special schools in each of the health trust areas in Northern Ireland was in the latest period for which figures are available. [173882]

Angela Smith: The information is not available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Hume: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average speech therapy provision was in terms of time per child in special schools in each of the health trust areas in Northern Ireland in the latest period for which figures are available. [173883]

Angela Smith: The information is not available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Hume: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the ability of the health trusts in Northern Ireland to recruit and retain speech therapists. [173884]

Angela Smith: In a survey of speech and language therapists conducted by the Department, at 30 September 2003 there was only one long-term vacancy. However, the Department has completed a workforce planning report on the speech and language therapy workforce and its findings indicate that there is a projected shortfall over the next five years. The Department is considering how best to deal with this shortfall, including initiatives to address recruitment and retention issues. As an interim measure, additional funding was provided to increase by 10 the number of student places for speech and language therapy with effect from the 2001/02 academic year and by a further five places from 2002/03. These increased intake levels are being maintained and there are 140 students in training during the current academic year.

Sporting Venues

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken by the Police Service for Northern Ireland to ensure that Windsor Park is maintained as a neutral sporting venue free from sectarian and racist activities. [172284]

Mr. Pearson: The primary responsibility for ensuring Windsor Park is maintained as a neutral sporting venue free from sectarian and racist activities rests with Linfield Football Club in regard to local matches and the Irish Football Association for international games. The Police Service of Northern Ireland work closely these organisations in developing a safe environment for all spectators.

Operationally, the PSNI role focuses on crime and disorder outside the ground, and on occasions the deployment of officers if crowd violence occurs.

It is pleasing to note that the atmosphere during recent international matches has been good with an absence of sectarian and racist chanting. The PSNI believe that this is, in no small part, due to the excellent work carried out by Community Relations officials attached to the Irish Football Association.

Teachers' Pay Dispute

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what advice has been given to school principals regarding their legal rights and responsibilities in relation to employees who go on strike. [173206]

Mr. Gardiner: Industrial action short of a strike commenced on 5 January by four of the five teachers' unions. At that stage Employing Authorities issued advice to schools in relation to issues likely to arise from such industrial action.

To date the teachers' unions have stopped short of strike action. Consequently the Employing Authorities have not issued advice in this regard. Should the teachers' unions give notification of their intention to commence a campaign of strike action, the Employing Authorities will, in advance of this, issue appropriate guidance to their schools.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made towards settling the teachers' pay dispute; and if he will make a statement. [173207]

Mr. Gardiner: I recently held separate meetings with the employers and union representatives. At these meetings I made it clear to both sides that the Department has the money in its budget at present to enable backdating to September 2003, providing early agreement is reached to an SDPM Scheme. This is in line with the recommendations of the Independent Inquiry

on teachers' pay and would give the 12,500 teachers who are already on the first point of the Upper Pay Scale an extra £1,062 each a year. I also stressed that movement on the Upper Pay Scale has to be accompanied by a performance management scheme, as has been the case in England and Wales since 2000.I also made it quite clear that the money is not available for backdating beyond the Inquiry's recommendations.

The teacher unions and the employers have been in talks with the Labour Relations Agency, and they are keen to reach an early and realistic resolution. At the most recent LRA meeting the teachers' unions agreed to work together with Management Side to consider and agree a School Development and Performance Management Scheme which is acceptable to both sides.

Waiting Times

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many individuals are awaiting an initial appointment with a hospital consultant. [173617]

Angela Smith: The latest available waiting list figures show the position at 31 December 2003, when there were 146,180 people awaiting a first outpatient appointment (including cancellations and deferrals) in Northern Ireland.

This information is published in the "Northern Ireland Waiting List Quarterly Information Release" on the first Thursday in March, June, September and December. A copy of this publication is placed in the House of Commons Library or can be obtained from the DHSSPS website, internet address: www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/publications/index.html

HEALTH

Drug Action Teams

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the real terms percentage change in the budget for each drug action team in England was in each year from 1996–97 to 2003–04; what the percentage change will be from 2003–04 to 2004–05; and if he will make a statement. [163883]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department does not have information centrally on individual drug action team (DAT) budgets for the time period 1996–2004.

This is the first Government to make substantial funding available for drug treatment. The pooled drug treatment budget totalled £129 million in 2001–02. In 2002–03, the total budget was £195.7 million and this increased to £243.6 million in 2003–04. This additional funding means that all DATs received a minimum increase of 30 per cent. in 2002–03, with a further average increase of 24 per cent. in 2003–04.

Drug Treatment

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in Preston are receiving drug treatment. [169695]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In 2000–01, there were a total of 2,874 people receiving drug treatment in the area covered by the drug action team for Lancashire. This is the latest available data. Data broken down by drug action team for 2001–02 and 2002–03 has not yet been finalised and published.

Source:
DH Statistics

Pregnancy/Sexual Health Statistics

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many teenage pregnancies were recorded over the past five years; and how many cases of sexually transmitted diseases were recorded in the same period. [169256]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Conceptions in women aged under 18, in England, for the years 1998 to 2002 are shown in the table:

	Conceptions
1998	41,089
1999	39,247
2000	38,699
2001	38,439
2002	39,286

Source:
Office of National Statistics

The total number of teenagers (patients who were under 20 years of age) treated for the principle sexually transmitted infections[1] in genitourinary medicine (GUM) clinics in England from 1998 to 2002 are shown in the table.

[1] Infectious syphilis, uncomplicated gonorrhoea, uncomplicated chlamydial infection, genital herpes (first attack) and genital warts (first attack).

Sex description	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Female	20,979	23,018	25,225	27,346	29,795
Male	6,530	7,768	9,116	9,694	11,026
Total	27,509	30,786	34,341	37,040	40,821

Source:
Health Protection Agency, KC60 statutory returns from GUM clinics.

Blackout Clinics/Nurses

Mr. Maples: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to make available provision for blackout *(a)* clinics and *(b)* nurses. [169269]

Miss Melanie Johnson: On 12 March 2004, the Government announced that a new national service framework chapter on arrhythmias and sudden cardiac death would be published within one year.

An expert group will be formed to take this work forward and they will consider any issues relevant to blackouts as part of their work.

Body Piercing/Tattooing

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health with what frequency inspections are carried out on body piercing and tattooing establishments; what the nature of such inspections is; and by whom they are carried out. [173810]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Local authorities inspect body piercing and tattooing businesses in relation to the hygiene and cleanliness of premises, practitioners and equipment, and health and safety at work issues. The frequency of such inspections is a matter for local determination and we do not collect information on this centrally.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what regulations are in place to prevent children aged under 16 years obtaining body piercings and tattoos without their parents' consent; and if he will make a statement. [172043]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 12 May 2004]:* There is no statutory age of consent for body piercing. Minors are able to give valid consent themselves if they are capable of understanding the nature of the act to be done. A statutory minimum age of consent for tattooing (18 years of age) is specified in the Tattooing of Minors Act 1969.

The Government have no current plans to introduce legislation to provide for a statutory age of consent for body piercing as this might lead to minors piercing themselves or each other in an unhygienic manner, or to go into disreputable businesses. We keep the position under review.

The Health and Safety Executive has produced guidelines for local authorities on the enforcement of skin piercing activities. These contain useful advice for local authorities in working with businesses to promote a reasonable approach to age of consent issues.

Care Homes

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received regarding a reduction in the number of inspections required each year by care homes. [162376]

Dr. Ladyman *[pursuant to his reply, 22 March 2004, Official Report, c. 590W]:* I regret my previous reply was incorrect, it should read as follows:

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has received one representation regarding a reduction in the number of inspections required each year by care homes.

Childhood Immunisation

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made on the inclusion of Prevenar in the UK childhood immunisation programme. [173180]

Miss Melanie Johnson: New studies have been taken forward by the Health Protection Agency for the inclusion of pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (Prevenar) into the United Kingdom childhood immunisation programme and a decision will be taken at the end of these studies. The timing is dependent on the rate of recruitment of children to these studies.

Children (Chronic Illness)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of children with chronic illness suffer from *(a)* asthma, *(b)* eczema and *(c)* respiratory conditions. [169483]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collected in the form requested. The latest hospital episode statistics for children aged 0–16 years with these conditions are shown in the table. Admissions may relate to more than one episode for the same child.

Primary Diagnosis: Asthma (ICD-10 diagnosis codes J45, J46), Eczema (L20-L30, B00.0), (Respiratory conditions (J00-J99). Age on admission 0–16 years. Count of finished admission episodes—NHS Hospitals England 2002–03

Diagnosis grouping	*Finished admission episodes*
Respiratory conditions	179,357
Of which:	
Asthma	25,166
Eczema	3,876

Notes:

Finished admission episodes

A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

Diagnosis (Primary Diagnosis)

The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (7 prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.

Ungrossed Data

Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed). *Source:*

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Children's Diet

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the percentage of school-age children who eat five portions of fruit and vegetables per day. [165577]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The latest Health Survey for England (2002) provides data on the percentage of children who eat five or more portions of fruit and vegetables a day. The tables show the percentages for each age, which for children aged five to 15 average 11 per cent. of boys and 12 per cent. of girls.

In a National Opinion Poll survey in October 2003 regarding the impact of the National School Fruit Scheme, over a quarter of parents reported that their children and families ate more fruit at home after their child's school joined the scheme; and nearly half of all parents thought the scheme has made them more aware of the importance of fruit for a healthy diet.

Percentage of children aged between five and 15 years who consume five or more portions of fruit and vegetables per day—England, 2001–02

Age	*Males*	*Females*
5	11	10
6	10	8
7	9	11
8	9	11
9	10	9
10	11	11
11	12	13
12	12	13
13	12	12
14	15	13
15	16	14
Total	11	12

Percentage of young people aged 16 to 19 years who consume five or more portions of fruit and vegetables per day

Age	Males	Females
16	13	14
17	15	16
18	13	16
19	13	18
Total	15	18

Note:
The figures are based on combined data from 2001 and 2002.
Sources:
National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) Health Survey for England 2002, the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health and the Royal Free and University College Medical School: Volume 1—The Health of Children and Young People.

Contraception

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of the reasons for the change in the number of contraceptive injections given to school-aged girls in the last five years; [171067]

(2) what protocols apply to the giving of the contraceptive injection to school-aged girls; [171068]

(3) what the primary method of contraception was of teenage girls *(a)* below the age of 16 years and *(b)* over the age of 16 years in each of the last five years; [171069]

(4) for what reasons implants were not used as the primary method of contraception for school aged girls between 1997–98 and 1999–2000; [171221]

(5) what factors influence the decision to give a contraceptive injection rather than the contraceptive pill to school-aged girls. [172311]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There has been an increase in the use of contraceptive injections administered in family planning clinics among girls aged under 16, in the last five years. There is currently very low uptake of non-user dependent methods of contraception in women of all ages. Increasing and improving access to all methods of contraception are aims of both the teenage pregnancy strategy and the sexual health and HIV strategy, to reduce rates of unintended pregnancies.

Decisions about the most suitable type of contraception are for individuals to make in consultation with health professionals. Health professionals can provide contraception to young people under 16, working within an established legal framework, provided they are satisfied that the young person is competent to fully understand the implications of any treatment and to make a choice of the treatment involved.

The data requested on methods of contraception used by teenage girls, are published in table 2 of the statistical bulletin "NHS Contraceptive Services, England: 2002–03" and in the equivalent table in earlier bulletins, available in the Library and at:

www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sb0315.htm

www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sb0220.htm

www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sb0127.htm

www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sb0027.htm

www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sb9930.htm

Note that these data are available for family planning clinics only. Data from general practitioners are not available by age.

The first and only available contraceptive implant product was withdrawn from use by the licence holder in 1998–99, before being replaced by another product which was licensed in 1999, hence low usage in women of all ages at that time.

Correspondence

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he intends to reply to the hon. Member for Southend, West's letters of *(a)* 13 October 2003 and *(b)* 26 January 2004. [164392]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 30 March 2004]:* A reply was sent to the hon. Member on 13 May.

Dentistry

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent per capita on NHS dentistry in *(a)* the Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* the North East and *(d)* England in each year since 1997; and what spending is projected for 2004. [162837]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Gross fees paid to dentists per capita on general dental service (GDS) dentistry in South Tyneside Primary Care Trust (PCT), the North-East and for England in each year since 1997 is shown in the table. Jarrow constituency is covered by South Tyneside PCT. Figures for 2002–03 are split between the previous health authorities for the first six months and the new PCT (for South Tyneside) and strategic health authorities (for the North-East) for the later six months. To ensure comparability, these are expressed as an annual rate.

Expenditure figures for 2003–04 are not yet available. Under current arrangements, local budgets are not required, or calculated, for 2004. The GDS budget for 2004–05 is a non-discretionary budget, which is held centrally, and expenditure is determined by dental activity.

Gross fees cover payments for patient registrations and treatments and exclude additional payments such as superannuation contributions. Gross fees include patient charges.

These expenditure figures do not cover expenditure in other national health service dental services; the personal dental service, community dental service and hospital dental service.

Gross fees per capita on GDS dentistry for each financial year from 1997–98

Financial year	South Tyneside[1]	North East	England
1997–98	27.64	27.21	26.12
1998–99	29.88	29.36	27.68
1999–2000	30.45	30.28	28.02
2000–01	31.74	30.83	29.07
2001–02	33.20	32.17	30.55
2002–03 (April to September)[1]	33.12	31.53	30.79
2002–03 (October to March)[1]	34.84	34.91	31.76

[1] For 1997–98 to 2002–03 (Apr to Sept.) figures cover Gateshead and South Tyneside Health Authority (HA) area. From 2002–03 the figures cover South Tyneside PCT.

[2] Between 1997–98 and 2002–03 (April to September) the North-East includes the following HAs: County Durham and Darlington, Gateshead and South Tyneside, Newcastle and North Tyneside, Northumberland, Sunderland and Tees. From 2002–03 (October to March), it includes Northumberland, Tyne and Wear Strategic Health Authority (SHA) and County Durham and Tees Valley SHA.

[3] Figures for 2002–03 are split between the previous HAs for the first six months and the new PCT (for South Tyneside) and SHAs (for the North-East) for the later six months. To ensure comparability, these are expressed as an annual rate. Figures have been expressed at an annual rate by multiplying half-year figures by two.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to increase the number of dentists offering NHS dental treatment in the Vale of York. [173031]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Selby and York Primary Care Trust is working closely with local dentists and the North and East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire Strategic Health Authority to identify opportunities for investment in local dental practices in order to improve access to national health service dentistry.

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* private dentists and *(b)* NHS dentists there are in the Easington constituency. [170117]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department does not collect information on the number of private dentists, as this is a matter for individual contractors. There were 14 national health service dentists in Easington in December 2003.

Departmental Staff

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many staff were employed in the Department to work in the communications field, and what the total expenditure on communications for the Department was, broken down by *(a)* Government Information and Communication Service staff and *(b)* other staff, broken down by (i) press officers, (ii) special advisers and (iii) others, in (A) 1994–95, (B) 1996–97, (C) 1997–98 and (D) 2001–02. [168678]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of staff that were employed in the Department's communications field and what expenditure on communications for the Department broken down by Government information and communication service staff and other staff for the financial years 1994 to 2002 can be provided only at disproportionate costs.

Information on numbers and costs of press officers from 1994 to 2002 is shown in the table.

	Number	*Cost (£ million)*
1994–95	14	[1]—
1995–96	17	[1]—
1996–97	17	[1]—
1997–98	15	[2]1,062
1998–99	15	[2]1,239
1999–2000	16	[2]1,253
2000–01	19	[2]1,233
2001–02	22	[2]1,279

[1] The Department's staffing cost information for press and publicity division for 1994–97 does not separately identify the cost of the press office or individual press officers. This level of detail has only been available since 1997–98.

[2] These figure are for the total staff costs in the Departments media centre. Press officer costs cannot be identified separately.

Note:

The increased costs reflect increased/new activity.

The special advisers' code of conduct sets out the sort of work a special adviser may undertake on behalf of their Minister. This includes communications activity. Details of the costs of special advisers are issued on an annual basis.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what principles govern workplace drug abuse agreements with trade unions in his Department. [171629]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The agreed policy is part of the Department's health and safety policy statement.

The relevant section reads:

"Alcohol and drugs. Recreational drugs are not allowed on the premises. Drugs prescribed by a doctor or over the counter medication should be kept secure."

If a member of staff were found in possession of recreational drugs on the Department's premises, they would face disciplinary action as well as appropriate police action.

Diagnostic and Treatment Centres

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether there is a diagnostic and treatment centre located in Burnley. [167948]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There is no diagnosis and treatment centre located in Burnley. However a treatment centre is located in Manchester.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether there is a diagnostic and treatment centre located in Preston. [168106]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There is no diagnosis and treatment centre in Preston. However, a treatment centre is located in Ormskirk.

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether there is a diagnostic and treatment centre located in Workington constituency. [170714]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There is no diagnosis and treatment centre located in Workington.

Disability Discrimination Act

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures are in place to ensure that the NHS will be in full compliance with the relevant provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 by October. [170968]

Dr. Ladyman: National health service organisations are responsible for their own compliance with the new, and existing, provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act. The Department is, however, working in partnership with the Disability Rights Commission on a range of measures to support the NHS in assessing and improving progress on disability access. These measures include, for example, ensuring that core practical guidance is readily available to the NHS and

contributing to the development of health sector-specific guidance being produced by the Disability Rights Commission.

Drug Research Data Publication

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to give the National Institute for Clinical Excellence powers to compel pharmaceutical companies to provide unpublished drug research data. [171235]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We have no plans to do so.

Erectile Dysfunction

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 5 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1613W, on erectile dysfunction, if he will ask primary care trusts to collate information on recorded instances of erectile dysfunction, broken down by age group. [172790]

Miss Melanie Johnson: We have no plans to do so.

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 6 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1793W, on erectile dysfunction, if he will redraft Health Service Circular 1999/177 to include guidance on what constitutes severe distress for the purposes of the treatment of erectile dysfunction. [172791]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Health Service Circular (HSC) 1999/177, issued on 6 August 1999, contains guidance to general practitioners on criteria for determining whether a patient is suffering from severe distress as a result of erectile dysfunction.

We have no plans to issue further guidance.

Eye Tests (Manchester, Blackley)

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many residents in Manchester, Blackley aged over 60 years have benefited from the abolition of charges for eye tests. [172886]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data for the number of sight tests by constituency or by the number of senior citizens is not collected centrally.

In 2002–03, the total number of national health service sight tests paid for by the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority for patients aged 60 and over was 189,900. The total number eligible for a free sight test for those aged 60 and over was 493,100. Sight tests cannot be equated to the numbers of patients.

Food Additives

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what quantities of *(a)* aspartame, *(b)* monosodium glutamate and *(c)* saccharine were used in foods processed in the UK in each year since 1989; [172349]

(2) what estimate he has made of the *(a)* average daily and *(b)* annual per capita consumption of (i) aspartame, (ii) saccharine and (iii) monosodium glutamate in each year since 1989. [172363]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answers 11 May 2004]:* I am advised by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) that when additives are authorised for use maximum use levels are set to ensure the acceptable daily intake (ADI) is not exceeded. The ADI is defined as the amount of a food additive, expressed as mg/kg body weight, that can be ingested daily over a lifetime without incurring any appreciable health risk.

The ADIs for aspartame and saccharin are 40 and 5 mg per kilogram of body weight per day respectively. An 'ADI not specified' was set for monosodium glutamate reflecting the fact that glutamate is a component of animal and plant protein and represents some 20 per cent. of ingested protein of the normal diet.

Surveys of additive intake are not conducted on an annual basis, however the following intake data are available from studies conducted between 1991 and 2003.

In 1991 mean intakes of monosodium glutamate were assessed to be 600 mg per person per day and 1,300 mg per person per day for the general population and school children respectively.

In 1993 the per capita intake of aspartame, saccharin and monosodium glutamate was assessed to be:

	Per capita intake
Aspartame	19.6 mg/person/day (13 per cent. of ADI)
Saccharin	12.2 mg/person/day (8.2 per cent. of ADI)
Monosodium glutamate	264.2 mg/person/day (ADI not specified)

The mean intake of aspartame and saccharin by United Kingdom consumers was assessed in 1999 to be:

	Adult	*Children*
Aspartame	5.30 mg/kg bw/day 13 per cent. of ADI	15.91 mg/kg bw/day 40 per cent. of ADI
Saccharin	0.92 mg/kg bw/day 18 per cent. of ADI	2.56 mg/kg bw/day 51 per cent. of ADI

In May 2003, a survey by the FSA reported the intake of intense sweeteners from soft drinks by young children. The mean intake by young children was assessed to be:

	Mean intake
Aspartame	3.38 mg/kg bw/day 8 per cent. of ADI
Saccharin	1.16 mg/kg bw/day 23 per cent. of ADI

Figures are not collected on the total quantity of additives used in foods processed in the UK.

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what regulations cover the labelling of foods containing *(a)* aspartame, *(b)* monosodium glutamate and *(c)* saccharine, (i) produced in this country and (ii) imported. [172350]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* The labelling of foods containing additives, including aspartame, monosodium glutamate and saccharin, are covered in the United Kingdom by the Food Labelling

Regulations 1996. These implement the Food Labelling Directive 2000/13 EC. Foods imported into the UK and sold here would also have to comply with this legislation.

Free Eye Tests

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many senior citizens took advantage of free eye tests in the area covered by the Easington Primary Care Trust in *(a)* 2002 and *(b)* 2003. [170120]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Figures for the number of sight tests by primary care trust (PCT) are not available for the years 2002 and 2003. PCTs took over the responsibilities of health authorities in England from October 2002. Data are collected by eligibility as opposed to numbers of senior citizens.

In 2002–03 the total number of national health service sight tests paid for patients aged 60 and over in the Co. Durham and Tees Valley Strategic Health Authority (SHA) for the year 2002–03 was 92,430. The total eligible for a free sight test for those aged 60 and over was 243,770. The total number of NHS sight tests paid for by the SHA in 2002–03 was 225,350

Sight tests can not be equated to the numbers of patients.

Health Expenditure (Lancashire)

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on health in Burnley in each of the last seven years. [167958]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested. Expenditure per weighted head in the Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area, which includes the constituency of Burnley, has increased from £600.03 in 1997–98 to £1,173.57 in 2002–03 (the latest year available). This does not represent the total expenditure per head as an element of health expenditure cannot be identified by SHA area.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on health in Preston in each of the last seven years. [168100]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested. Expenditure per weighted head in the Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area, which includes the constituency of Preston, has increased from £600.03 in 1997–98 to £1,173.57 in 2002–03 (the latest year available). This does not represent the total expenditure per head as an element of health expenditure cannot be identified by SHA area.

Health Services (West Lancashire)

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses there were in West Lancashire in each of the last seven years. [171548]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* The information requested is shown in the following tables.

NHS doctors within specified organisations for West Lancashire 1997 to 2003

Number (headcount)

		1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
All Doctors		242	263	320	326	382	402	448
RW4	Mersey Care NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	59	103	136
RVT	North Sefton and West Lancashire Community NHS Trust	—	—	41	44	16	—	—
QC7	Sefton Health Authority	6	6	7	6	5	—	—
QC1	South Lancashire Health Authority	8	10	8	6	6	—	—
RJP	Southport and Formby Community Health Service NHS Trust	24	26	—	—	—	—	—
RVY	Southport and Ormskirk Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	205	211	223	225	239
REQ	Southport and Formby NHS Trust	100	115	—	—	—	—	—
RJV	West Lancashire NHS Trust	104	106	—	—	—	—	—
4AM58	West Lancashire PCG	—	—	59	59	—	—	—
5F3	West Lancashire PCT	—	—	—	—	73	74	73
Of which:								
General practitioners[1]		—	—	59	59	60	64	63
5F3	West Lancashire PCT	—	—	—	—	60	64	63
4AM58	West Lancashire PCG	—	—	59	59	—	—	—
Medical and dental staff[2]		242	263	261	267	322	338	385
RW4	Mersey Care NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	59	103	136
RVT	North Sefton and West Lancashire Community NHS Trust	—	—	—	41	44	16	—
QC7	Sefton Health Authority	6	6	7	6	5	—	—
QC1	South Lancashire Health Authority	8	10	8	6	6	—	—

NHS doctors within specified organisations for West Lancashire 1997 to 2003

Number (headcount)

		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
RJP	Southport and Formby Community Health Service NHS Trust	24	26	—	—	—	—	—
RVY	Southport and Ormskirk Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	205	211	223	225	239
REQ	Southport and Formby NHS Trust	100	115	—	—	—	—	—
RJV	West Lancashire NHS Trust	104	106	—	—	—	—	—
5F3	West Lancashire PCT	—	—	—	—	13	10	10

'—' = Zero

[1] All Practitioners (excluding retainers) include QMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs, PMS Salaried GPs, Restricted Principals, Assistants, GP Registrars, Salaried Doctors (Para 52 SFA), PMS Other, Flexible Career Scheme GPs and GP Returners.

[2] Excludes medical Hospital Practitioners and medical Clinical Assistants, most of whom are also GPs that work part-time in hospitals.

Sources:

1. Department of Health medical and dental workforce census.
2. General and personal medical services statistics.

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff in the specified organisations as at 30 September each year

Headcount

		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Total Nursing Staff		1,222	1,279	1,312	1,431	1,648	2,263	2,346
RW4	Mersey Care NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	444	1,123	1,178
RVT	North Sefton and West Lancashire Community NHS Trust	—	—	—	475	72	—	—
QC7	Sefton Health Authority	2	2	4	15	4	—	—
QC1	South Lancashire Health Authority	6	5	5	13	5	—	—
RJP	Southport and Formby Community Health Service NHS Trust	262	255	—	—	—	—	—
REQ	Southport and Formby NHS Trust	442	513	—	—	—	—	—
RVY	South and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	824	895	921	935	957
RJV	West Lancashire NHS Trust	510	504	—	—	—	—	—
4AM58	West Lancashire PCG	—	—	26	33	—	—	—
5F3	West Lancashire PCT	—	—	—	—	202	205	211
Of which:								
Practice nurses		—	—	26	33	34	36	34
4AM58	West Lancashire PCG	—	—	26	33	—	—	—
5F3	West Lancashire PCT	—	—	—	—	34	36	34
Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff		1,222	1,279	1,286	1,398	1,614	2,227	2,312
RW4	Mersey Care NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	444	1,123	1,178
RVT	North Sefton and West Lancashire Community NHS Trust	—	—	453	475	72	—	—
QC7	Sefton Health Authority	2	2	4	15	4	—	—
QC1	South Lancashire Health Authority	6	5	5	13	5	—	—
RJP	Southport and Formby Community Health Service NHS Trust	262	255	—	—	—	—	—
REQ	Southport and Formby NHS Trust	442	513	—	—	—	—	—
RVY	Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	824	895	921	935	957
RJV	West Lancashire NHS Trust	510	504	—	—	—	—	—
5F3	West Lancashire PCT	—	—	—	—	168	169	177

[1] In April 2002 Mersey Care NHS Trust incorporated staff from Ashworth Hospital, previously coded under Special Health Authorities.

[2] In September 2001 there were 524 qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff within Ashworth Hospital. Ashworth Hospital staff cannot be identified separately for earlier years.

Sources:

1. Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.
2. General and Personal medical services statistics.

Hearing-impaired Patients

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps he is taking to address the problems experienced by deaf or hard of hearing patients who miss NHS appointments due to poor communication; [170969]

(2) what plans there are to introduce *(a)* loop systems for hearing aid users and *(b)* visual displays in (i) reception areas and (ii) consulting rooms in general practitioner surgeries. [170970]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Warrington, North (Helen Jones) on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 163W.

Heart Surgery (Manchester, Blackley)

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in Manchester, Blackley awaiting heart surgery have had the option of choosing an alternative hospital for quicker treatment in the last 12 months. [172887]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally.

HIV/AIDS

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people were suffering from HIV/Aids on the latest date for which figures are available, broken down by age group. [173479]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 17 May 2004]*: The latest information on numbers of diagnosed HIV-infected individuals seen for care by the national health service, including breakdown by age, is available from the Health Protection Agency's website at http://www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/hiv_and_sti/publications/sophid2002.pdf.

Immigrant Medical Inspections

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what reports have been *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* received by his Department since 1997 on the usefulness of screening immigrants for TB by X-ray at the ports of entry; and if he will publish them. [156844]

Miss Melanie Johnson: A four-month pilot study of the medical inspection function was conducted at Heathrow airport in 1997 which tested an approach whereby immigrants who were high risk for Tuberculosis were screened by the health control unit only if they had no valid United Kingdom address; in other cases the unit simply forwarded their contact details to the districts concerned to arrange screening. The report was distributed to those involved in the study, including Hillingdon health authority. Copies have been placed in the Library.

Immunisation

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received on the availability of appropriate treatment for children with brain damage caused by immunisations. [166823]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I have not received representations on the availability of appropriate treatment for children with brain damage caused by immunisations.

Implantable Cardiac Defibrillators

Mr. Maples: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance he has given to NHS trusts on the criteria to be used in prioritising patients for implantable cardiac defibrillator procedures. [172900]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) undertook a technology appraisal and published guidance on the use of implantable cardiac defibrillators (ICD) for arrhythmias in 2000. It was circulated to all national health service trusts and it detailed which patients should be considered for the use of ICDs.

This is currently being reviewed by NICE and further guidance is expected to be published in July 2004.

A copy of the current guidance has been placed in the Library and can be found on the NICE website at: http://www.nice.org.uk/pdf/nice + defibrillator + + guidance.pdf

Medical Staff (Manchester, Blackley)

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses there were in Manchester, Blackley in each of the last seven years. [172885]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Mid-Essex Hospital Trust

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients are waiting for inpatient treatment in the Mid-Essex Hospital Trust area. [172209]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 12 May 2004]*: The information requested is shown in the table. These are the latest data available.

Number of people waiting for in-patient treatment (including day cases)

March 2004	*Number*
Total	7,331
9–11 months	0
12 plus months	0

Source:
Department of Health statistics division—KH07 returns.

Obese Children

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of children were registered as obese in *(a)* Bolton North East, *(b)* Greater Manchester and *(c)* England in the last year for which figures are available. [172599]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The available information is shown in the table. The figures are taken from the Health Survey for England for 2002, the latest year for which figures are available. No figures are available for Bolton North East or Greater Manchester.

Obesity prevalence among English children—Aged 2 to 15 with a valid Body Mass Index (BMI) measurement

	Boys	Girls	All persons
BMI status			
Obese[1]	16.0%	15.9%	16.0%
Bases	4,740	4,672	9,412

[1] Equal to or greater than 95th BMI percentile

Source:

Health Survey for England 2002

Obesity

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to reduce levels of obesity, with particular reference to young people. [171891]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 12 May 2004]:* The Government takes the issue of tackling obesity in children very seriously. Prevention is the best long-term approach, by improving diet and promoting physical activity. A variety of initiatives are in place, including the promotion of breastfeeding; reform of the welfare food scheme; action within schools, such as the food in schools programme; the 5 A DAY programme including the national school fruit scheme and action to address sugar, fat and salt levels in the diet. Significant investment is being made to transform physical education, school sport and club links over the next three years.

Strategies are being developed through the Choosing Health? Choosing a better diet and the Choosing Health? Choosing Activity consultations. Both these consultations will inform the forthcoming White Paper which will include tackling obesity in children.

Osteoporosis

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department is taking to improve services for osteoporosis patients while the National Institute for Clinical Excellence is developing guidance on osteoporosis. [172200]

Dr. Ladyman: Services to identify, treat and offer preventative advice are readily available on the national health service. Significant progress has been made in highlighting the importance of preventing the development of osteoporosis and resulting fractures.

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what *(a)* support and *(b)* resources are available to strategic health authorities to ensure implementation of (i) osteoporosis and (ii) falls strategies; [172202]

(2) what support is available to primary care trusts for establishing osteoporosis *(a)* strategies and *(b)* services. [172203]

Dr. Ladyman: A range of national actions have been taken to support the implementation of integrated falls service required by the national service framework for older people. As outlined in the framework this should include appropriate links to osteoporosis prevention, treatment and care. National support has included asking the National Institute for Clinical Excellence to develop clinical guidelines on the prevention of falls, and on osteoporosis prevention; the publication of supporting documents "How can we help older people not fall again? Implementing the Older People's NSF Falls Standard—Support for commissioning good falls services" in September 2003, including cascade training events on the use of the document; and developing and sharing practice through the National Falls Collaborative and Healthy Communities Collaborative on falls. We are continuing to work closely with and support Help the Aged's slips and trips campaign.

Mrs. Dean: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he plans to take to ensure that the National Institute for Clinical Excellence's technology appraisal on osteoporosis is implemented. [172558]

Dr. Ladyman: National health service bodies are under a statutory obligation to fund treatments recommended in National Institute for Clinical Excellence technology appraisals. We expect primary care trusts (PCTs) to meet their statutory obligations, and strategic health authorities to follow up any allegations of non-compliance. We last reminded PCTs of these obligations in guidance published in January 2003.

Dr. Naysmith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of what features are required in a fully integrated falls and osteoporosis service. [173542]

Dr. Ladyman: The national service framework for older people, published in March 2001, set out an evidence based service model detailing the essential features of an integrated falls service, this included appropriate links to osteoporosis. A copy of the publication is available in the Library.

Two evidence based supporting documents have been published: "How can we help older people not fall again? Implementing the Older People's NSF Falls Standard—Support for commissioning good falls services"; September 2003 and "Making the case for investing in falls and fractures prevention—A workbook of ideas", February 2004. Copies are available in the Library. Cascaded training of their use was offered to all local health and social care communities.

The Department asked the National Institute for Clinical Excellence to develop separate but linked clinical guidelines on the prevention of falls and the prevention of osteoporosis. These are due for publication in September 2004 and 2005 respectively.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he will answer parliamentary question, ref. 164392 tabled by the hon. Member for Southend, West. [172573]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 12 May 2004]:* I replied to the hon. Member today.

Primary Care Trusts

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance has been issued concerning the *(a)* number of and *(b)* population covered by primary care trusts. [173099]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* "The New NHS", published in 1997 set out a vision for the national health service and for primary care trusts (PCTs) as a key driver to improve health and make the NHS modern and dependable.

This was followed by two key guidance documents. The first document, issued in April 1999, "Primary Care Trusts Establishing Better Services", sought to address questions about how PCTs would be established and the principles for coverage and size. This was followed up with "Primary Care Trusts: Establishment, the preparatory period and their Function", which provided additional guidance on PCT boundaries.

Neither document specified numbers of, or population to be covered by PCTs. The function of PCTs is to meet local health care needs by making local decisions that respond to the community. PCTs were encouraged to centre around natural communities and to seek coterminosity with other bodies where appropriate. However, the overriding principle for determining a PCT boundary is a coherent and cogent focus on meeting the needs of all people living within that community.

Prostate Cancer

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made in removing regional variations in the *(a)* diagnosis and treatment and *(b)* outcomes for prostate cancer. [173086]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) 'Improving Outcomes in Urological Cancers' manual was published in September 2002. It aims to ensure that all patients have access to a uniformly high quality of care in the community or hospital no matter where they live. Cancer networks across England are currently drawing up action plans to implement the guidance. Progress in implementing the guidance will be assessed during the next round of peer review due to start later this year.

In addition, as part of the prostate cancer risk management programme (PCRMP), all general practitioners in England have been sent an evidence-based resource pack to help them counsel men worried about prostate cancer. The PCRMP is reducing geographical variation across England by: standardising guidelines for GPs; standardising information for patients; and providing explicit quality standards for prostate cancer testing.

Public Appointments (Political Affiliations)

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many appointees to the boards of *(a)* strategic health authorities and *(b)* primary care trusts have declared political activity for (i) the Labour Party, (ii) the Conservative Party, (iii) the Liberal Democrats and (iv) other political parties; and in each case what percentage this represents of the total number of appointments made; [159626]

(2) how many councillors have been appointed as *(a)* chairman and *(b)* non-executive directors of (i) strategic health authorities and (ii) primary care trusts; and how many declared a political affiliation to (A) the Labour Party, (B) the Conservative Party, (C) the Liberal Democrats and (D) other political parties; [159629]

(3) how many board members of NHS trusts have been re-appointed to their posts in each of the last five years for which records are available; of those re-appointed, how many have declared political activity for *(a)* the Labour Party, *(b)* the Conservative Party, *(c)* the Liberal Democrat Party and *(d)* other political parties; and what percentage each category constitutes of the total number of re-appointments; [159630]

(4) how many appointees to the boards of NHS trusts in each of the last five years have declared political activity for *(a)* the Labour Party, *(b)* the Conservative Party, *(c)* the Liberal Democrats and *(d)* other political parties; and in each case what percentage this represents of the total number of appointments made; [159627]

(5) how many councillors have been appointed as *(a)* chairman and *(b)* non-executive directors of NHS trusts in each of the last five years; and how many declared a political affiliation to (i) the Labour Party, (ii) the Conservative Party, (iii) the Liberal Democrats and (iv) other political parties; [159628]

(6) how many members of primary care trusts have been re-appointed to their posts; how many of those who have been re-appointed have declared political activity for *(a)* the Labour Party, *(b)* the Conservative Party, *(c)* the Liberal Democrat Party and *(d)* other political parties; and what percentage each category constitutes of the total number of re-appointments. [159631]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is shown in the tables.

Political activity of all current chair and non-executive appointments to the boards of strategic health authorities and primary care trusts

	Strategic health authorities		*Primary care trusts*	
	Number	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
None	156	76.85	1,071	64.60
Conservative	10	4.93	91	5.49
Labour	32	15.76	396	23.88
Liberal Democrat	3	1.48	71	4.28
Other	2	0.99	29	1.75
Total	203	—	1,658	—

Political activity of chair and non-executive appointments to the boards national health service trusts

	2001–02		2002–03		2003 to end of January 2004	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
None	388	70.29	419	75.22	306	73.73
Conservative	16	2.90	24	4.31	24	5.78
Labour	122	22.10	92	16.52	62	14.94
Liberal Democrat	21	3.80	15	2.69	18	4.34
Other	5	0.91	7	1.26	5	1.20
Total	552	100.00	557	100.00	415	100.00

Note:
Separate information on NHS trusts is not available for the previous two years.

Councillors appointed to the boards of national health service trusts

	2001–02		2002–03		2003–04	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Chairs						
Conservative	1	11.11	1	20.00	—	—
Labour	8	88.89	3	60.00	4	100.00
Liberal Democrat	—	—	1	20.00	—	—
Other	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	9	100.00	5	100.00	4	100.00
Non-executives						
Conservative	4	8.89	6	13.33	3	11.54
Labour	33	73.33	33	73.33	13	50.00
Liberal Democrat	8	17.78	3	6.67	6	23.08
Other	—	—	3	6.67	4	15.38
Total	45	100.00	45	100.00	26	100.00

Note:
Information for the previous two years is not available.

Political affiliation of people appointed to primary care trusts and strategic health authorities who have declared political activity as a councillor

Chairs	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003 to end of January 2004*
Conservative	—	1	—
Labour	—	7	1
Liberal Democrat	—	3	—
Other	—	—	—
Total	—	11	1

Political affiliation of people appointed to primary care trusts and strategic health authorities who have declared political activity as a councillor

Non-executives	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003 to end of January 2004*
Conservative	—	10	4
Labour	—	47	11
Liberal Democrat	—	12	—
Other	—	7	1
Total	—	76	16

Political activity of people re-appointed to national health service trusts

	2001–02		2002–03		2003 to end of January 2004	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
None	146	66.67	174	73.11	151	71.9
Conservative	2	0.91	11	4.62	9	4.29
Labour	59	26.94	44	18.49	38	18.10
Liberal Democrat	10	4.57	7	2.94	11	5.24
Other	2	0.91	2	0.84	1	0.48
Total	219	100	238	100	210	100

Note:
Information on the previous two years is not available.

Political activity of people re-appointed to the boards of primary care trusts

	2001–02		2002–03		2003 to end of January 2004	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
None	2	66.67	17	77.27	59	64.13
Conservative	—	—	1	4.55	2	2.17
Labour	1	33.33	3	13.64	24	26.09
Liberal Democrat	—	—	—	—	6	6.52
Other	—	—	1	4.55	1	1.09
Total	3	100	22	100	92	100

In November 2002, the National Health Service Appointments Commission (the body responsible for making appointments to NHS boards) instructed the Nuffield Centre at Leeds University to carry out an analysis of the candidates appointed by the Commission and their political activity. The research found that the higher number of Labour activists appointed largely reflected the higher proportion of Labour activists that applied; and did not suggest any systematic preference for one political party over another.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was paid in fees to *(a)* members of primary care trusts, *(b)* members of strategic health authorities and *(c)* board members of NHS trusts who have declared political activity for (i) the Labour Party, (ii) the Conservative Party, (iii) the Liberal Democrat Party and (iv) other political parties in each of the last five years for which records are available. [159632]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not held centrally.

Some members refuse to accept any payment, so it would not be possible to calculate the figure that trusts, primary care trusts and strategic health authorities actually pay out to their board members without going to all the individual bodies for the information. Therefore, the information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Public Bodies

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost of *(a)* the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health and *(b)* patients forums will be for each of the next three years. [171261]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The funding allocation for 2004–05 is £33.3 million and, subject to the outcomes of the review of arms length bodies, the planning assumptions for the next three years are that it should remain static.

It is the Commission's responsibility to ensure that within that settlement, forums are adequately funded to deliver their functions.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on *(a)* PHorum and *(b)* the Stakeholder Network, including their (i) remits, (ii) budget, (iii) administration budget, including payroll, (iv) number of staff and (v) capital assets. [163514]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The National Forum of Non-Governmental Public Health Organisations (NGO Forum) was established by the Department following the publication of the White Paper, 'Saving Lives: Our Healthier Nation' (1999). After a review in 2002, it was renamed the 'National NGO PHorum'.

The PHorum's remit is:

to provide Government with expertise and advice in developing, implementing and delivering its public health policies for England;

to facilitate an ongoing dialogue and discussion between the Government and the non-government sector, and

to consider the effective involvement of NGOs in action to improve health and tackle health inequalities.

It does not have a separate budget. It has no capital assets. It is managed by the Health Development Agency (HDA) from within the HDA's allocation, on behalf of the Department of Health. The HDA has one member of staff with specific responsibility for administrative work in support of the PHorum.

The Department is currently looking at the best way of relating to principal stakeholders as part of its overall change programme.

Rituximab

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the availability of Rituximab for treating rheumatoid arthritis. [173582]

Dr. Ladyman: Rituximab is not licensed in the United Kingdom for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis.

Solvent Abuse

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will meet a delegation from Re-Solv, the Society for the Prevention of Solvent and Volatile Substance Abuse. [172585]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* I am happy to accept the invitation from the hon. Member for Southend, West, to meet with members of Re-Solv, the Society for the Prevention of Solvent and Volatile Substance Misuse.

Waiting Lists/Times

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes there have been to NHS waiting list time in the last seven years for the residents of Preston. [168101]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected on a constituency basis. The information shown in the table relates to the national health service organisations serving the Preston area.

In-patient waiting lists by provider

			Patients waiting for admission by month waiting						
	Unit name	*Total*	*0–2 Not seen*	*3–5 Not seen*	*6–8 Not seen*	*9–11 Not seen*	*12–14 Not seen*	*15–17 Not seen*	*18+ Not seen*
1996–97	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	8,970	4,137	2,352	1,445	1,000	18	15	3
1996–97	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	1,857	1,079	463	249	66	0	0	—
1997–98	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	8,500	4,079	1,969	1,334	787	257	74	0
1997–98	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	2,121	1,299	537	183	102	0	0	—
1998–99	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	7,602	4,154	1,729	1,043	544	132	0	0
1998–99	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	2,051	1,126	527	248	132	17	1	—
1999–2000	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	7,025	4,110	1,701	853	359	2	0	0
1999–2000	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	1,967	1,228	453	186	90	10	0	—

In-patient waiting lists by provider

			Patients waiting for admission by month waiting						
			0–2	3–5	6–8	9–11	12–14	15–17	18+
	Unit name	Total	Not seen	Not seen	Not seen	Not seen	Not seen	Not seen	Not seen
2000–01	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	8,926	5,559	1,987	1,002	378	0	0	0
2001–02	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	8,891	5,565	2,055	995	276	0	0	0
March 2003	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	8,445	5,473	2,096	711	165	0	0	0
March 2004	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	8,275	5,527	2,123	625	0	0	0	0

Source:
Department of Health KH07

Out-patient provider waiting list data

		GP Referral to consultant waiting list in weeks	
	Name	Not seen 13 to 25	Not seen 26 plus
1996–97	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	281	19
1996–97	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	941	13
1997–98	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	761	110
1997–98	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	1,113	235
T998–99	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	1,563	443
1998–99	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	1,503	714
1999–2000	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	1,039	284
1999–2000	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	855	187
2000–01	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	1,904	287
2001–02	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	1,653	—

Date	Name	Not seen 13–17	Not seen 17–21	Not seen 21–26	Not seen 26+
March					
2003	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	819	157	0	0
2004	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	686	0	0	0

Note:
Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust was established 1 August 2002 from the acute services of Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust and Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust. For 2001 and 2002, data for both trusts was reported under Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust.
Source:
Department of Health QM08.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 19 May 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Bovine TB

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department uses the Bovigam gamma interferon test in field trials. [172529]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Bovigam test is being used in Defra's gamma-interferon field pilot.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farms in Gloucestershire are under movement restrictions due to bovine TB, broken down by constituency; what the figures were in each of the last five years; what action she proposes to take to reduce these figures; and if she will make a statement. [173693]

Mr. Bradshaw: The information requested is not available on a constituency basis. TB data is held by county or Animal Health Divisional Office level.

At 31 March 2004, 201 herds were under TB movement restrictions in Gloucestershire. The information requested for the previous five years for Gloucestershire is given in the following table.

	Herds under TB movement restrictions
1999	277
2000	330
2001[1]	180
2002[2]	394
2003[2]	474

[1] In 2001, the TB testing and control programme was largely suspended due to the foot and mouth disease (FMD) outbreak. Since testing resumed in 2002, resources have been concentrated on herds with overdue TB tests which would have had a longer period in which to contract the disease. Also the proportion of high risk herds being tested post-FMD is greater than that prior to the outbreak. As a result since 2002 the statistical data is not comparable to that of previous years.

[2] Includes restrictions imposed for other reasons, such as a TB test being overdue.

Note:

Data downloaded from the State Veterinary Service database on 13 May 2004.

This is provisional data, which is subject to change, as more data becomes available. The TB strategy is under review. We issued a consultation document 'Preparing for a new GB strategy on bovine TB' in February 2004. This constitutes the first stage in the development of a long-term strategy for TB, which applies the principles in the overarching Animal and Welfare Strategy.

The consultation also includes proposals for short-term cattle based-measures designed to restrict the geographical spread of the disease. These include such measures as pre- and post-movement testing, reviewing testing frequencies and improving the delivery of the testing and control programme.

We have carried out a number regional workshops in support of the review of the bovine TB strategy including one in Bristol on 16 April 2004, and a national workshop held in London on 12 May.

Agricultural Census

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has for the future administration of the annual June agricultural census. [166447]

Alun Michael: The annual June Agricultural and Horticultural Census is an important survey. We continue to develop it with a view to reducing the burden on both respondents and the taxpayer. Following a review with our statistical advisers, we have concluded the sample sizes can be reduced in 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2009 when we do not need to run such large surveys for EU purposes. The sample size for 2004 is being reduced from 75,000 holdings to about 50,000. While this will reduces the precision at the local levels, this will be minimised by the use of available administrative sources. Increasing numbers of farmers and growers are now completing survey forms electronically and we will be developing our electronic data collection as part of the Whole Farm Approach initiative.

Carbon Dioxide Emissions

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what target was most recently set by the Government for the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions by 2020. [171522]

Margaret Beckett: The Government have set a domestic goal to move towards a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 20 per cent. below 1990 levels by 2010, and is putting itself on a path to cut the UK's carbon dioxide emissions by some 60 per cent. by about 2050, with real progress by 2020.

A target for 2020 has not been set, however, the 2003 Energy White Paper said that by 2020, on the basis of existing policies including the full effect of our climate change programme, we would expect UK carbon dioxide emissions of some 135 millions tonnes of carbon (MtC) in 2020. To be consistent with demonstrating leadership in the international process, we expect to aim for cuts in carbon of 15–25 MtC below that by 2020.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the Government expects to achieve a 60 per cent. reduction in carbon dioxide emissions. [171523]

Margaret Beckett: In the 2003 Energy White Paper we accepted the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution's recommendation, in their June 2000 report "Energy—The Changing Climate", that the Government should adopt a strategy to put the UK on a path to reducing carbon dioxide emissions by some 60 per cent. from current levels by about 2050.

As the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution's recommendation implies, absolute precision five decades before 2050 is not possible. However, the Energy White Paper uses around 65 million tonnes of carbon (MtC) to describe the level of carbon emissions which a 60 per cent. cut would deliver by 2050.

Analysis for the Energy White Paper showed that on the basis of existing policies, including the full effect of our climate change programme, we would expect UK carbon dioxide emissions of some 135 MtC in 2020. We expect to aim for additional cuts in carbon of 15–25 MtC below that by 2020 to put us on course to reduce our carbon dioxide emissions by some 60 per cent. by about 2050.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the Government first used the term some 60 per cent. by 2050 to define the target for reducing carbon dioxide emissions. [171524]

Margaret Beckett: The Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution recommended in their June 2000 report, "Energy—The Changing Climate", that the Government should adopt a strategy to put the UK on a path to reducing carbon dioxide emissions by some 60 per cent. from current levels by about 2050.

Following analysis and public consultation, the Government accepted this recommendation and first defined it as a goal in the Energy White Paper, which was published on 24 February 2003.

Dairy Farming

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effect of decoupling on co-operative dairy farmers; and if she will make a statement. [173690]

Alun Michael: Decoupling will provide the basis for all farmers to improve the market orientation of their business and will free them from many of the bureaucratic rules associated with production linked subsidies. Decoupling has the potential to bring considerable benefits to agriculture as a whole.

The scope for dairy farmers to realise these benefits as members of co-operatives is not inherently different from those that supply milk direct to processors.

Departmental Conferences

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many conferences have been organised by her Department in the last three years for which figures are available; how much was spent on them; how many were cancelled; and what costs were incurred in respect of cancelled conferences. [160776]

Alun Michael: Conferences organised by the Communications Directorate of Defra in the last three years for which figures are available are as follows. Records of all conferences carried out by the Department are not held centrally and could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost.

Conference	£
Farm Business Recovery—July 2001, Scotch Corner	13,920
Farm Business Recovery—July 2001, Oakhampton	13,860
Farm Business Recovery—July 2001, Carlisle	14,095
Farm Business Recovery—July 2001, Darlington	14,045
Farm Business Recovery-August 2001, Carlisle	13,870
Farm Business Recovery—August 2001, Hexham	14,045
Farm Business Recovery—August 2001, Gloucester	13,860
Farm Business Recovery—August 2001, Bishop Auckland	14,045
Farm Business Recovery—August 2001, Penrith	13,870
Farm Business Recovery—August 2001, Stafford	13,860
Farm Business Recovery—August 2001, Bromsgrove	13,860
Farm Business Recovery—August 2001, Barnstable	13,860
Farm Business Recovery—August 2001, Broughtone	13,870
Farm Business Recovery—August 2001, Hereford	14,170
Farm Business Recovery—August 2001, Skipton	14,045
Farm Business Recovery—August 2001, Carlisle	13,870
Farm Business Recovery—August 2001, Penrith	13,870
Farm Business Recovery—August 2001, Gisbum	13,870
Farm Business Recovery—October 2001, Middlesborough	14,045
Waste Management Seminar—November 2001	13,131
Chemicals Stakeholder Forum—2002	4,690
Rural Revival Seminar—June 2002	1,105
SEAC Open Meeting—2002	37,255
Defra Hunting Hearing- 2002	18,143
8 Regional Events On Sustainable Food & Farming—2002	24,240
Noise Forum Conference—2002	313
Countryside Stewardship Campaign, 10th Anniversary Conference 2002	2,158
Foundation workshop—2003	78,500
Organised meetings (radio)—2003	5,000
Organised meetings (material)—2003	8,250
Organised meetings (facilitation)—2003	9,600
Organised meetings (launch)—2003	42,344
Reconvened focus groups—2003	55,000
Second tier meetings—2003	23,176
Additional costs launch meetings—2003	29,176
Flood and Coastal Management Conference—2003	1,360
E-nabling Defra Conference—2003	3,900
England Bio-Diversity Conference—2003	900
IMD Open day—2003	1,405
Better Buildings Summit—2003	26,325
Animal Health & Welfare Stakeholder Event—2003	622
Ethnic Minority Network Conference—2003	7,000
Flood Management Conference—2003	2,022
Rural Services Standard—2003	614
Darwin Lecture—2003	1,050
Growing Media Forum Seminar—2003	8,621
Science & Innovation Open Meeting—2003	8,971
Total	679,801

No conferences were cancelled.

The costs do not include the cost of Departmental staff, details of which are not recorded against each conference.

Farm Income

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research she is undertaking into the implications of the use of the milk quota and other quota arrangements as a means of access to the single farm payment. [169648]

Alun Michael: The use of milk quota to generate "historic" entitlements would tend to favour larger, more intensive, producers compared to the flat rate area based entitlements that are being adopted in England over an eight year transition period. It also increases the value of milk quota prior to decoupling. The issue was considered in the report by David Colman and David Harvey on "The Future of UK Dairy Farming", which

was commissioned by the Dairy Supply Chain Forum and we are not undertaking any further research on the matter.

Farm Medicine

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on proposals to examine the rules in relation to prescription-only farm medicines and the cost of administering them. [173878]

Mr. Bradshaw: The rules in relation to prescription-only farm medicines have been the subject of three reviews. In the UK, the Independent Review of Dispensing by Veterinary Surgeons of Prescription Only Medicines (the Marsh Report) in 2001 and the 2003 Competition Commission Inquiry into the Cost of Prescription only Medicines both recognised the benefits of retaining the UK's distribution system for veterinary medicinal products while recommending changes to its detailed operation. This was, therefore the Government's aim during negotiations on the Review of European medicines legislation.

The Review of European medicines legislation has been completed and an amending Directive 2004/28/EC was published in the Official Journal on 30 April 2004. We are now able to implement the changes agreed in the three reviews. In taking forward the provisions for veterinary POMs we expect to establish a system that will retain the key elements of the current distribution arrangements.

We will consult widely on these proposals and on their cost. Officials from the Veterinary Medicines Directorate are already carrying out informal discussions with interested organisations. We intend to carry out a formal consultation exercise, when our proposals are developed further, at the beginning of next year so as to meet the deadline for implementation of the changes to the legislation of 30 October 2005.

Glaciers

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what net change in the percentage of *(a)* area and *(b)* volume of glacier there has been in each of the last 10 years. [171510]

Mr. Morley: Yearly information on glaciers is not available as very few of them are monitored in detail. However, it is possible to infer how glacier volume is changing from measurements of sea level rise. By using values given in the "Third Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change", and estimates of sea level rise of 0.4 mm per year during the 1990s, it is estimated that glacier volume decreased by approximately 0.2 per cent. per year during the 1990s.

GM Crop Trials

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* acres and *(b)* hectares of land have been used for GM crop trials in each of the last five years for which records are available (i) as part of the Government's farm scale evaluation, (ii) for other experimental purposes and (iii) for other purposes. [173017]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* The available information is as follows.

(a) Farm-scale evaluations—approximate areas

	Area (acres)	*Area (hectares)*
2000 and 2001	2,433	985
2002	1,171	474
2003	249	101
Total	3,853	1,560

(b) Research and development trials

Accurate information is not available on the areas of research and development trials. Under the legislation the notifier is only required to give the size of the release site which is usually larger than the area used for growing GM crops. However, most of these releases are very small, in the region of 0.1–0.2 ha.

(c) National List trials—each site on average less than 0.1 ha

	Area (acres)	*Area (hectares)*
1999	3.7	1.5
2000	4.0	1.6
2001	1.2	0.5
2002	1.5	0.6
2003	<0.1	<0.1
Total	10.4	4.2

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on how many sites GM crops have been grown in the UK in the last five years for which records are available; and how many were *(a)* part of the Government's farm scale evaluation and *(b)* for other purposes. [173018]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* In the five years to the end of 2003, there were 565 releases of GM crops for research purposes. Of these 273 were used in the farm-scale evaluations on 264 sites, as nine maize sowings were on fields reused from the previous year. The remaining 292 releases were for National List trials or other research work and in many cases several different releases were located at the same site.

IACS

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the implications for farmers of the time scale for distribution of Integrated Administration and Control System forms to farm businesses this year. [173016]

Alun Michael: The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) is responsible for the distribution of Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS) forms. The RPA is aware that 1,255 applicants, 1.85 per cent. of the total number of IACS applicants, had not received their forms by 19 April. It apologises for the late arrival of these forms.

The RPA acknowledges that this will have reduced the time for some applicants to ensure forms are correctly completed and received by the RPA by the regulatory deadline of 17 May 2004. The deadline is set by EC Regulation and the RPA has no authority to change it.

As soon as the RPA became aware of concern from a small percentage of IACS applicants that they had not received their IACS forms it issued a statement on its website advising them to contact their RPA Processing Site.

The News Release that the RPA issued on 17 March announcing the 2004 IACS arrangements had already advised that any producer who had not received his form by 15 April to contact the RPA. The need to contact the RPA where IACS forms had not been received was further enforced in advertisements placed in editions of *Farmers Weekly* and *The Grower* at the end of March.

Milk

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on what dates the Dairy Supply Chain Forum met in the last year to discuss farmgate milk prices; what representations she has received regarding the price of milk received by farmers; what steps she is taking to increase the percentage that farmers receive; and if she will make a statement. [172988]

Alun Michael: The Dairy Supply Chain Forum, which is chaired by my noble Friend, the Lord Whitty, provides a framework in which all links in the dairy supply chain can come together to discuss the challenges facing the sector and develop collaborative solutions to improve the efficiency and promote the sustainable development of the sector. It does not discuss price negotiations, which are a private commercial matter between farmers and purchasers. However, the work of the Forum and its various subgroups should help address some of the underlying causes of low farmgate prices. In the last year the main Forum met on 7 July, 20 October and 28 January. In addition, its sub-groups meet frequently to take forward individual work streams.

As well as participating in the Forum and its subgroups, Defra has made a grant of £0.5 million to the Food Chain Centre to undertake a value chain analysis in the dairy sector. This will examine a number of different supply chains to find ways in which efficiency can be increased, improving the returns to all participants in those chains.

Milk Processing (Lancashire)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what powers she has to ensure that competition exists in milk processing in Lancashire. [173309]

Alun Michael: None. Responsibility for the administration of competition law rests with the competition authorities.

Over-30 Month Scheme

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will make an announcement on the ending of the over-30 month scheme. [172457]

Mr. Bradshaw: The ending of the over-30 month (OTM) scheme is linked to a change to the OTM rule. The Food Standards Agency has recommended to Ministers that the OTM rule could be replaced with a system of testing OTM animals for the food chain. UK Health Ministers are currently considering the agency's advice. Rural Affairs Ministers have decided that, for practical reasons, animals born before August 1996 will not be allowed back into the food chain.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with *(a)* her colleagues in the Department of Health and *(b)* the Food Standards Agency on the future of the over-30 month scheme. [172458]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Food Standards Agency (FSA) recommended to Health Ministers in July 2003 that the over-30 month (OTM) rule could be replaced with a system of testing. Defra Ministers and officials have been in regular contact with colleagues in both the Department of Health and the Food Standards Agency on issues arising from that recommendation.

Pedestrian Crossings (Railways)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidance she gives to local authorities on re-routing public rights of way in order to make pedestrian crossings at rail lines safer. [173084]

Alun Michael: Guidance on rail crossing orders affecting rights of way is provided in paragraph 32 and Annex C of Department of the Environment Circular 2/1993.

Sewage Sludge

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reasons sludge sewage has been exempted from requiring a waste management licence for treatment in agriculture; and what research has been undertaken to assess the potential health risks posed by sewage sludge seeping into water supplies. [173428]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* Article 2 of the Waste Framework Directive exempts sewage sludge from waste management licensing requirements if it is used in accordance with the separate Directive on use of sludge in agriculture. This Directive, which is implemented by the Sludge (Use in Agriculture) Regulations 1989, as amended, requires sludge to be used in such a way that the quality of the surface and ground water is not impaired. In addition, there are statutory requirements to ensure that only treated water may enter the public drinking water supply, to comply with European and national standards.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research has been undertaken to assess the potential risks to health posed by the spreading of sewage sludge on agricultural fields situated close to residential homes. [173429]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* A study carried out in the USA has examined the evidence for Staphylococcus aureus (SA) in sewage sludge applied to land and whether a route existed by which populations living in proximity to sludge spreading could be infected. The result of this work was that no SA were detected in any background aerosol or sludge aerosol sample.

Proposals to amend the Sludge (Use in Agriculture) Regulations 1989, as amended, will further strengthen the controls applying to the recycling of sewage sludge in England and Wales by making statutory the water industry's voluntary ban on the use of untreated sewage sludge on agricultural land.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps have been taken to amend the Sludge (Use in Agriculture) Regulations 1989 to incorporate a safe barrier between agricultural fields treated with sewage sludge and residential homes; and if she will make a statement. [173432]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* The Sludge (Use in Agriculture) Regulations 1989, as amended, ensure that recycling sludge to agricultural land is carried out in a way that protects human and animal health and the environment. Proposed revisions to the regulations will introduce additional requirements to protect further against the entry of pathogens into the food chain. These requirements are already being followed on a voluntary basis by the water industry.

The non-statutory Code of Practice for Agriculture Use of Sewage Sludge, which is also under revision, includes recommendations on environmental protection relating to odour control and proximity to properties.

Single Farm Payments

Mr. Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact of the single farm payment scheme on farmers in *(a)* Loughborough and *(b)* Leicestershire. [174050]

Alun Michael: Farmers in Loughborough and Leicestershire, like all others, will benefit from decoupling of subsidies from production.

Defra will publish shortly an analysis of the economic impact on the English farming industry of the decoupling of CAP direct payment and the way in which the scheme will be operated in England.

Sudden Oak Death

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many instances of sudden oak death have been detected in the South East of England; and at what locations. [174193]

Mr. Bradshaw: The following table outlines the total number of instances of phytophthora ramorum in the South East of England since the first finding in April 2002.

Region/county	*Total*	*Retail and nurseries*	*Established gardens, woods and other wild planting areas*
Berkshire	4	4	—
Buckinghamshire	6	6	—
East Sussex	10	10	—
Hampshire	18	15	3
Isle of Wight	2	2	—
Kent	9	9	—
London	10	10	—
Oxfordshire	2	2	—
Surrey	32	31	1
West Sussex	33	26	7

Sugar

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will make a statement on the consultation carried out by her Department on reform of the sugar regime. [173487]

Alun Michael: We are still considering the wide range of views received and hope to produce a summary soon.

In the meantime the responses themselves are available for public inspection in the Defra library.

Swill Feeding

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of the replies received by the Department by *(a)* 26 April 2001 and *(b)* 1 May 2001 in response to the consultation document that preceded the ban on swill feeding *(a)* were against the ban, *(b)* were in favour of the ban and *(c)* expressed no preference. [166754]

Mr. Bradshaw: The answer I gave the hon. Member on 30 March, *Official Report*, column 1305W, on swill feeding incorrectly stated that we had received 357 responses. The correct number is 330. The previous response included some duplicated responses. As a result the percentage of responses supporting a ban was also incorrect in the answer of 30 March for which I apologise.

The date of receipt of the responses (other than those by e-mail) is not recorded. It is not possible therefore to give the figures with the degree of accuracy that you seek. I have, however, had the responses reviewed and recounted. Respondents replied to a consultation document that asked a series of questions. The questions were:

"(a) Should swill feeding of catering waste containing animal by-products be banned?

(b) If yes, should (i) fish and poultry animal by-products fed on-farm be included in the ban, and (ii) non-meat containing catering waste be included in the ban? [It was explained that a ban on all catering waste would include non-meat containing catering waste e.g. bread, brewers waste.]

(c) Should a three-four week transitional period apply?

(d) any other comments, including on whether or not it would be practicable to place obligations on the producers of catering waste e.g. restaurants to ensure that it is not fed to animals; and [comments] on the enclosed draft Order."

Some respondents tailored their responses to five options set out in the Regulatory Impact Assessment. Those were:

"(a) Do nothing, i.e. permit the feeding of swill under current controls.

(b) Tighten up current controls.

(c) Ban the feeding of catering waste (waste from kitchens, restaurants and some food factories) and processed poultry and fish waste as swill.

(d) Ban the feeding of catering waste and poultry as swill.

(e) Ban the feeding of swill and all catering waste (including that which does not contain meat or meat products e.g. biscuits, yoghurts, brewers grain, vegetable waste, etc)."

In view of the detailed questions asked by the consultation document it is not surprising that the replies were often equally diverse and detailed. But the responses have been re-read as objectively as possible to place them in the categories you seek.

There were 303 responses dated by the sender on or before 26 April.

Those against the ban on the swill feeding of catering waste that contains animal by-products totalled 77 (26 per cent.).

Those that were in favour of a ban on swill feeding of catering waste that contains meat or meat products totalled 105 (35 per cent.). There was an additional 35 (12 per cent) that favoured a complete ban on swill feeding of all catering waste including non-meat waste. The combined figures of these respondents total 140 (46 per cent.) in favour.

There were 31 (10 per cent) respondents where no particular preference was stated.

An additional 55 (18 per cent.) respondents were against a ban being extended to non-meat waste foods, e.g. from millers, vegetable producers, brewers, etc.

Between 27 April and 1 May there were three additional responses (one against, one in favour of a ban on swill feeding meat waste, and one no preference). One further response was received after 1 May which was against a ban.

There were also an additional 23 undated responses. 11 were against a ban, three favoured a ban on all catering waste (i.e. including non-meat waste), eight favoured a ban on swill feeding meat waste and one was against an extended ban to non-meat waste.

In total therefore, of all responses received, 208 (63 per cent.) respondees supported a ban on swill feeding of catering waste containing meat. There were 90 (27 per cent) against a ban and 32 (10 per cent) where no preference was expressed.

I believe the House can be reassured therefore that not only was there a numerical majority in favour of a ban but also that it was widely supported when account is taken of the support expressed from associations that represented large memberships (including the NFU, Tenant Farmers Association, the British Pig Association, the Royal Association of British Dairy Farmers, the National Beef Association, the National Consumer Council, the Meat and Livestock Commission and qualified support from the National Pig Association).

All the responses were placed in the library after the consultation period, which was in accordance with normal procedures, and the responses continue to be available for others to scrutinise.

Tobacco Exports

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to which countries EU-grown tobacco is exported. [173189]

Alun Michael: The main destinations for EU grown tobacco in its raw state are Russia, the United States, Egypt, Poland, Algeria, the Ukraine and Switzerland. A table showing the quantities exported to these and other important destinations is as follows:

EU 15 Exports of raw tobacco and tobacco refuse in 2002

	Tonnes
Russia	44,190
USA	18,690
Egypt	12,948
Poland	11,149
Algeria	10,710
Ukraine	9,465
Switzerland	7,178
Turkey	5,091
Romania	5,025
Japan	4,830
Singapore	3,243
Uruguay	3,139
Serbia Montenegro	2,791
Tunisia	2,772
Ivory Coast	2,408
Other destinations	45,482
Total	189,111

Source:
Eurostat Comext database 12/2002

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Miners' Compensation Scheme

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many miners have been compensated and how much has been paid in compensation under the miners' compensation scheme, broken down by constituency, listed in descending order by region. [172951]

Nigel Griffiths: I refer the hon. Member to the Department's website www.dti.gov.uk/coalhealth/ for constituency figures.

The constituencies are listed alphabetically and the information is compiled in the middle of the month and shows the figures for the end of the previous month.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many medical assessments and offers have been disputed by Raleys solicitors under the Coalminers Compensation claim for chronic pulmonary obstructive disease and vibration white

finger which have required additional expenditure outwith the costs covered by the Department under the claims handling agreement. [172984]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* None.

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether DMH *(a)* has been removed at any time and *(b)* is currently removed from the list of approved solicitors dealing with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease compensation claims. [173027]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* I can confirm that I wrote to DMH solicitors requesting they confirm that they had not double charged and, if they had, that they repay any deductions. According to the Department's records. I did not receive a reply to this correspondence and subsequently DMH were removed from the list of solicitors on the Department's website.

Combined Heat and Power

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she is taking to meet the Energy White Paper target of 10GWe of combined heat and power by 2010; and what progress has been made towards the target. [171033]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* I have been asked to reply.

The package of support for CHP is set out in the Government's Strategy for CHP to 2010, which we published on 26 April. This support will significantly help the industry. At the end of 2002, installed CHP capacity stood at 4,742MWe. More up to date data will become available when the annual Digest of UK Energy Statistics (DUKES) is published in the summer by DTI.

Company Liquidations

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether administrators who take over a company following its liquidation are subject to the same redundancy regulations as other companies. [173851]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Yes. The provisions in the Employment Rights Act 1996 apply to all redundancies. The provisions in the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 apply in all cases where there are proposals to dismiss 20 or more employees at one establishment within a 90-day period.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will take steps to ensure that employees made redundant by administrators following a company's liquidation have the same rights as those made redundant by companies. [173852]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Under the current redundancy provisions, employees have redress against an employer's failure to comply with any of the requirements by making a complaint to an employment tribunal. This applies irrespective of the solvency of the employer.

Product Safety

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 5 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1645W, on product recalls/safety, when she intends to implement the General Product Safety Directive. [173958]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* We expect to carry out a formal public consultation on the draft regulations implementing the General Product Safety Directive in the summer and to lay the regulations at the turn of the year.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 5 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1645W, on product recalls/safety, if she will place in the Library correspondence between the Government and the European Commission on the General Product Safety Directive. [173959]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* It is not the practice under exemption 2 Internal Advice and Discussion of the Code of Practice on Access to Government information to release details of correspondence between Her Majesty's Government and the European Commission.

Small Businesses (Blackpool, South)

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government has taken to help small businesses in Blackpool, South since 1997. [173063]

Nigel Griffiths: The Business Link Operator for North and West Lancashire has provided assistance to 1,647 enterprises in the Blackpool constituencies since 2001. (Statistics are not available specifically for Blackpool South). The Small Business Service was set up as an agency of the Department of Trade and Industry in April 2000. Contracts were exchanged with a national network of 45 Business Link Operators (seven in the North West) to provide Business Support to small and medium sized enterprises from April 2001. Before this date Government Support to business was provided through training and Enterprise Councils and the SBS does not have access to this data.

243 of the 1,647 companies who received assistance were pre start-ups. The type of assistance provided include IT support, Investors in People, International, and Business support.

Under the Research and Development Scheme (R&D) six companies have received offers of grant with a total value of £335,128 since 1997.

Under the Enterprise Grant Scheme (EGS) eight companies have received offers of grant with a total value of £261,950.

Small Mines Claims

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when the operational arrangements to allow full and final payments to be made in respect of the 23 February agreement on small mines claims will come into effect. [172738]

Nigel Griffiths: Agreement in principle on the accession of the small mines to the respiratory disease Claims Handling Agreement was reached on 23 February. The Department is in the process of finalising a Memorandum on Heads of Agreement with the claimants' solicitors and the small mines, and agreeing with them the necessary amendments to the dust model to enable final compensation payments to be calculated. It is hoped that the testing of the computer models will be completed and operational arrangements for the bulk of cases finalised by the end of July.

UK Trade and Investment

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the impact of UK Trade and Investment in the last financial year. [169739]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* UK Trade and Investment has played a key role in helping to deliver the Government's agenda of increasing competitiveness, innovation and prosperity for all. Details, in quantifiable terms, of what UK Trade and Investment has achieved are contained in its 2003 Autumn Performance Report, and in its latest Departmental Report. Copies of both reports are laid in the Libraries of the House.

Working Time Regulations

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of West Lancashire have benefited from a reduction of the compulsory working week to 48 hours. [171727]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations provide workers with the right to refuse to work more than 48 hours on average, if they do not want to. Numbers for West Lancashire are not available, however it has been estimated that around 300,000 workers resident in the north-west stood to benefit from the introduction of the weekly working time limits in 1998.

Work-Life Balance

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what schemes and initiatives her Department is undertaking in each constituency in Hampshire to promote a better work-life balance. [171644]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* The national Work-life Balance (WLB) campaign was launched by the Prime Minister in 2000. Using case studies, a body of research evidence, and a dedicated website the campaign seeks to demonstrate to employers and employees the case for adopting flexible working practices, and highlight the business benefits that can accrue to companies who have considered, and then implemented, alternative ways of working. The campaign has historically provided practical help in implementing Work-life Balance initiatives through the DTI Challenge Fund.

At present only one Challenge fund project, from the fifth and final round, is operating in Hampshire. New DTI arrangements to support best practice in business, and other employer organisations, are now in place. These arrangements will be the means by which work-life balance, and the DTI financial support to promote the take-up and growth of flexible working opportunities, will be delivered.

Financial assistance to implement best practice in work-life balance and flexible working (and a range of other best practice areas) will be accessible via Business Link offices. Advisers in these offices, in Hampshire and the rest of the country, will provide local points of access for this support. Further details on these arrangements are available on the DTI website at www.dti.gov.uk.

TREASURY

Aviation Tax

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the additional revenue that would be raised, assuming no change in the level of sales, if duty free concessions on alcohol, tobacco and VAT were abolished at UK airports. [171364]

John Healey: No estimate of the additional revenue that would be raised if duty free concessions on alcohol, tobacco and VAT were abolished at UK airports is available.

Climate Change Levy

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what revenue he received from the Climate Change Levy in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; and what proportion of that sum in each year was received from those companies receiving 80 per cent. discounts as part of sectoral climate change agreements. [173463]

John Healey: Table 2.1D in the ONS publication "Financial Statistics" (April 2004) shows cash receipts from the Climate Change Levy to be £829 million in 2002–03. A provisional figure for 2003–04 receipts of £831 million is also available on the ONS website.

It is not possible to determine the proportion of levy receipts the Exchequer received during 2002–03 or 2003–04 from those companies covered by negotiated climate change agreements.

Construction Industry

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the impact of the climate change levy on the construction industry. [174252]

John Healey: Climate Change Levy (CCL) revenue receipts and forecast revenues are provided for the UK as a whole and are not available by individual industry sector. The CCL is broadly revenue neutral for business as a whole. CCL revenues are recycled back to business by means of a 0.3 percentage point reduction in employers' national insurance contributions, introduced at the same time as the levy in April 2001, and by support for energy efficiency and low carbon technologies. CCL has not led to any net gain to the public finances.

Monitoring of the climate change levy takes the form of a rolling programme of research and analysis of data as they become available, encompassing all sectors of industry. It takes account of data from specific research as well as information from business organisations, individual companies, environment groups and site visits by officials.

Credit Derivatives

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the review of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 covers the regulation of credit derivatives. [173263]

Ruth Kelly: The regulatory treatment of credit derivatives does not specifically fall under the remit of the two-year review of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000. However, the FSA is participating in a review of trading book activity by the Basel Committee and the International Organisation of Securities Commission (IOSCO), including the prudential treatment of credit derivatives.

Debt Cancellation

Colin Burgon: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his policy is on the cancellation of debt in the world's poorest countries. [173930]

John Healey: The UK fully supports the cancellation of debt of the world's poorest countries through the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative. We were instrumental in securing international agreement to enhance the original Initiative in 1999, to ensure that as much debt relief as possible is granted to as many countries as possible. The UK continues to be a champion of the HIPC Initiative. We have provided commitments of £2.3 billion of debt relief to eligible countries and have pledged a total of US$474 million through multilateral institutions to support the Initiative further. The UK goes even further than is required under the Initiative, and is committed to providing 100 per cent. debt relief to eligible HIPC countries.

The HIPC Initiative is delivering real benefits to participating countries. It is providing over $70 billion of debt relief to the 27 counties that have reached Decision Point. We are committed to maintaining the momentum of the HIPC Initiative and continue to ensure that it is fully implemented. Ethiopia and Niger's exits from the Initiative in April mean that five countries have now reached Completion Point since September 2003 (Ethiopia, Guyana, Nicaragua, Niger and Senegal), bringing the total number to 13.

The HIPC Initiative is also helping increase annual social expenditures in countries receiving debt relief. Total social spending has increased by around $4 billion since 1999—equivalent to 2.7 per cent. of GDP. On average, health and education spending account for 65 per cent. of the use of HIPC debt relief.

However, debt relief alone is not sufficient. All HIPC countries will need additional aid to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This is why the UK has proposed an International Finance Facility (IFF), which could provide the much-needed substantial increase in aid—in the form of grants, concessional loans, or further debt relief—needed to attain the MDGs without threatening the long-term debt sustainability of the world's poorest countries.

European Council of Finance Ministers

Mr. Hood: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the outcome was of the ECOFIN Council held on 11 May; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including its voting record; and if he will make a statement. [173080]

Mr. Gordon Brown: I attended the ECOFIN meeting on 11 May. This was the first ECOFIN attended by the accession countries as full members of the European Union.

ECOFIN had an orientation discussion of the draft Broad Economic Policy Guidelines (BEPGs). The Council took note of the Commission's recommendations for this year's update and requested that the Economic and Financial Committee and the Economic Policy Committee take work forward so as to enable the Council to adopt a report to the European Council on the BEPGs in its meeting on 2 June.

An EPC report on Potential Output and Output gaps was adopted. Discussion noted the transitional problems of Spain, Austria and Germany in moving to an estimation method based solely on the production function.

The Council took stock of the situation regarding the adoption of the European Investment Bank's external lending mandates.

The Council adopted a Decision abrogating Decision 2002/923/EC on the existence of an excessive budget deficit in Portugal, noting that it had complied with the terms of the Recommendation adopted by the Council with a view to bringing that deficit situation to an end.

The Council took stock of progress made in negotiations on savings tax agreements. It welcomed progress made with Andorra on a savings tax agreement and the prospect of monetary agreement, and adopted a Decision on the position to be taken. I provided an update on the Crown Dependencies and Caribbean Overseas Territories. The Council reaffirmed its determination for the various savings tax

Following global compromises agreed with the European Parliament in March, political agreement was reached on two draft Directives on financial services as amended by the European Parliament—Transparency Directive and Committee Structure Directive. Formal adoption, without further discussion, will follow later in the year.

The Council took note of the presentation by the Commission of the EU's preliminary draft budget for 2005. A brief exchange of views was held. It was requested that the Permanent Representatives Committee (Coreper) examine the text and prepare a package enabling the Council to adopt the 2005 Draft Budget at the July 16th Budget ECOFIN.

The Council was briefed by the Presidency on the work by the Permanent Representatives Committee (Coreper) on the EU's financial perspective for 2007–2013, and held an exchange of views. I stated the need for a budget of 1 per cent. of ED GNI based on clear priorities: —subsidiarity, EU valued added, and budget discipline. The Presidency will prepare a report in advance of the European Council on 17 and 18 June, to provide guidance for the next phase of work.

The Council took note of the situation regarding excise duty rates on alcohol and of concerns expressed by the Swedish delegation regarding delay in the presentation by the Commission of a report on this subject. The Commission said that the report was currently being finalised and would be adopted as soon as practical within the coming weeks. The presidency concluded that all Member States would want to consider the report carefully when it was released.

ICT Training

Mr. Simon: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his budget is for staff training in information and communication technology in this financial year. [173715]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested is not readily available and would be available only at a disproportionate cost.

Lambert Review

John Austin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to implement Recommendation 6.2 of the Lambert Review of Business University collaboration; and if he will make a statement. [174184]

John Healey: The final report of the Lambert Review, an independent review of business-university collaboration, was published in December 2003 and made a series of recommendations aimed at improving the links between the UK's strong science base and the business community. The Government are strongly supportive of the analysis in the report and recognise the importance of this policy agenda.

The Government believe that Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) are well-placed to promote business-university collaboration but recognise that they need capacity and links to national programmes to do this effectively. The RDAs also have a role to play in facilitating cross-regional collaborative activity.

The Government intend to develop the main policy reforms put forward in the Lambert Review in the context of the 10-year investment framework on science and innovation. The Government's final response to the Lambert Review will be published this summer as part of this 10-year investment framework.

Museums

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to give the same VAT tax privileges to university museums as those that apply to other museums [174335]

John Healey: Under normal VAT rules, VAT incurred on goods and services relating to non-business activities cannot be recovered. Free admission of persons to premises is a non-business activity for VAT purposes, therefore museums which do not charge for admission cannot recover the VAT they incur on related purchases. These principles apply irrespective of the source of the funding used to make the purchases.

In September 2001, the Government introduced a VAT refund scheme that allows the main national museums and galleries which do not charge admission to recover VAT they incur on related purchases. This scheme is designed to remove the obstacle VAT was creating to the delivery of the Government's 1997 manifesto commitment that there should be free access to the main national museums and galleries.

As the Chancellor announced in his Budget statement this year the commitment to achieve free access has been an outstanding success. Building on that success, and in light of the Goodison Review, the Government are considering in the context of the forthcoming spending review the issue of extending the free access commitment for the main national museums and galleries, and the VAT refund scheme that has helped to deliver it, to university museums.

Overseas Aid

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much funding he has made available for overseas aid in each year since 2000. [173857]

John Healey: Since 2000 the following amounts have been made available each year by the Government for the UK's official development assistance:

UK Official Development Assistance (oda)

	£ billion
2000–01	3.0
2001–02	3.2
2002–03	3.3
2003–04	3.8

Source:
OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and Statistics on International Development 1998–99 to 2002–03.

Sport Utility Vehicles

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will examine the recent steps taken by the German states to increase the tax on sport utility vehicles to assess the potential environmental effects of similar provisions in the United Kingdom. [173144]

John Healey *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* The Government keep all taxation policy under review. Any changes to taxation policy are announced by the Chancellor in the context of his annual Budget statement.

TRANSPORT

Dibden Bay

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans the Government Office for the South East has to initiate discussions with appropriate authorities to determine the future *(a)* investment and *(b)* infrastructure needs of the Port of Southampton following the decision on Dibden Bay; and if he will make a statement. [173214]

Mr. Jamieson: It is for the Port of Southampton to determine their own future investment and infrastructure needs in discussion with the appropriate authorities, as they see fit. The Government Office for the South East would be pleased to discuss any proposals for the Port with those responsible for its development.

British Transport Police

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport from how many police stations the British Transport Police operate; and what the manning levels were at each station in each year since 1997. [171900]

Mr. McNulty: The British Transport Police (BTP) have provided the following information:

Police station profile

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
London North Area								
Paddington	27	24	21	22	26	28	42	40
Heathrow Express	0	4	5	5	4	3	3	3
Liverpool Street	35	34	34	32	36	33	41	40
Reading	20	20	20	15	14	16	12	11
Euston Road	97	89	89	87	96	87	84	72
Southend	15	15	14	12	12	15	12	12
Norwich	11	10	10	10	10	10	10	8
Ipswich	13	12	11	13	12	9	10	10
Cambridge	9	9	9	6	7	8	5	5
Milton Keynes	8	8	9	8	5	10	10	7
Stratford	19	19	17	19	19	19	20	18
Peterborough	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
London South Area								
London Bridge	22	25	24	23	22	9	14	30
Victoria	60	61	55	55	63	72	63	57
Waterloo	57	56	53	53	58	72	77	72
Brighton	15	14	12	14	12	17	19	20
Guildford	6	5	7	10	8	8	5	4
Croydon	9	9	8	10	11	13	14	12
Bournemouth	6	7	7	7	7	6	6	7
Ashford	34	33	31	30	28	30	39	37
Clapham	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	4
Southampton	20	21	20	20	18	18	19	16
Gatwick	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Croydon Tramlink	0	0	0	9	10	9	11	6
London Underground Area								
Probationers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	87
Aldgate	66	67	81	50	0	0	0	0
Baker Street	64	66	67	87	0	0	0	0
East Ham	24	24	21	0	0	0	0	0
DLR	6	6	7	8	9	10	10	8
Hammersmith	32	37	41	36	25	26	24	28
Heathrow	9	10	10	9	8	10	11	9
Finsbury Park	39	40	38	30	17	19	19	21
Wembley Park	33	32	31	26	16	20	20	16
Stockwell	32	35	32	25	18	19	17	17
West Ham	0	0	0	28	18	26	19	30
TCR	0	0	0	0	120	133	167	130
East London Line Ext.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Jubilee Line Ext.	3	3	9	14	0	0	0	0
North East Area								
Darlington	15	19	18	9	9	8	7	6
Grimsby	3	6	3	8	5	5	4	4
Hull	12	10	11	10	9	9	9	8
Leeds	32	35	42	44	44	42	44	45
Newcastle	39	31	32	27	30	30	34	35
Sheffield	14	10	12	12	13	13	12	14
York	12	14	15	15	16	12	12	12
Middlesbrough	7	0	0	7	8	8	6	6
Doncaster	19	20	21	17	17	15	15	13
Lincoln	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4

Police station profile

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
North West Area								
Manchester	50	55	57	60	60	56	62	63
Manchester Airport	4	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Preston	26	26	27	25	23	21	22	25
Carlisle	14	10	10	10	11	11	11	10
Lancaster	6	5	5	5	5	4	4	3
Liverpool	38	43	39	44	35	32	41	62
Merseyrail	35	35	38	32	37	34	26	0
Bangor	5	4	4	5	5	14	4	0
Wigan	8	11	10	10	8	9	9	10
Crewe	28	28	26	23	22	22	20	20
Scottish Area								
Glasgow	62	70	74	72	78	76	79	81
Dalmuir	5	5	5	5	5	6	4	5
Paisley	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
Kilwinning	8	8	9	9	9	9	9	9
Edinburgh	31	31	31	31	31	36	35	38
Motherwell	7	6	7	7	7	7	6	7
Aberdeen	9	9	7	7	9	8	9	8
Inverness	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Dundee	8	8	8	8	8	7	8	8
Kirkcaldy	7	6	6	7	8	7	5	5
Perth	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Falkirk	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
South West Area								
Bristol	26	24	27	33	31	27	28	—
Gloucester	4	4	5	3	5	4	3	—
Plymouth	13	13	13	12	14	13	11	—
Exeter	7	7	7	7	9	9	8	—
Truro	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	—
Cardiff	22	22	24	25	29	28	32	—
Swansea	11	12	12	15	14	14	12	—
Midland Area								
Birmingham	25	25	28	31	33	30	31	—
Birmingham Centro	9	9	8	11	8	7	7	—
Metro LRT	0	3	11	9	10	9	7	—
Wolverhampton	11	12	10	10	11	8	11	—
Shrewsbury	6	5	5	5	5	5	5	—
Leicester	13	13	9	12	13	11	12	—
Lincoln	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	—
Coventry	11	9	12	12	10	11	12	—
Peterborough	14	13	13	13	13	14	14	—
Derby	0	0	0	0	0	9	8	—
Nottingham	27	28	24	28	27	15	15	—
Western Area								
Birmingham	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	30
Birmingham Centro	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8
Metro LRT	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
Wolverhampton	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8
Shrewsbury	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6
Bangor	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Leicester	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15
Carmarthen	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Coventry	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12
Derby	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9
Nottingham	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	17
Bristol	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	27
Swindon	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Gloucester	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Plymouth	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12
Newport	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Exeter	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10
Truro	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Cardiff	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	32
Swansea	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12
Total Stations	76	77	77	78	74	75	76	79

Note:
Midland and South Western Areas were merged to form Western Area in 2003–04.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many British Transport Police officers in London are *(a)* trained and *(b)* equipped to handle major terrorist biological attacks. [171903]

Mr. McNulty: For security reasons actual numbers of trained and equipped officers cannot be revealed. However, the BTP is currently in excess of double the target number set by the Home Office for all forces regarding numbers of officers to be trained for a chemical, biological, nuclear or radiological attack both in terms of forcewide and in London.

Bus Lanes

Jane Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will issue regulations to allow camera enforcement of bus lanes outside London; and if he will make a statement. [173803]

Mr. McNulty: We will make the regulations as soon as possible.

Concessionary Bus Fares

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the use of concessionary bus fares for older people in England and Wales; and what plans he has for future changes. [173262]

Mr. McNulty: The National Travel Survey provides the following information on the use of concessionary bus fares for women aged 60 or over and men aged 65 or over in England and Wales.

	Take-up rate of those with scheme available [1] (Percentage)	*Trips per person per year, where main mode is bus, using concessionary fares* [2]
1991–93	58	69
1996–98	50	53
1999–2001	47	42
2002	57	61

[1] The percentage of older people taking up their entitlement to a travel pass allowing them to claim concessionary fares

[2] In the National Travel Survey, a trip is a one-way course of travel having a single main purpose.

We have no plans to change the present arrangements for concessionary travel for older people. The current statutory minimum requirement for concessionary travel in England introduced in 2001 ensures half fares for older and disabled people on local buses, with no charge for the pass. From April 2003, we have extended concessionary travel schemes to men aged 60–64, bringing them into line with women of the same age. Local authorities may make more generous provision, including free travel, at their discretion.

Driving Standards Agency (Conferences)

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many conferences for attendees other than Driving Standards Agency employees the DSA has organised each year since 1997; and how much each conference cost. [174166]

Mr. Jamieson: Since 1997, the Driving Standards Agency has organised three conferences for external audiences:

	Conference title and venue	*Cost (£)*
1998	Safe driving for life—Birmingham	24,000
1999	Safe driving for life—Birmingham	32,500
2003	CIECA(Commission Internationale des Examens de Conduite Automobile)—Edinburgh	57,600

Light Rail

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what assessment his Department has made of the National Audit Office report, "Improving Public Transport in England through Light Rail"; [173915]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of its *(a)* bidding process for and *(b)* evaluation of light rail proposals since publication of the National Audit Office report, "Improving Public Transport in England through Light Rail." [173916]

Mr. McNulty: The Department is currently considering the findings of the report published on 23 April, including those conclusions relating to the bidding process and the evaluation of light rail projects.

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions his Department has had with organisations representing the disabled about the inclusion of access criteria in the assessment of the Blackpool light rail bid. [173917]

Mr. McNulty: The impact on accessibility is one of Department's criteria used for assessing the value for money of all transport projects. The Department has no direct discussion with organisations representing the disabled regarding accessibility issues on the Blackpool tramway; this would be for the promoters when developing their bid.

Light Rapid Transit

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how much central Government investment was promised by his Department when funding approval was first given to the South Hampshire Rapid Transit scheme; and what subsequent change in funding has been agreed by his Department; [171958]

(2) how much central Government investment was promised by his Department when funding approval was first given to the Leeds Supertram; and what subsequent change in funding has been agreed by his Department; [171959]

(3) how much central Government investment was promised by his Department when funding approval was first given to the Liverpool Merseytram; and what subsequent change in funding has been agreed by his Department. [171960]

Mr. McNulty: In March 2001 the Department agreed to contribute up to £170 million (in present value) towards the South Hampshire Rapid Transit scheme and up to £355 million (in present value) towards Leeds Supertram. In December 2002 the Department provisionally agreed to contribute a maximum of £165 million towards Merseytram Line 1 subject to all the necessary statutory powers being obtained. In all cases, final funding is dependent on the scheme still offering value for money against the Department's appraisal criteria to ensure value for money. No change in funding has been agreed.

Radioactive Materials

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department is taking to minimise the movement of radioactive material. [173477]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* We are not aware of any shipments of radioactive materials having taken place without a justifiable reason.

In the UK and worldwide the overwhelming majority of radioactive material movements are associated with medical care. These materials often have a very short shelf life, and may be delivered in response to individual patient needs. Other requirements, such as the need for secure storage, also influence the number of shipments of radioactive material.

Rail and Bus Services

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what assessment he has made of the socio-economic make up of rail users *(a)* outside London, *(b)* in London and *(c)* in the South East; [173468]

(2) what assessment he has made of the socio-economic breakdown of bus users outside London. [173724]

Mr. McNulty: The National Travel Survey provides the information for people aged 16 and over in Great Britain for the period 1998–2000, according to their area of residence.

The table shows the percentage of users in each socio-economic group.

Percentage

Socio-economic group (SEG)	*All persons aged 16 and over*	*Rail users* [1]			*Bus users* [2]
		Outside London	*London*	*South East*	*Outside London*
Professional/managerial	14	21	24	25	8
Intermediate non-manual	10	14	16	14	8
Junior non-manual	12	14	14	17	13
Skilled manual	12	8	9	7	8
Other manual/other SEGs	14	13	9	11	17
Retired	26	19	16	18	30
Other economically inactive	12	11	14	8	15
All persons	100	100	100	100	100

[1] Use surface rail more than twice a year (31 per cent. of all persons aged 16 and over).
[2] Use a local bus more than twice a year (47 per cent. of all persons aged 16 and over).

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress has been made towards the targets for bus services agreed between his Department and the Confederation for Passenger Transport announced on 30 April 2002 *(a)* in London and *(b)* outside London; and what further action he proposes to take to ensure that those targets are achieved. [173469]

Mr. McNulty: Progress towards the four bus service targets agreed between the Department and the Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT) in 2002 is monitored regularly through surveys.

With regard to reliability, the results for the quarter year October to December 2003 showed that 98.5 per cent. of scheduled local bus mileage was operated in England, using seasonally adjusted data. The figure for London was 97.5 per cent. and that for the rest of England 98.8 per cent. In the baseline year, 2000–01, 98.2 per cent. of scheduled local bus mileage was operated. The target is for operators to run 99.5 per cent. of all scheduled mileage.

On bus fleet age, the most recent results from CPT for the age of their members' full size bus fleet showed an average age of 7.5 years at 1 July 2002. The target is to maintain an average fleet age of no more than eight years. Data for 1 July 2003 should be available shortly. Separate figures for London as compared to the rest of the country are not available.

On accessibility, results from the Department's annual survey of bus operators showed that, at 31 March 2003, 29.3 per cent. of full size buses in Great Britain were of low floor design, allowing wheelchair access. This has increased from 22.0 per cent. at 31 March 2001. The target is for half of all full size buses to be wheelchair accessible by 2010. A separate survey undertaken by Transport for London showed that 82 per cent. of the capital's full sized bus fleet is fully accessible.

Survey results for the quarter year October to December 2003 showed that bus passenger satisfaction with information at bus stops was rated at 66 out of 100, for England, using seasonally adjusted data. This is up from 61 in 2000–01 and 63 in 2002–03. The figure for London was 73 out of 100 as against 60 out of 100 for the rest of England. The target is to improve the rating year on year.

The Government and the CPT remain committed to achieving these targets, underlining the good working relationship that we have with the bus industry, as well as demonstrating the industry's continuing commitment to delivering improved services.

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much capital expenditure has been invested by local authorities on measures designed to improve the quality and reliability of bus services outside London in the last five years for which data is available. [173723]

Mr. McNulty: We do not hold figures for local authority transport capital expenditure broken down by mode for the years preceding the introduction of the local transport plan system.

In the first two years of the LTP programme (2001–02 and 2002–03) local authorities informed us that they spent £97 million and £165 million respectively on bus infrastructure schemes, including major schemes. They forecast further spend of £233 million in 2003–04.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many hourly bus services were operating in rural areas in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [173729]

Mr. McNulty: Information is not available in the form requested. The Department collects information each year on the number of rural bus services it supports through rural bus subsidy grant but the survey does not measure the frequency of services.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which train operating companies are run on *(a)* management contracts and *(b)* a cost plus basis; and when each contract began. [171212]

Mr. McNulty: Virgin West Coast, Virgin Cross Country, First North Western and Arriva Trains Northern are operating on management contracts. The new arrangements came into place in July 2002 for the Virgin franchises, March 2001 for First North Western, and February 2001 for Arriva Trains Northern. Of these, only First North Western is on a cost plus basis. The others are operated on the basis of annual budgets (so the operator is at risk within the year).

Railways

Albert Owen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will ask Network Rail to launch an urgent inquiry into track quality between Holyhead and Chester. [174069]

Mr. McNulty: This is an operational matter for Network Rail. However, Network Rail advises me that it is already undertaking a comprehensive programme to manage and monitor the track quality in this area and, at the same time, is investing to upgrade the track.

Rural Buses

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much of the £263 million cited in paragraph 5.14 on page 52 of his Department's Annual Report 2004 comes through the Rural Bus Subsidy Grant and Rural and Urban Bus Challenge. [174167]

Mr. McNulty: In 2002–03, this Department paid a total of £74.7 million to local authorities under its three bus grant schemes. This consisted of £47.3 million under the Rural Bus Subsidy Grant, £18.2 million under the Rural Bus Challenge and £9.2 million under the Urban Bus Challenge.

Speed Cameras

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans there are to increase the number of speed cameras in the Humberside area. [171774]

Dr. Howells: Approval has been given to the request by the Humberside Safety Camera Partnership to place four additional fixed camera sites and 13 additional mobile camera sites in the 2004–05 financial year.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will estimate the *(a)* installation costs and *(b)* annual maintenance and running costs of a speed camera. [171894]

Mr. Jamieson: The estimated cost of installing a camera site is around £7,000. The estimated cost of a speed or traffic light enforcement camera, which may be used at a site continuously or from time to time, is around £38,000.

Average running costs are estimated at around £5,000 per annum per camera site.

Transport Direct

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress has been made towards delivering the targets relating to Transport Direct set out in the 10- year plan; and when he expects remaining components to be operational. [170867]

Dr. Howells: Transport Direct has overseen the implementation of 19 local authority schemes, which have resulted in approximately 40 per cent. of the English bus fleet having real-time capability. Also, real-time operating information for the whole rail network has been put in place.

The development of the internet portal was completed in November 2003. The portal will allow the user to plan multi-modal journeys, book long-distance tickets and consult internet maps. It will be first available to the public in summer 2004, as opposed to the 10-year plan target of 2003.

The portal is currently integrated with 12 remote journey planners, three retailers and several real-time travel information providers. The prime cause of delay in launching the portal has been the need to fully integrate all these services with the portal and to test the resultant outputs.

HEALTH

Abortion

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the cost was of performing abortions in NHS hospitals in each of the last three years for which figures are available; [165975]

(2) how many abortions have been performed under the Abortion Act 1967; and how many were performed to save the life of the mother. [165976]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The number of abortions performed in England and Wales on residents of England and Wales in the years 1968 to 2002 was 4.73 million. Of these 39,757 were performed under Sections 1(1)*(c)* and 1(4) of the Abortion Act 1967. These are cases where the continuance of the pregnancy would involve risk to the life of the pregnant woman, greater than if the pregnancy were terminated, or where the termination is immediately necessary to save the life or to prevent grave permanent injury to the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman.

The cost of performing abortions in national health service hospitals in England was £32.7 million in 2000–01, £35.7 million in 2001–02 and £38.2 million in 2002–03.

Agency Fees

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 26 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1127W, on agency fees, what definition has been used of non-NHS staff. [172813]

Mr. Hutton: The figures for non-national health service staff include all expenditure on agency staff and any other temporary staff not directly employed by NHS trusts, primary care trusts and strategic health authorities. Separate information on agency staff is not collected.

Allied Health Professions

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many *(a)* consultants and *(b)* clinical specialists he estimates will be appointed within the allied health professions in the next (i) 12 months and (ii) 12 to 24 months; [173722]

(2) if he will make a statement on progress towards meeting targets for the number of consultants within the allied health professions; [173725]

(3) how many *(a)* clinical specialists and *(b)* consultants there are within the allied health professions. [173733]

Mr. Hutton: Information on numbers of clinical specialists in the allied health professions in England is not collected centrally. The Department's non-medical workforce census records that there were 20 allied health professions consultants in England on 30 September 2003. In neither case have we made estimates of numbers for future periods.

Ambulances (Speeding)

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many ambulance drivers have been recorded as speeding by speed cameras while answering 999 calls in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002 and *(c)* 2003; what the total cost has been to ambulance trusts; and if he will make a statement. [173021]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* The information requested is not collected centrally.

However, the Department is aware that speeding tickets issued to ambulances on emergency journeys are creating extra administration costs in some areas. Officials have already had useful discussions with the Home Office and are working closely with them to provide a solution.

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received in respect of ambulance drivers recorded as speeding by speed cameras when answering 999 calls; and if he will make a statement. [173022]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* The Department is aware that speeding tickets issued to ambulances on emergency journeys are creating extra administration costs in some areas. Officials have already had useful discussions with the Home Office and are working closely with them to provide a solution.

The issue of speeding tickets has been raised with the Department in a Lord's starred question, in questions from hon. and right hon. Members and by the Ambulance Service Association.

Barbecued Food

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many food poisoning incidents relating to barbecued food were recorded in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [172702]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Health Protection Agency receives reports of outbreaks of infectious intestinal disease (IID) in England and Wales. A summary of the outbreaks from 1997 to 2003 that were reported as being associated with barbecues or with barbecued food is shown in the table.

However, outbreaks account for only a small proportion of laboratory-confirmed cases of IID (probably around 5 per cent.). The majority of cases are sporadic and in such cases, it is usually impossible to determine the source of infection. Laboratory confirmed cases of IID themselves represent only a fraction of all cases.

Foodborne outbreaks of infectious intestinal disease (IID) associated with barbecues: 1997 to 2003[1]

	Pathogen	Location	Number ill	Month of onset	Comment
1997	*Salmonella* Virchow PT8	Restaurant	3	April	Chicken (BBQ)
1998	*Escherichia coli* 0157	School	2	May	Sausages at BBQ
2000	Campylobacter	BBQ at Residential institution	21	May	BBQ held for residents and staff
2001	*Salmonella* Enteritidis PT6	BBQ at Private House	22	Sept	Tiramisu

[1] Provisional for 2003.

Note:

There were no outbreaks of IID associated with barbecues in 1999, 2002 and 2003.

Source:

Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre, Gastrointestinal Diseases Department, Health Protection Agency.

Barnet and Chase Farm NHS Trust

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will provide key statistical performance indicators for Barnet and Chase Farm NHS Trust, disaggregated between Barnet and Chase Farm hospitals, for each of the last three financial years; and if he will make a statement. [169799]

Mr. Hutton: Disaggregated statistical information on performance indicators used to calculate star ratings for national health service trusts are not held centrally.

Statistical information on the trusts' results are available on the star ratings website which is http://www.chi.nhs.uk/Ratings/Reports/SummaryReportCore.asp?TrustCode=RVL

Cancelled Operations

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many operations have been cancelled for non-clinical reasons in each strategic health authority in England in each year since 1997. [172823]

Mr. Hutton: Quarterly data for England are collected on the number of operations cancelled by the hospital for non-clinical reasons at the last minute (for example, on the day patients are due to arrive, or after arrival in hospital, or on the day of their operation), and the number of patients not admitted within 28 days of a "last minute" cancellation as part of the NHS Plan cancelled operations guarantee.

Cancelled operations data by national health service trust and by strategic health authority are available in the Library and on the Department's website at http://www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity.

Dentistry

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of the population in each primary care trust in London is registered with an NHS dentist. [172798]

Mr. Hutton: At 31 March, 2.9 million people were registered with a general dental service (GDS) dentist in London, representing, 40.7 per cent. of the population. The information in the table shows the percentage of population registered with a dentist in each primary care trust area in London at 31 March.

Registrations are recorded in the dentist's primary care trust (PCT) area. Patients attending a dentist in their home PCT area are recorded in the PCT area of their dentist. Registration rates for individual PCTs can be significantly affected by some patients receiving dental treatment in a different PCT area from the one in which they live.

Registrations lapse if patients do not return to their dentist within 15 months and so the registration figures exclude patients who have not been to their GDS dentist within the past 15 months. Also excluded from the figures are patients who receive dental treatment from other national health service dental services including dental access centres.

Number of General Dental Service registration as a percentage of the population at 31 March 2004—London

Primary care trust	Registration rates
London Region	40.7
North Central London	41.3
Barnet	33.3
Enfield	40.0
Haringey	53.4
Camden	43.1
Islington	40.8
North East London	38.6
Havering	45.3
Barking and Dagenham	36.9
City and Hackney	28.0
Tower Hamlets	31.4
Newham	37.6
Redbridge and Waltham Forest[1]	44.4
North West London	43.1
Hillingdon	44.2
Hammersmith and Fulham	38.8
Ealing	44.5
Hounslow	46.5
Brent	49.5
Harrow	42.8
Kensington and Chelsea	20.6
Westminster	49.7
South East London	40.7
Bromley	34.9
Greenwich	44.8
Bexley Care Trust	42.3
Lambeth	37.1
Southwark	38.1
Lewisham	49.0
South West London	39.6
Kingston	37.5
Croydon	43.5
Wandsworth	38.2
Richmond and Twickenham	29.8
Sutton and Merton	42.6

[1] Combined rates for Redbridge and Waltham Forest.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money has been allocated to dentistry *(a)* in each year since 1997 and *(b)* for each of the next three years; and how that money has been spent. [169706]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Funding for hospital and community dental services is included in primary care trusts' (PCTs) unified budget allocations and is not identified separately; PCTs decide what level of spend is appropriate for local circumstances from their unified budget allocations.

Funding for general dental services (GDS) is currently managed on a national basis as a non-discretionary budget, and expenditure is determined by the number of patients and the treatments provided. Actual net spend since 1997–98 to 2002–03 are shown in the table.

	Expenditure (£ million)
1997–98	959
1998–99	1,022
1999–2000	1,058
2000–01	1,130
2001–02	1,202
2002–03	1,263

Expenditure figures represent the net spend on the GDS after taking account of the contribution from dental charges paid by patients. Figures from 1997–98 to 1999–2000 are cash based. Figures for 2001–02 onwards are resource based. Figures from 1998–99 include expenditure on new personal dental service (PDS) pilot schemes.

In addition to the non-discretionary expenditure shown in the table, £4 million in 2000–01 and £41 million in 2001–02 was allocated to special schemes to help dentists modernise their practices and extend access to more national health service patients.

Expenditure figures for 2003–04 are not yet available. As in previous years, the GDS budget for 2004–05 is a central non-discretionary budget and expenditure will be determined by dental activity. We have not yet made allocations for 2005–06 and 2006–07. These will be notified to Parliament in due course. However, we have already announced further supplementary investment totalling £90 million to support dentistry through to 2005–06. £59 million will support access, and strategic health authorities have been advised of their shares and are working with their primary care trusts to address access issues. £30 million is to support information technology and the balance of £1 million will support organisational development locally.

The funding has been spent in paying fees to dentists for the provision of dental services through the GDS and the PDS and includes increases in fees in line with the Doctors and Dentists Review Body recommendations, as well as the introduction of schemes such as rewarding NHS commitment. Over this period, the number of adult courses of treatment in the general dental service increased from 25.3 million in 1997–98 to 26.7 million in 2002–03, which includes 0.4 million courses in the personal dental service.

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action he is taking to recruit more NHS dentists. [170415]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We are developing a comprehensive plan to increase dental workforce capacity. The plan will address the short, medium and long term. It will include international recruitment and increases in the amount of national health service dentistry provided by United Kingdom dentists.

Diagnostic Testing

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 5 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1612W, on diagnostic testing, of what types of diagnostic testing his Department is committed to extending the provision within *(a)* general practitioner surgeries and *(b)* community pharmacies; and what costs this will incur. [172915]

Mr. Hutton: The Department is committed to improving access to diagnostic services in primary and community settings to prevent inappropriate hospital visits.

However it is the responsibility of local strategic health authorities and primary care trusts, determined by local needs, to decide which diagnostic services GP surgeries and community pharmacies might provide, and the costs incurred by such services.

Drugs Expenditure

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total expenditure on drugs in the NHS was in *(a)* England, *(b)* each NHS region and *(c)* each strategic health authority in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [169707]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Failed Appointments

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of patients failed to attend NHS appointments in *(a)* England, *(b)* each region and *(c)* each strategic health authority in each year since 1997. [172708]

Mr. Hutton: The information is shown in the tables.

England: out-patient non-attendance rates

	Number of patients who did not attend	*Percentage of patients who did not attend*
1997–98	5,629,429	11.9
1998–99	5,648,971	11.8
1999–2000	5,882,510	12.0
2000–01	5,954,819	12.0
2001–02	5,947,730	11.9
2002–03	5,885,369	11.7

NHS Executive Regions	1998–99 Number of patients who did not attend	1998–99 Percentage of patients who did not attend	1999–2000 Number of patients who did not attend	1999–2000 Percentage of patients who did not attend	2000–01 Number of patients who did not attend	2000–01 Percentage of patients who did not attend
Northern and Yorkshire	742,460	11.8	789,636	12.4	756,921	11.8
Trent	523,492	10.6	541,815	10.8	558,708	10.9
West Midlands	626,061	12.2	642,063	12.2	660,166	12.3
North West	889,697	12.4	909,187	12.4	935,436	12.5
Eastern	417,882	9.6	442,051	9.9	457,356	10.2
London	1,412,961	15.7	1,497,322	15.8	1,481,249	15.7
South East	683,884	10.0	696,046	10.1	733,824	10.4
South West	352,534	8.8	364,390	8.9	371,159	8.9

Notes:
1. Due to changes in the configuration of regions which took place between 1997–98 and 1998–99, information for 1997–98 is not available on a comparable basis.
2. The regions were abolished in 2001–02.

Strategic Health Authority	2001–02 Number of patients who did not attend	2001–02 Percentage of patients who did not attend	2002–03 Number of patients who did not attend	2002–03 Percentage of patients who did not attend
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire HA	166,963	8.5	162,214	8.2
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire HA	139,738	11.7	137,514	11.0
Essex HA	142,168	10.6	146,876	10.9
North West London HA	360,176	16.6	366,960	15.7
North Central London HA	358,724	15.7	343,41 1	15.4
North East London HA	283,504	16.4	319,770	17.4
South East London HA	356,102	18.7	339,551	17.6
South West London HA	176,100	11.9	166,796	12.5
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear HA	210,232	11.8	193,052	10.5
County Durham and Tees Valley HA	122,341	11.4	121,820	10.8
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire HA	148,395	10.6	129,973	9.8
West Yorkshire HA	280,942	12.4	281,300	12.6
Cumbria and Lancashire HA	176,390	10.4	170,853	10.5
Greater Manchester HA	420,197	12.7	428,425	12.6
Cheshire and Merseyside HA	375,061	13.0	355,203	11.9
Thames Valley HA	173,978	10.3	177,184	10.1
Hampshire and Isle of Wight HA	133,591	9.6	132,192	9.3
Kent and Medway HA	133,673	10.4	135,047	9.7
Surrey and Sussex HA	243,799	10.6	235,515	10.7
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire HA	179,432	9.1	177,541	9.2
South West Peninsula HA	110,648	8.4	111,395	8.4
Somerset and Dorset HA	73,508	7.7	76,095	7.7
South Yorkshire HA	209,614	11.9	209,162	11.6
Trent HA	223,764	10.1	212,878	9.8
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland HA	132,761	10.4	140,875	10.8
Shropshire and Staffordshire HA	118,013	9.6	117,857	9.4
Birmingham and the Black Country HA	353,362	12.3	356,482	12.2
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire HA	144,554	11.6	1 39,428	11.0

Note:
Strategic Health Authorities did not exist prior to 2001–02.

Fertility Treatment

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many licensed clinics providing fertility treatment have obtained licences for embryonic stem cell research. [173381]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Seven clinics licensed to provide fertility treatment have obtained licences for embryonic stem cell research.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the application to the Human Fertilisation Embryology Authority by Professor Alison Murdoch for a licence to create human embryonic stem cell lives using nuclear transfer and parthenogenically activated oocytes. [173434]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Embryo research in the United Kingdom can only be carried out under licence from the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA).

Consideration of the application by Professor Alison Murdoch for a licence to create human embryonic stem cell lines using nuclear transfer and parthenogenically activated oocytes is for the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority to determine under the provisions of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990.

Professor Murdoch is on the HFEA's panel of external inspectors for in-vitro fertilisation clinics. The HFEA have procedures in place to avoid using individual external inspectors in circumstances where they could have a conflict of interest.

Foundation Trusts

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* staff and *(b)* community electors each foundation trust had at the time of the election for governors; and how many electors took part in each election. [170999]

Mr. Hutton: This is a matter for the Office of the Independent Regulator of NHS Foundation Trusts. The chairman will write to the hon. Member, and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many positions were available on the board of governors for each NHS foundation trust for patients and staff; how many people stood for each position; how many positions were uncontested; and how many positions remain unfilled. [171263]

Mr. Hutton: This is a matter for the Office of the Independent Regulator of NHS Foundation Trusts. The Chairman will write to the hon. Member, and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Gamete Donation

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much money the Government intends to invest to promote gamete donation; [173379]

(2) what protocols are in place to ensure that no coercive practices are involved in the targeting of gamete donation. [173380]

Miss Melanie Johnson: We announced in January that we are to support the transition to identifiable gamete donors, subject to Parliament's approval of the regulations, by increasing public awareness of the importance of such donors. The investment that we are making in the promotion of gamete donation involves time and effort as well as the provision of funding.

We are working with a range of organisations including the Donor Conception Network, the National Gamete Donation Trust and the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) on collaborative arrangements to encourage the recruitment of identifiable donors. We will be supporting the National Gamete Donation Trust (NGDT) to make contact with fertility clinics about current recruitment arrangements and the dissemination of good practice. The NGDT will also run an improved helpline for people interested in being gamete donors on 0845 226 9193. To date we have decided to provide the NGDT with some £100,000 for this work and are currently in discussion with them about further funding for 2004–05 and 2005–06.

Raising awareness of the value and importance of identifiable gamete donors will also take place in other ways. The HFEA will, for instance, include it as part of their inspections of clinics. We will also be promoting public awareness of gamete donation with other organisations and with the media in preparation for the introduction of identifiable donors from April 2005.

The donation of sperm, eggs or embryos is entirely voluntary. The code of practice issued by the HFEA makes clear that gamete donors must be paid no more than £15 for each donation plus reasonable expenses. It also makes clear that where a person is undergoing a treatment cycle, there must be no pressure or undue influence on a patient to donate supernumerary gametes or embryos.

General Practice in England

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department has taken to act on the findings and recommendations of the Audit Commission report "A Focus on General Practice in England". [172734]

Mr. Hutton: "A Focus on General Practice in England" did not make recommendations. The findings of this baseline study of general practice undertaken during the negotiations between the NHS Confederation and the general practitioners committee of the British Medical Association for a new contract for general medical services did, however, inform those negotiations. The new contract that came into effect on 1 April will make sure that the money going into general practice matches the needs of patients, enable general practitioners to control their work load while incentivising high quality care; and the new quality and outcomes framework will ensure that all patients can benefit from the same high quality care.

General Practitioners

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioners there are per head in each primary care trust in England. [172828]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of general practitioners per 100,000 patients in each primary care trust in England, as at September 2003, has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time for NHS patients to be given a first appointment with a general practitioner was in each year from 1974 to 2003. [173634]

Mr. Hutton: These data are not collected centrally. However, available information shows that in March 2004 some 97 per cent. of the population could be seen by a general practitioner within two working days. This compares with about 75 per cent. in March 2002, which was the first year in which these data were collected.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioners there have been per head in Brent, East in each year since 1997. [172822]

Mr. Hutton: General practitioner services for people living in Brent are currently provided by Brent Primary Care Trust, part of North West London strategic health authority. Prior to 2001, these services were provided by Brent and Harrow health authority.

The table shows the number of general practitioners there have been in the Brent area since 1997.

Practitioners (excluding GP Retainers but including GP Registrars)[1] per 100,000 patients of Unrestricted Principals and Equivalents (UPEs[2] for North West London SHA and specified organisations, 1997–2003

Number (headcount)

	1997			1998		
	All practitioners (excluding GP Retainers)	*Patients of UPEs*	*Practitioners per 100,000 UPE patients*	*All practitioners (excluding GP Retainers)*	*Patients of UPEs*	*Practitioners per 100,000 UPE patients*
Q04 North West London	1,209	2,031,706	60	1,188	2,011,394	59
Of which:						
4JC46 Brent Central	—	—	—	—	—	—
4XW97 Brent North	—	—	—	—	—	—
4EF26 Brent South	—	—	—	—	—	—
5K5 Brent PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5HX Ealing PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5H1 Hammersmith and Fulham	—	—	—	—	—	—
5K6 Harrow PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5AT Hillingdon PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5HY Hounslow PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5LA Kensington and Chelsea PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5LC Westminster PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—

	1999			2000		
	All practitioners (excluding GP Retainers)	*Patients of UPEs*	*Practitioners per 100,000 UPE patients*	*All practitioners (excluding GP Retainers)*	*Patients of UPEs*	*Practitioners per 100,000 UPE patients*
Q04 North West London	1,134	1,881,696	60	1,125	2,004,915	56
Of which:						
4JC46 Brent Central	47	93,074	50	50	95,790	52
4XW97 Brent North	65	108,692	60	64	113,029	57
4EF26 Brent South	63	79,638	79	57	98,801	58
5K5 Brent PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5HX Ealing PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5H1 Hammersmith and Fulham	—	—	—	—	—	—
5K6 Harrow PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5AT Hillingdon PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5HY Hounslow PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5LA Kensington and Chelsea PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
5LC Westminster PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—

	2001			2002		
	All practitioners (excluding GP Retainers)	*Patients of UPEs*	*Practitioners per 100,000 UPE patients*	*All practitioners (excluding GP Retainers)*	*Patients of UPEs*	*Practitioners per 100,000 UPE patients*
Q04 North West London	—	—	—	—	—	—
Of which:						
4JC46 Brent Central	—	—	—	—	—	—
4XW97 Brent North	—	—	—	—	—	—
4EF26 Brent South	—	—	—	—	—	—
5K5 Brent PCT	184	320,649	57	197	347,890	57
5HX Ealing PCT	198	360,064	55	195	352,583	55
5H1 Hammersmith and Fulham	105	180,949	58	106	186,741	57
5K6 Harrow PCT	142	259,168	55	121	221,675	55
5AT Hillingdon PCT	138	254,204	54	137	253,087	54
5HY Hounslow PCT	123	240,173	51	118	248,171	48
5LA Kensington and Chelsea PCT	124	178,455	69	132	189,307	70
5LC Westminster PCT	136	232,816	58	133	241,265	55

	2003		
	All practitioners (excluding GP Retainers)	*Patients of UPEs*	*Practitioners per 100,000 UPE patients*
Q04 North West London	—	—	—
Of which:			
4JC46 Brent Central	—	—	—
4XW97 Brent North	—	—	—
4EF26 Brent South	—	—	—
5K5 Brent PCT	205	344,059	60
5HX Ealing PCT	194	355,535	55
5H1 Hammersmith and Fulham	96	183,361	52
5K6 Harrow PCT	146	223,947	65
5AT Hillingdon PCT	139	256,188	54
5HY Hounslow PCT	133	240,698	55
5LA Kensington and Chelsea PCT	120	165,860	72
5LC Westminster PCT	143	202,609	71

[1] All Practitioners (excluding GP Retainers) include GMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs, PMS Salaried GPs, Restricted Principals, Assistants, GP Registrars, Salaried Doctors (Para 52 SFA). PMS Other, GP Retainers. Flexible Career Scheme GPs and GP Returners

[2] UPEs include GMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs and PMS Salaried GPs.

Note:
Data as at 1 October 1997–99, 30 September 2000–03
Source:
Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics

All practitioners (excluding GP Retainers)[1] per 100,000 patients of Unrestricted Principals and Equivalents (UPEs)[2] for Brent and Harrow HA: 1997–2003

Brent and Harrow HA	*Number (headcount)*
1997	
All practitioners (excluding GP Retainers)	324
Patients of UPEs	554,018
Practitioners per 100,000 UPE patients	58
1998	
All practitioners (excluding GP Retainers)	333
Patients of UPEs	561,395
Practitioners per 100,000 UPE patients	59
1999	
All practitioners (excluding GP Retainers)	311
Patients of UPEs	516,923
Practitioners per 100,000 UPE patients	60
2000	
All practitioners (excluding GP Retainers)	306
Patients of UPEs	560,206
Practitioners per 100,000 UPE patients	55
2001	
All practitioners (excluding GP Retainers)	326
Patients of UPEs	579,817
Practitioners per 100,000 UPE patients	56

[1] All Practitioners (excluding GP Retainers) include GMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs, PMS Salaried GPs, Restricted Principals, Assistants, GP Registrars, Salaried Doctors (Para 52 SFA). PMS Other. GP Retainers. Flexible Career Scheme GPs and GP Returners
[2] UPEs include GMS Unrestricted Principals. PMS Contracted GPs and PMS Salaried GPs.
Note:
Data as at 1 October 1997–99
Source:
Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics

Waiting Times

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of women in South Ribble with suspected breast cancer saw a specialist within two weeks in each of the last five years. [171668]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected on a constituency basis. The information shown in the table relates to the national health service organisations serving the South Ribble area.

Waiting times for 1st consultant out-patient appointment for suspected breast cancer following urgent GP referral

	NHS Trust	*Seen within 2 weeks Percentage*	*Number*
1999–2000	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	94.5	52
2000–01	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	100.0	169
2001–02	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	100.0	240
2002–03	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	238
2003–04	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	279

Note:
Lancashire Teaching Hospitals was established on 1 August 2002 following a merger of the Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust and Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust.
Source:
DH form QMCW.

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of women in Workington constituency with suspected breast cancer saw a specialist within two weeks in each of the last five years. [170717]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected on a constituency basis. The information shown in the table relates to the national health service organisations serving the Preston area.

Waiting times for first consultant out-patient appointment for suspected breast cancer following urgent GP referral

		Seen within 2 weeks Percentage	*Number*
1999–2000	Carlisle Hospitals NHS Trust	92.9	236
2000–01	West Cumbria Health Care NHS Trust	—	—
2000–01	Carlisle Hospitals NHS Trust	83.3	244
2001–02	North Cumbria Acute NHS Trust	94.7	570
2002–03	North Cumbria Acute NHS Trust	89.0	699
2003–04	North Cumbria Acute NHS Trust	95.0	755

Note:
West Cumbria Health Care NHS Trust and Carlisle Hospitals NHS Trust merged to form North Cumbria Acute NHS Trust in April 2001.
Source:
Department of Health form QMCW.

Health Therapists

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* occupational therapists, *(b)* physiotherapists and *(c)* speech and language therapists were employed in the NHS in each (i) NHS region and (ii) strategic health authority in each of the last two years. [172705]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the table.

NHS Hospital and Community Health Services: Qualified occupational therapists, physiotherapists and speech and language therapists employed in the NHS in each Government office region and strategic health authority area in England as at 30 September in each year

Headcount

	Occupational therapists		*Physiotherapists*		*Speech and language therapists*	
	2002	*2003*	*2002*	*2003*	*2002*	*2003*
England total	14,749	15,391	16,885	17,922	5,960	6,243
A. North East						
Total	726	756	953	1,004	320	344
Q10 County Durham and Tees Valley SHA	289	283	392	412	123	135

NHS Hospital and Community Health Services: Qualified occupational therapists, physiotherapists and speech and language therapists employed in the NHS in each Government office region and strategic health authority area in England as at 30 September in each year

Headcount

	Occupational therapists		*Physiotherapists*		*Speech and language therapists*	
	2002	*2003*	*2002*	*2003*	*2002*	*2003*
Q09 Northumberland, Tyne and Wear SHA	437	473	561	592	197	209
B. North West						
Total	1,978	2,012	2,588	2,748	861	911
Q15 Cheshire and Merseyside SHA	617	602	915	942	264	274
Q13 Cumbria and Lancashire SHA	559	611	643	700	242	274
Q14 Greater Manchester SHA	802	799	1,030	1,106	355	363
D. Yorkshire and the Humber						
Total	1,577	1,587	1,917	2,050	568	596
Q11 North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire SHA	410	448	472	528	170	184
Q23 South Yorkshire SHA	475	478	600	638	158	178
Q12 West Yorkshire SHA	692	661	845	884	240	234
E. East Midlands						
Total	1,327	1,440	1,222	1,329	453	462
Q25 Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland SHA	435	471	400	439	145	145
Q24 Trent SHA	892	969	822	890	308	317
F. West Midlands						
Total	1,444	1,515	1,783	1,926	591	649
Q27 Birmingham and The Black Country SHA	597	619	734	792	283	304
Q26 Shropshire and Staffordshire SHA	418	452	540	589	137	157
Q28 West Midlands South SHA	429	444	509	545	171	188
G. East of England						
Total	1,519	1,607	1,457	1,572	554	573
Q02 Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire SHA	322	364	367	431	171	174
Q03 Essex SHA	454	460	354	373	131	136
Q01 Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire SHA	743	783	736	768	252	263
H. London						
Total	2,018	2,113	2,328	2,486	979	1,133
Q05 North Central London SHA	390	450	471	510	178	254
Q06 North East London SHA	410	399	390	421	184	179
Q04 North West London SHA	455	458	565	597	229	258
Q07 South East London SHA	416	456	491	516	219	251
Q08 South West London SHA	347	350	411	442	169	191
J. South East						
Total	2,311	2,394	2,608	2,666	998	931
Q17 Hampshire and Isle Of Wight SHA	436	478	584	625	185	190
Q18 Kent and Medway SHA	411	415	443	449	199	190
Q19 Surrey and Sussex SHA	885	898	877	885	303	265
Q16 Thames Valley SHA	579	603	704	707	311	286
K. South West						
Total	1,849	1,967	2,029	2,141	636	644
Q20 Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA	814	878	934	991	321	308
Q22 Dorset and Somerset SHA	450	463	468	506	125	137
Q21 South West Peninsula SHA	585	626	627	644	190	199

Source:
Department of Health Non-medical Workforce Census.

Healthy Eating

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the Department is taking to encourage the production and sale of healthier foods. [160697]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 11 March 2004]:* We are working closely with the food industry and other stakeholders to encourage the production and sale of healthier foods. Our 5 A DAY programme is promoting the sale of fruit and vegetables.

We are currently consulting stakeholders and the public as part of the Choosing Health? consultation through the consultation document, "Choosing Health? Choosing a Better Diet". This will enable a wide range

of stakeholders to contribute to the debate on healthier food. The Government will draw up a White Paper in the light of consultation.

Healthy Living Centres

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the impact of healthy living centres. [170417]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Healthy living centres (HLCs) have a key role to play in reducing inequalities and supporting the work of other statutory and voluntary organisations locally.

The New Opportunities Fund has commissioned the Bridge Consortium to carry out a four-year evaluation of the programme which will focus on health impact monitoring and issues of sustainability, partnership and social exclusion.

The Department has commissioned its own evaluation of the HLC programme through the Tavistock Institute against key health priorities, such as cancer and coronary heart disease prevention. The institute will be encouraged to publish its findings and the Health Development Agency will incorporate the findings into evidence and practice reviews.

Interim findings from the New Opportunities Fund's evaluation are already available on the New Opportunities Fund website at www.nof.org.uk.

Hearing-impaired Patients

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans there are to introduce deaf and disability awareness training for front-line NHS staff. [170967]

Mr. Hutton: NHSU, the organisation set up by the Department to establish a university for the national health service, is leading the development and delivery of disability equality and awareness training tools and resources as part of a wider disability learning and development strategy. An initial prototype learning programme, aimed at providing staff with a broad overview of disability awareness, will be ready for consultation in the autumn.

There are no plans for centrally funded training programmes that deal specifically with deaf awareness.

Hospital Services/Investment

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the major investments at *(a)* Diana, Princess of Wales Hospital, Grimsby and *(b)* Scunthorpe Hospital since 1997, and the value of those investments. [172338]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Major capital schemes at Northern Lincolnshire and Goole hospitals national health service trust since 1997

Year started	*Description*	*£000*
1998–99	C7 Enabling—DPOW	606
	Special Procedures & Fluoroscopy—DPOW	197
1999–2000	C Floor Ward Accommodation—DPOW	275
	CT Scanner & Building work—DPOW	422
2000–01	Maternity & Day Surgery Unit—DPOW	13,609
	Brumby—Scunthorpe	871
	Replacement Nurse Call System—DPOW	236
	New Substation & Generator—DPOW	377
	F&G Theatres Refurbishment—Scunthorpe	241
2001–02	A&E—Scunthorpe	833
	Refurbish Ward 16/17—Scunthorpe	431
	Additional Medical Beds—Scunthorpe	844
	Additional Medical Beds—DPOW	813
	Dermatology—Scunthorpe	368
	Laminar Flow—Scunthorpe	269
2002–03	Treatment Centre—Goole	2,800
	Child Development Centre—DPOW	641
	CT Scanner—Scunthorpe	505
	Pathology Modernisation	2,000
	Pathology IT	1,034
	HSDU Washers/Disinfectors—Scunthorpe	433
	Obstetric Theatre—Scunthorpe	238
	Main Electrical supply—Goole	305
2003–04	MAU—Ward 5—Scunthorpe	1,804
	Cardiology—DPOW	1,100
	Endoscopy—DPOW	1,730
Not yet started	Stroke Unit—DPOW	610
	A&E—DPOW	5,000
	Total	38,592

Notes:
DPOW—Diana Princess of Wales Hospital, Grimsby.
Scunthorpe—Scunthorpe General Hospital.
Goole—Goole and District Hospital.
Source:
Northern Lincolnshire and Goole Hospitals NHS Trust.

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients were on *(a)* in-patient waiting lists and *(b)* day case waiting lists at (i) Diana, Princess of Wales hospital and (ii) Grimsby and Scunthorpe hospital in each year since 1997. [172339]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The requested information is not available for individual hospitals. Information for the relevant national health service trusts is shown in the tables.

In-patient waiting list figures for North East Lincolnshire NHS Trust (March 1996 March 2001), Scunthorpe and Goole Hospitals NHS Trust (March 1996 to March 2001)

	North East Lincolnshire NHS Trust			*Scunthorpe and Goole Hospitals NHS Trust*			*Total*		
As at March each year	*Day*	*Ord.*	*Total*	*Day*	*Ord.*	*Total*	*Day*	*Ord.*	*Total*
1996	1,300	2,328	3,628	2,366	1,389	3,755	3,666	3,717	7,383
1997	2,121	3,580	5,701	3,253	2,210	5,463	5,374	5,790	11,164
1998	2,674	4,155	6,829	3,921	2,012	5,933	6,595	6,167	12,762
1999	1,995	3,263	5,258	3,100	1,450	4,550	5,095	4,713	9,808
2000	2,737	2,137	4,874	3,281	1,019	4,300	6,018	3,156	9,174
2001	2,430	2,008	4,438	2,646	905	3,551	5,076	2,913	7,989

In-patient waiting list figures for Northern Lincolnshire and Goole Hospitals NHS Trust (March 2002 to March 2004)

As at March each year	Northern Lincolnshire and Goole Hospitals NHS Trust			Total		
	Day	Ord.	Total	Day	Ord.	Total
2002	5,606	2,377	7,983	5,606	2,377	7,983
2003	5,078	2,250	7,328	5,078	2,250	7,328
2004	1,967	4,669	6,636	1,967	4,669	6,636

Source:
Department of Health KH07.

Hospitals (Internet Access)

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the hospitals which *(a)* have and *(b)* do not have access to broadband-enabled internet, broken down by (i) London boroughs, (ii) metropolitan boroughs, (iii) shire districts, (iv) unitary authorities, (v) shire counties and (vi) other local authorities; and if he will make a statement on the benefits of broadband connectivity to (A) patients and (B) hospital staff. [173097]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* All acute trusts in England have broadband connections to the national health service national network. Information about the type of local authority organisation within which the trust is based is not collected.

A major part of the infrastructure programme is the implementation of the NHS national broadband network. This will provide the NHS with world class networking services, including secure broadband connectivity, for the future. The substantially enhanced bandwidth, intelligent network services and new network technologies will meet increasing demand and offer a range of new opportunities. It will enhance services and allow for the further development of remote centres, with increased access to specialist support.

The broadband network will provide access to the patient record in the various care locations, support on-site procedures and allow consistent access to knowledge for all clinicians. Care will be provided using telemedicine and telecare techniques in a wide range of locations, for example, minor injuries units, enhanced general practices and diagnostic and treatment centres. This will relieve acute trusts and accident and emergency departments by taking on investigations, treatment for minor injuries and procedures such as some day-case surgeries.

Improving Chronic Disease Programme

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the details of the Improving Chronic Disease Programme will be published. [171935]

Mr. Hutton: "Improving Chronic Disease Management" was published by the Department on 4 March, and signalled the start of an evolving programme to engage the national health service in adopting a more systematic approach to helping people with chronic conditions. More details were given to chief executives of strategic health authorities in a letter on 6 May, and this was followed by a conference on 18 May, and a series of regional workshops in June.

Internet Medicine Sales

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many representations have been made by *(a)* the Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency between April 2003 and 2004 and *(b)* the Medicines Control Agency for each year between 1997 and 2003 to internet service providers regarding websites (i) in breach of the law on the sale of unlicensed medicines via the internet and (ii) providing medicines without adequate patient consultations; and if he will list the websites in each case. [167806]

Ms Rosie Winterton: During the period 2003 to 2004, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) made one representation to an internet service provider (ISP) involving the supply of unlicensed medicines via the internet without a United Kingdom registered medical practitioner's prescription. Initially compliance was achieved. However, the site is once again operating and is the subject of a new criminal investigation. Disclosure of the name of the site during the investigation could be prejudicial to any future prosecution action, and exemption four of the open government code of practice therefore applies.

During the period 1997 to 2003, the Medicines Control Agency (MCA) made six representations to ISPs involving the supply of both licensed and unlicensed medicines via the internet. All six representations related to a study (by the MCA enforcement unit) in 1999. The specific details of individual sites have not been retained following their closure.

Investing in General Practice Initiative

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how the £85,000 allocated to South Sefton Primary Care Trust to support the Investing in General Practice commitments will be spent. [170525]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not collected centrally. Following the introduction of the new general medical services contract, future decisions on how to prioritise health centre developments are the responsibility of local primary care trusts.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how the £86,000 allocated to Southport and Formby Primary Care Trust to support the Investing in General Practice commitments will be spent. [170526]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not held centrally.

Following the introduction of the new general medical services contract, future decisions on how to prioritise health centre developments are the responsibility of local primary care trusts.

Maternity Services

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action he is taking to increase the number of midwives employed in *(a)* hospitals and *(b)* the community. [173580]

Mr. Hutton: The Government are implementing a range of measures to recruit more midwives, both in primary and secondary care. These include improving pay and conditions, encouraging the national health service to become a better, more flexible and diverse employer, increasing training, investing in child care and continuing professional development, attracting back returners and running national and local recruitment campaigns. As a result of these initiatives, there are more than 1,500 more midwives working in the NHS in England than in 1997.

NHS (Translation Costs)

Mr. Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what translation costs were incurred within the National Health Service in 2003–04. [172374]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer given 13 May 2004]* This information is not held centrally.

NHS Land Sales

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Health who will receive the profits of sale of NHS land for housing where a foundation trust is not in existence. [169763]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 30 April 2004]:* The receipts from the proposed transfer surplus National Health Service land to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will be added to normal capital allocations and passed out to the benefit of the entire NHS.

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the anticipated profits of sale of surplus NHS land for housing are expected to be; and how much front line service expansion this profit is expected to fund. [169816]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 30 April 2004]:* Until negotiations on the precise terms of the transfer of the land to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have been agreed, it will not be possible to say how much will be received for the surplus National Health Service land.

All of the receipts, once to hand, will be re-invested in the NHS.

NHS Staff

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many of those classified as *(a)* senior managers, *(b)* managers, *(c)* clerical and *(d)* administrative staff within the NHS (i) have medical training and (ii) do not have medical training. [171290]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

North Bristol NHS Trust

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the costs of *(a)* elective acute activity and *(b)* non-elective acute activity at North Bristol NHS Trust; how these compare with the tariff payments that he proposes to make for such services; what the effect on the money available to North Bristol NHS Trust would be if the payment by results policy was implemented immediately; and if he will make a statement on his plans for transition to the new arrangements. [169013]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 27 April 2004]:* The Department annually collects retrospective cost and activity data from all English national health service trusts, including collections of elective in-patient, non-elective in-patient, and day case activity. The national tariff for 2004–05 includes some 550 or so healthcare resource groups (HRGs) covering activity in these categories. HRGs are groups of procedures and treatments that are clinically similar and involve similar use of resources.

Though the tariff is based on national average reported costs (Reference Costs), it is not meaningful to make direct comparisons between the two because of the prospective nature of the tariff. For example, the latest reference costs refer to 2002–03, and the tariff to 2005–06. However a realistic guide to the relative cost efficiency of a NHS Trust is given by the National Reference Cost Index (RCI). The RCI gives a single figure for each NHS trust which compares the actual cost of its activity with the same activity at national average cost. The 2002–03 RCI score for North Bristol NHS Trust indicates that across the board its activity costs are 26 per cent. above the national average. This reflects the significant extra unplanned expenditure incurred by the trust in that year.

Payment by results began in a small way in 2003–04, is extended in 2004–05, and becomes fully operational in 2005–06. There will be a further three-year transition period to full impact of the new system until 2008, during which the effect of the tariff will be phased to allow trusts to adjust local costs so as to be able to live within the tariff.

We anticipate there may be some NHS trusts that will not be able to reduce costs to the extent necessary. The numbers in this position are likely to be very few as new and better costing and HRG definitions are introduced, and when the system has been fine-tuned to take account of exceptionally expensive patients not well covered by the tariff. We also recognise that where organisations are recovering an accumulated deficit, recovery plans will need to be revisited in the light of transition.

Latest thinking on how these and a number of other operational issues might be resolved in practice is described in the Department's formal response to the latest round of consultation on payment by results, which will be published shortly. Final guidance will be issued later this year in time to inform the normal planning and contracting processes for 2005–06.

Obesity

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the obesity rate is for *(a)* all people, *(b)* under-25s and *(c)* over-25s in (i) the East Riding of Yorkshire and (ii) England. [171786]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The prevalence of obesity in children and adults, based on data from the Health Survey for England 2000–02, are shown in the table. No figures are available for the East Riding of Yorkshire.

Prevalence of obesity in children and adults

Age (years)	Total: England Prevalence (percentage)	Bases
2–15	16.0	9,412
16–24	10.3	3,270
25+	24.2	5,835
16+	19.2	9,105

Source:
Health Survey for England.

Organ Transplants

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many transplant operations took place on average in each year since 2001, broken down by type of organ. [164866]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table shows data on organ transplants in the United Kingdom, April 2001 to March 2004, by financial year, organ and donor type with average over the three years.

Organ	2001–02 Cadaveric	Living	Total	2002–03 Cadaveric	Living	Total
Kidney	1,264	372	1,636	1,337	379	1,716
Pancreas	7	—	7	11	—	11
Kidney/pancreas	41	—	41	48	—	48
Heart	154	6	160	147	10	157
Lung(s)	96	—	96	118	—	118
Heart/lung	21	—	21	21	—	21
Liver	654	7	661	692	7	699
Liver/kidney	5	—	5	13	—	13
Other	5	—	5	1	—	1
Total	2,247	385	2,632	2,388	396	2,784

	2003–04 Cadaveric	Living	Total	Average over three years Cadaveric	Living	Total
Kidney	1,330	450	1,780	1,310	400	1,710
Pancreas	12	—	12	10	—	10
Kidney/pancreas	45	—	45	45	—	45
Heart	164	—	164	155	6	161
Lung(s)	147	—	147	120	—	120
Heart/lung	9	—	9	17	—	17
Liver	676	10	686	674	8	682
Liver/kidney	10	—	10	9	—	9
Other	1	—	1	2	—	2
Total	2,394	460	2,854	2,342	414	2,756

Pensions Agency

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 2 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 865W, on pension schemes, on what grounds the NHS Pensions Agency may refuse to accept a pension transfer into their scheme; and if he will make a statement. [173906]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* The National Health Service Pensions Agency may refuse to accept a transfer of pension rights into the NHS pension scheme ("the Scheme") if:

the transferring scheme is not tax approved

the transferring scheme is not an occupational pension scheme, a personal pension scheme, a buy-out policy or a retirement annuity other than a retirement annuity approved under section 620 (formerly section 226) of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988

the application to transfer is made on or after age 60

the application to transfer is made more than 12 months after joining the NHS scheme (there is discretion to extend this time limit)

the transfer payment offered does not meet the scheme's liability to provide a guaranteed minimum pension

the transferring scheme will not provide a signed declaration confirming that the payment offered represents benefits that have been equalised from 17 May 1990 and that they will make good any deficiency in the amount paid should it later prove that the equalisation was inadequate.

Personal Injury Cases

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many personal injury cases have resulted in repayment of NHS costs to the NHS in each of the last five years; what the total amount recovered was; what the categories of cases are from which recovery is expected; what the maximum amounts recoverable for each kind of treatment are; and if he will make a statement on *(a)* the trend in recovery of NHS costs and *(b)* his future plans for the recoupment scheme. [R][173562]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* Under the provisions of the Road Traffic (NHS Charges) Act 1999, national health service hospital treatment costs can be recovered in cases where a person injured in a road traffic accident makes a successful claim for personal injury compensation. The costs are recovered from insurers, not the injured person. The charges are calculated using a tariff, which is currently set at £473 for treatment without admission, a daily rate fee of £582 for treatment with admission and there is a ceiling of charges which is set at £34,800.

The table shows the number of settled claims for personal injury compensation following a road traffic accident that resulted in a payment to the NHS and the total amounts paid to NHS hospitals in England, Scotland and Wales for each of the last five years.

	Number of cases resulting in repayment of NHS costs	Amounts recovered and paid to NHS hospitals (£ million)
1999–2000	67,466	30.05
2000–01	148,249	75.9
2001–02	182,006	98.3
2002–03	195,643	105.03
2003–04	185,533	105.7

Provisions contained in the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 allow the current system of recovery of NHS costs to be expanded so that NHS hospital treatment costs and NHS ambulance service costs will be recoverable in all cases where personal injury compensation is paid. This will in the main include employer and public liability claims, in addition to road traffic accident claims. The new scheme is due to commence on 1 April 2005. It is estimated that the expanded scheme will recover an additional £150 million per year when its full impact is realised in several years' time.

Pharmaceutical Research

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make it his policy to ensure that the results of pharmaceutical research indicating negative results are made available to *(a)* the National Institute for Clinical Excellence and *(b)* the public. [171854]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Pharmaceutical companies must submit all research data to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency in support of any application for a marketing authorisation of a medicinal product. We have no plans to compel pharmaceutical companies or others to provide unpublished research data to the National Institute for Clinical Excellence.

It is for the company or the research author(s) to decide whether they wish to publish their data.

Practitioners with a Special Interest

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate he has made for each of the last five years of the number of referrals to practitioners with a special interest, broken down by *(a)* primary care trust and *(b)* strategic health authority area; [168863]

(2) what estimate he has made of the cost savings expected in the current financial year as a result of referrals to practitioners with a special interest rather than to hospitals; and what projection he has made of future cost savings from this programme. [168864]

Mr. Hutton: The practitioner with special interest role is intended to offer opportunities for professional development to general practitioners and others, and to offer primary care trusts (PCTs) new flexibilities in delivering services.

In line with "Shifting the Balance of Power", PCTs are responsible for developing practitioners with special interest services. Most are now doing so, but information on referrals to practitioners with a special interest is not collected centrally. Overall, however, in 2001–02 some 600,000 procedures previously only done in hospitals were carried out in primary care. By 2002–03, this had increased to 700,000 and further increases are expected in future years. This initiative has not been introduced to save money and no central estimates of potential or actual savings to the national health service in 2004–05 have been made.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many professions allied to medicine have been appointed as practitioners with a specialist interest in each year since the scheme started; and from which discipline they came. [172706]

Mr. Hutton: There is no central scheme for the appointment of allied health professionals with a special interest, and information on any such appointments made locally is not collected centrally.

Professional Groups (Vacancies)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the vacancy rate was for each professional group in the North West London Strategic Health Authority in each year since 1997. [172819]

Mr. Hutton: General practitioner vacancy rates are not collected by strategic health authority.

Vacancy rates for other professional groups are only collected centrally for:

Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff.

Allied health professionals.

Other qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff.

Ambulance staff.

Consultants.

However, this data has only been collected since 1999. The figures are shown in the table.

Annex A: Department of Health Vacancies Survey, Three-month vacancy rates in England, North West London Strategic Health Authority area and Brent and Harrow Health Authority area

Percentage

Specified staff groups		*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting						
	England	*2.8*	*3.9*	*3.4*	*3.1*	*2.9*
Q04	North West London SHA	n/a	n/a	n/a	4.4	6.3
QAR	Brent and Harrow HA	6.2	5.6	6.0	n/a	n/a
Allied Health Professionals						
	England	*2.1*	*3.2*	*4.3*	*5.0*	*4.8*
Q04	North West London SHA	n/a	n/a	n/a	6.2	7.3
QAR	Brent and Harrow HA	2.5	6.2	8.4	n/a	n/a

Annex A: Department of Health Vacancies Survey, Three-month vacancy rates in England, North West London Strategic Health Authority area and Brent and Harrow Health Authority area

Percentage

Specified staff groups		*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Other qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff						
	England	*1.6*	*2.6*	*3.3*	*3.2*	*2.8*
Q04	North West London SHA	n/a	n/a	n/a	4.8	4.6
QAR	Brent and Harrow HA	2.7	2.0	1.4	n/a	n/a
Ambulance staff						
	England	*0.8*	*1.0*	*1.4*	*0.5*	*0.7*
Q04	North West London SHA	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.0	[1]—
QAR	Brent and Harrow HA	0.0	[1]—	[1]—	n/a	n/a
Consultants						
	England	*2.3*	*2.8*	*3.0*	*3.8*	*4.7*
Q04	North West London SHA	2.1	1.7	1.1	4.0	3.4
QAR	Brent and Harrow HA	—	—	—	—	—

n/a = Not applicable.
[1] Figures where sum of staff in post and vacancies is less than 10.
Notes:
1. Three-month vacancies are as at 31 March each year.
2. Three-month vacancies are vacancies which Trusts are actively trying to fill, which had lasted for three months or more (whole-time equivalents).
3. Three month Vacancy Rates are three month vacancies expressed as a percentage of three-month vacancies plus staff in post.
4. For 1999–2001, three-month vacancy rates are calculated using staff in post from the previous September's Workforce Census.
5. For 2002–03, three-month vacancy rates are calculated using staff in post from the March Vacancy Survey.
Sources:
Department of Health Vacancies Survey.
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the vacancy rate is for each health professional group in each strategic health authority in England; and what the average figures are for *(a)* London and *(b)* England. [172820]

Mr. Hutton: The three-month vacancy rate and number for specified non-medical professional groups and consultants in each strategic health authority (SHA) as at March 2003 is shown in the table. The average three-month vacancy rate and number for London and England as at March 2003 has also been provided.

The estimated three-month general practitioner vacancy rate for England in 2003 was 3.4 per cent. It is not possible to produce reliable estimates of the vacancy rate for GPs at SHA level.

Department of Health Vacancies Survey, March 2003—Vacancies in NHS Trusts by Strategic Health Authority and NHS Trust, specified staff groups three month vacancy rates and numbers

	Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff		*Qualified Allied Health Professionals*		*Other qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff*	
	Three month vacancy rate percentage	*Three month vacancy number*	*Three month vacancy rate percentage*	*Three month vacancy number*	*Three month vacancy rate percentage*	*Three month vacancy number*
England	2.9	7,967	4.8	2,176	2.8	1,548
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic HA	1.4	167	5.4	115	2.6	59
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Strategic HA	4.9	315	7.4	79	5.9	65
Essex Strategic HA	3.4	220	4.1	46	3.1	42
London	5.7	2,611	8.4	594	4.8	510
North West London Strategic HA	6.3	737	7.3	127	4.6	111
North Central London Strategic HA	6.5	638	9.0	139	4.1	109
North East London Strategic HA	3.7	303	8.6	110	2.5	42
South East London Strategic HA	7.3	779	10.7	166	7.4	194
South West London Strategic HA	2.8	153	5.3	52	4.4	55
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear Strategic HA	1.7	177	3.7	56	2.7	48
County Durham and Tees Valley Strategic HA	0.8	57	2.4	25	1.1	11
North and East Yorkshire And Northern Lincolnshire Strategic HA	2.1	163	4.9	63	2.7	36
West Yorkshire Strategic HA	1.6	211	3.6	86	1.5	39
Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic HA	1.8	202	3.0	52	2.7	43
Greater Manchester Strategic HA	3.0	524	4.4	127	1.8	57
Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic HA	1.0	155	2.8	66	2.3	74
Thames Valley Strategic HA	4.0	400	7.3	129	3.8	66
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Strategic HA	4.6	422	5.4	76	3.4	46
Kent and Medway Strategic HA	4.4	312	4.1	49	2.3	29
Surrey and Sussex Strategic HA	4.1	508	6.4	147	5.0	108
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic HA	3.6	441	3.0	68	1.7	46
South West Peninsula Strategic HA	1.2	106	3.2	49	1.6	25

Department of Health Vacancies Survey, March 2003—Vacancies in NHS Trusts by Strategic Health Authority and NHS Trust, specified staff groups three month vacancy rates and numbers

	Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff		Qualified Allied Health Professionals		Other qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff	
	Three month vacancy rate percentage	Three month vacancy number	Three month vacancy rate percentage	Three month vacancy number	Three month vacancy rate percentage	Three month vacancy number
Dorset and Somerset Strategic HA	0.7	42	1.1	12	1.3	12
South Yorkshire Strategic HA	0.9	82	2.2	34	1.1	21
Trent Strategic HA	1.1	158	2.2	52	0.9	23
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland Strategic HA	2.9	216	5.1	61	3.3	46
Shropshire and Staffordshire Strategic HA	1.1	83	3.6	46	2.2	29
Birmingham and The Black Country Strategic HA	2.2	328	5.0	105	2.6	81
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Strategic HA	0.8	59	3.3	40	1.7	21
Special Health Authorities	1.7	8	[1]	[1]	0.4	11

	Ambulance		Consultants	
	Three month vacancy rate percentage	Three month vacancy number	Three month vacancy rate percentage	Three month vacancy number
England	0.7	111	4.7	1,264
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic HA	[1]	[1]	4.4	53
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Strategic HA	2.1	12	5.5	33
Essex Strategic HA	0.0	[1]	3.7	22
London	0.0	[1]	3.5	181
North West London Strategic HA	*	[1]	3.4	42
North Central London Strategic HA	[1]	[1]	1.8	21
North East London Strategic HA	[1]	[1]	3.2	28
South East London Strategic HA	0.0	[1]	6.0	72
South West London Strategic HA	[1]	[1]	2.5	19
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear Strategic HA	3.0	18	5.3	54
County Durham and Tees Valley Strategic HA	[1]	[1]	7.8	52
North and East Yorkshire And Northern Lincolnshire Strategic HA	0.0	[1]	6.4	43
West Yorkshire Strategic HA	0.0	[1]	4.9	61
Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic HA	0.2	2	7.3	61
Greater Manchester Strategic HA	0.0	[1]	6.8	108
Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic HA	7.3	48	3.6	50
Thames Valley Strategic HA	0.0	[1]	5.4	56
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Strategic HA	0.0	[1]	5.6	48
Kent and Medway Strategic HA	0.0	[1]	6.2	41
Surrey and Sussex Strategic HA	0.0	[1]	5.1	59
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic HA	2.3	19	3.4	40
South West Peninsula Strategic HA	0.7	6	2.9	22
Dorset and Somerset Strategic HA	0.0	[1]	2.4	12
South Yorkshire Strategic HA	0.0	[1]	2.9	24
Trent Strategic HA	0.5	6	5.4	61
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland Strategic HA	[1]	[1]	5.2	36
Shropshire and Staffordshire Strategic HA	0.0	[1]	6.2	40
Birmingham and The Black Country Strategic HA	0.0	[1]	5.4	78
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Strategic HA	0.0	[1]	3.9	27
Special Health Authorities	[1]	[1]	4.7	5

[1] Zero.

Notes:

1. Three-month vacancy information is as at 31 March 2003.
2. Three-month vacancies are vacancies which trusts are actively trying to fill, which had lasted for three months or more (whole time equivalents).
3. Three-month vacancy rates are three month vacancies expressed as a percentage of three-month vacancies plus staff in post.
4. Three month vacancy rates are calculated using staff in post from the Vacancy Survey, March 2003, or from March 2003 consultant Mini Census.
5. London is based on the five London Strategic Health Authorities and London Ambulance Service NHS Trust.

Public Health Action Plan

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the timetable is for *(a)* publishing and *(b)* implementing the Public Health Action Plan proposed in Choosing Health. [172521]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Secretary of State for Health launched "Choosing Health? A consultation on action to improve people's health" on 3 March 2004. The formal consultation period runs until 28 May 2004. The consultation will feed into a White Paper to be published this summer. The White Paper will set out the Government's plans to improve health, including the timetable for implementation.

Skin Diseases

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans his Department has to extend chronic disease management clinics to cover skin diseases; and if he will make a statement. [169713]

Mr. Hutton: Primary care trusts, in partnership with local stakeholders, have the responsibility for deciding what services to provide for their populations including those with skin conditions. They are best placed to understand local health needs and commission services to meet them.

St. George's Hospital

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what development projects are proposed for St. George's Hospital, Tooting within the next three years; and what the estimated cost is of each. [173079]

Mr. Hutton: St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust is projecting a capital spend of £16.4 million in 2004–05 on a number of small capital projects including an endoscopy unit, modernisation of the pharmacy facilities, upgrading of intermediate care facilities and a new maxillofacial laboratory. Delivery of this capital programme is dependent on the trust and South West London Strategic Health Authority working together to identify the funding streams.

The capital programme beyond 2004–05 has yet to be agreed.

Staff Turnover

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much was spent on staff turnover *(a)* at North West London Hospitals Trust and *(b)* in the North West London Strategic Health Authority in each year since 1997; [172799]

(2) what the percentage turnover of nursing staff was at North West London NHS Trust in the latest period for which figures are available. [172800]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the percentage turnover of nursing staff or on how much is spent on staff turnover is not collected centrally.

Teenage Sexual Health

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the rate of incidence of each sexually transmitted disease was in teenagers in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [167395]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Rates of diagnoses of each of the five most common sexually transmitted infections among teenagers from 1995 to 2002 are shown in the tables.

Rates (per 100,000) of diagnoses of selected STIs in 13–19 year olds, England: 1995–2002

Infectious syphilis (primary and secondary

	Males		*Females*	
	Diagnoses	*Rates*	*Diagnoses*	*Rates*
1995	3	0.1	2	0.1
1596	5	0.2	3	0.2
1997	3	0.1	3	0.1
1998	5	0.2	3	0.1
1999	5	0.2	12	0.6
2000	6	0.3	8	0.4
2001	12	0.5	12	0.6
2002	27	1.2	19	0.9

Gonorrhoea

	Males		*Females*	
	Diagnoses	*Rates*	*Diagnoses*	*Rates*
1995	716	35.4	1,130	57.3
1996	911	44.7	1,499	75.3
1997	1,083	52.3	1,557	77.0
1998	1,022	48.4	1,625	79.2
1999	1,392	64.8	1,974	95.0
2000	1,891	87.3	2,516	121.0
2001	2,041	92.2	2,819	133.6
2002	2,252	101.8	3,005	142.4

Chlamydia

	Males		*Females*	
	Diagnoses	*Rates*	*Diagnoses*	*Rates*
1995	1,183	58.6	5,083	257.7
1996	1,395	68.4	6,063	304.5
1997	1,846	89.1	7.764	384.1
1998	2,392	1,13.2	8,785	427.9
1999	2,931	136.4	10,515	506.1
2000	3,688	170.2	12,358	594.1
2001	4,119	186.1	13,746	651.4
2002	5,181	234.1	16,030	759.7

Genital herpes (first attack)

	Males		*Females*	
	Diagnoses	*Rates*	*Diagnoses*	*Rates*
1995	281	13.9	1,696	86.0
1996	269	13.2	1,699	85.3
1997	263	12.7	1,848	91.4
1998	327	15.5	1,918	93.4
1999	353	16.4	1,965	94.6
2000	396	18.3	2.012	96.7
2001	391	17.7	2,180	103.3
2002	390	17.6	2,081	98.6

Genital warts (first attack)

	Males		*Females*	
	Diagnoses	*Rates*	*Diagnoses*	*Rates*
1995	1,803	89.3	6,876	348.6
1996	2,033	99.7	7,685	386.0
1997	2,469	119.2	8,307	410.9
1998	2,784	131.7	8,648	421.2
1999	3,087	143.6	8,552	411.6
2000	3,135	144.7	8,331	400.5
2001	3,131	141.5	8,589	407.0
2002	3,175	143.5	8,656	410.2

Source:
Health Protection Agency.

Waiting Lists/Times

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on NHS waiting times for heart surgery in Burnley. [167944]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There were eight patients waiting more than nine months for heart surgery in the Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale Primary Care Trust area at 30 June 2002. As at 30 March 2004, there were no patients waiting more than six months.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of suspected cancer patients in Preston saw an NHS consultant within two weeks in each of the last seven years. [168110]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected on a constituency basis. The information shown in the table relates to the national health service organisations serving the Preston area.

Waiting times for first consultant out-patient appointment for suspected cancer following urgent GP referral

	NHS trust	Seen within 2 weeks: Percentage	Seen within 2 weeks: Number
2000-01	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	98.8	320
2000-01	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	158
2001-02	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	100.0	406
2001-02	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	291
2002-03	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	783
2003-04	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	990

Note:

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals was established on 1 August 2002 from the acute services of Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust and Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust.

Source:

DH form QMCW.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on NHS waiting times for heart surgery in Preston. [168111]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There were three patients waiting more than nine months for heart surgery in the Preston Primary Care Trust area at 30 June 2002. As at 30 March 2004, there were no patients waiting more than six months.

Dr. Richard Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether his target of 17 weeks' wait for a national health service out-patient referral starts from *(a)* the date of the consultation with the referring general practitioner and *(b)* the date that the patient is given the appointment date to attend the hospital or clinic. [172843]

Mr. Hutton: The target of 17 weeks wait for a national health service first out-patient appointment with a consultant following a general practitioner referral starts from the date on which the provider received the written referral request from the GP (or the date of the verbal request which was later confirmed), to the date when the first out-patient attendance with a consultant takes place.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Car Theft

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cars were stolen in *(a)* Lancashire, *(b)* Yorkshire, *(c)* Cheshire, *(d)* Derbyshire and *(e)* Wales in 2003; and how many were subsequently recovered in each case. [R] [172698]

Ms Blears: The available information relates to 2002–03 and is given in the table. Information relating to the recovery of vehicles is no longer collected centrally.

Police force area	Theft and unauthorised taking of motor vehicle
Lancashire	5,585
North Yorkshire	2,642
South Yorkshire	10,241
West Yorkshire	22,867
Cheshire	4,503
Derbyshire	4,062
Wales	17,814

Counter-terrorism

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment his Department has made, in respect of counter-terrorist planning, of the work done by the Health and Safety Executive for the International Atomic Energy Agency on public protection from high-activity sealed sources. [172314]

Mr. Blunkett: The United Kingdom has been prominent in negotiations to revise the International Atomic Energy Authority's Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources which was agreed in September 2003. The UK was among the first to express an intention to implement the code and encourage all other countries to do the same. The UK was also prominent in negotiating action plans within G8 and the European Union , and in December 2003 the EU Council Directive on High Activity Sealed Sources (HASS) was adopted. The UK is now in the process of implementation and this work is being taken forward by a number of Government Departments and agencies, including the Health and Safety Executive.

Crime (Stalybridge and Hyde)

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in *(a)* overall recorded crime, *(b)* overall recorded violent crime, *(c)* burglaries and *(d)* vehicle thefts has been in Stalybridge and Hyde since 1997. [168736]

Ms Blears: The information requested is not available centrally.

Stalybridge and Hyde is within the Tameside Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) area. Data at CDRP level have only been published from 1999–2000 onwards. Detailed statistics at CDRP level are available for 2002–03 on the new Home Office website: http://www.crimestatistics.org.uk.

Criminal Records Bureau

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Criminal Records Bureau checks were carried out free for charities in each of the last 12 months; and at what cost to his Department. [169026]

Ms Blears: Information is not available to determine how many Criminal Records Bureau checks have been carried out for charities during the last 12 months. However, between April 2003 and March 2004, the Bureau carried out 396,549 checks for volunteer applicants at a cost of £9,634,430 to the Department. The breakdown of the above figures on a monthly basis is shown in the table.

Month	*Number of enhanced disclosures issued free of charge for volunteers*	*Cost (£)*	*Number of standard disclosures issued free of charge for volunteers*	*Cost (£)*	*Overall cost (£)*
April 2003	28,096	337,152	4,733	56,796	393,948
May 2003	26,220	314,640	3,853	46,236	360,876
June 2003	30,863	346,812	4,855	58,260	405,072
July 2003	30,863	895,027	5,031	120,744	1,015,771
August 2003	21285	617,265	2,911	69,864	687,129
September 2003	23,703	687,387	4,141	99,384	786,771
October 2003	35,853	1,039,737	6,590	158,160	1,197,897
November 2003	29,323	850,367	6,209	149,016	999,383
December 2003	25,214	731,206	4,734	113,616	844,822
January 2004	26,524	769,196	4,750	114,000	883,196
February 2004	32,975	956,275	5,671	136,104	1,092,379
March 2004	29,690	861,010	4,424	106,176	967,186
Overall total					9,634,430

Custodial Sentences

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many adult males given a custodial sentence by courts were assessed as requiring *(a)* category A, *(b)* category B, *(c)* category C and *(d)* category D security conditions in London in each month since January 2003. [168638]

Paul Goggins: The original security category of adult males received under sentence in London prisons as *(a)* category A, *(b)* category B, *(c)* category C and *(d)* category D prisoners in each month since January 2003 is given in the table.

Original security category of adult males received under sentence into London prison

	A	*B*	*C*	*D*	*Other codes*[1]
January 2003-	4	33	488	123	143
February 2003	0	30	450	118	127
March 2003	0	20	496	101	155
April 2003	0	21	445	98	162
May 2003	0	26	494	111	169
June 2003	0	17	490	121	168
July 2003	0	17	560	112	204
August 2003	1	18	465	69	151
September 2003	0	24	484	117	159
October 2003	0	18	535	92	143
November 2003	0	27	518	95	175
December 2003	0	13	432	80	262
January 2004	0	14	505	134	186
February 2004	0	13	514	121	202
March 2004	0	15	513	110	231

[1] Other codes includes those awaiting categorisation and where the code has not yet been entered

Identity Cards

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of whether *(a)* convicted and *(b)* suspected terrorists in the United Kingdom are using (i) multiple and (ii) false identities. [170344]

Mr. Blunkett: We are aware that the use of false and multiple identities is a well established practice used by those who wish to disguise and facilitate involvement in serious crime, including terrorism. We know that at least 35 per cent. of terrorists use false or multiple identities.

An identity cards scheme which made it far more difficult to establish multiple identities will help to disrupt terrorist support networks. That is why the Government are introducing such a scheme.

Mini-cab Drivers

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what the reasons are for the exclusion of other EU citizens from criminal record checks when applying to work as mini-cab drivers; [167981]

(2) for what reason British and EU mini-cab drivers are not treated equally with regard to requirements for criminal record checks when applying to work as mini-cab drivers. [167982]

Ms Blears: The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) will accept a Disclosure application from any individual who is resident, or is seeking a post, in England and Wales, meets the eligibility criteria and makes an application in the prescribed form which includes providing the documentation required to authenticate the applicant. But Part 5 of the Police Act 1997, under which the CRB operates, does not empower the CRB to search data sources outside the United Kingdom for conviction and other information shown on its Disclosures. The value of a CRB Disclosure may therefore be limited if the applicant has been resident in the UK for no more than a short time.

Some other countries, including most in the EU, have arrangements in place which allow their citizens to obtain certificates of good conduct or extracts from the criminal record to show to prospective employers. The CRB has developed an Overseas Information Service for the benefit of employers. This supplies advice and

information about arrangements and contact points in a number of other countries in order that the employer can make inquiries or ask the employee to do so. At present, this covers 16 countries, including nine in Europe, and work is in hand to extend the service to a further 15 countries, including 14 in Europe. The CRB advises that Disclosures should complement and not replace other checks and inquiries under good recruitment practice. It is for employers (or regulatory bodies) to determine the arrangements that are to apply.

Ministerial Visits

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list visits made by each Minister in the Department between December 2003 and April 2004, broken down by *(a)* date, *(b)* constituency visited and *(c)* cost. [171568]

Mr. Blunkett: The Government publish on an annual basis the total costs of all ministerial overseas travel and a list of all visits by Cabinet Ministers costing in excess of £500. Information for 2003–04 is currently being collected and will be published in due course.

Detailed information for all Ministers in respect of UK travel is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

All travel is undertaken fully in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are in the Library.

Neighbourhood Watch

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the future of the National Association for Neighbourhood Watch. [173420]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* The National Neighbourhood Watch Association is an independent organisation and its future is a matter for the association itself.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what support and assistance he provides to Neighbourhood Watch districts merging into regional bodies. [173422]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* None. I am not aware of proposals for such mergers. I will consider any proposals if they are put to me. The Home Office and a number of Police forces provide considerable support to local neighbourhood watch schemes.

Operation Cohort

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Operation Cohort in the National Crime Squad is to close. [167401]

Caroline Flint: It would not be appropriate to comment on ongoing operational matters.

Police

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in the number of full-time police officers in Sittingbourne and Sheppey has been since 1997. [170287]

Ms Blears: Sittingbourne and Sheppey constituency is part of the Swale Basic Command Unit (BCU). Information on strength at BCU level is collected annually and reflects the position at the end of March. Information on BCU strength is only available from 2002.

Between March 2002 and March 2003 police strength for the Swale BCU increased by 10.3 per cent. (from 213 to 235). The deployment of officers to BCUs is a matter for the Chief Constable (Michael Fuller) and within the Swale BCU deployment of officers is a matter for the Divisional Commander.

The number of police officers in Kent County Constabulary has increased by 292 since March 1997 to a record 3,552 officers in December 2003.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department by how much in *(a)* percentage and *(b)* cash terms the Metropolitan police grant has changed in each year since 1997. [170493]

Ms Blears: The information is set out in the table.

	General government grants[1] *£ million*	*Annual percentage change in general government grants Percentage*	*Specific grants and capital provision*[2] *£ million*	*Total £ million*	*Annual percentage change in all government grants Percentage*
1997–98	1,549	—	39	1,588	—
1998–99	1,572	1.5	35	1,607	1.2
1999–2000	1,594	1.4	35	1,629	1.4
2000–01	1,586	-0.5	61	1,647	1.1
2001–02	1,666	5.0	125	1,791	8.7
2001–02[3]	1,647	—	125	1,772	—
2002–03	1,677	1.8	259	1,936	9.3
2003–04	1,764	5.2	290	2,054	6.1
2004–05	1,822	3.3	309	2,131	3.7

[1] General government grants comprise Home Office police grant, ODPM Revenue Support Grant and National Non-Domestic Rates. It also includes SSA Reduction Grant (£42.3 million in 1997–98, £32.1 million in 1998–99, £24.9 million in 1999–2000 and £10.4 million in 2000–01).

[2] Includes funding from the Crime Fighting Fund, Basic Command Unit funding, Street Crime Initiative, Community Support Officer funding, Special Priority Payments, the DNA Expansion Programme, London Allowance, Free Travel, Capital grant, Airwave, Premises Improvement Fund, C3i and Counter Terrorism funding. The total for specific grants in 2004–05 is an estimate.

[3] Figures for 2001–02 are not directly comparable with 2002–03 due to the change in funding arrangements for NCS and NCIS. Adjusted figures for 2001–02 are included to allow direct comparison with 2002–03.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures he has taken to promote the use of bicycles by patrolling police officers. [172570]

Ms Blears: The Home Office encourages forces to use a variety of means to increase the accessibility and visibility of officers with their local communities, as part of a wider commitment to engage with communities on a routine and in depth basis to identify their needs and act on them. It is the role of chief constables, however, to decide whether the use of patrol by bicycle would best meet the identified needs of their communities.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many civilians were employed by each police force in England and Wales in the last year for which figures are available; and in what roles they were employed. [173570]

Ms Blears: Published information on police staff strength by police forcearea is available in total but not by function. The latest available figures for police staff are those for 31 March 2003. For Community Support Officers the latest available is for 31 March 2004. The data are set out in the table.

Police staff as at 31 March 2003 and Community Support Officers as at 31 March 2004 by police force England and Wales

Police force	*Police Staff as at 31 March 2003*	*Community Support Officers as at 31 March 2004*
Avon and Somerset	1,785	46
Bedfordshire	595	11
Cambridgeshire	786	59
Cheshire	1,008	37
Cleveland	694	80
Cumbria	676	0
Derbyshire	1,061	0
Devon and Cornwall	1,834	55
Dorset	793	7
Durham	602	37
Essex	1,682	77
Gloucestershire	590	55
Greater Manchester	3,173	185
Hampshire	1,720	0
Hertfordshire	1,299	44
Humberside	880	0
Kent	2,095	62
Lancashire	1,489	117
Leicestershire	934	45
Lincolnshire	641	44
London, City of	268	0
Merseyside	1,752	100
Metropolitan Police	11,358	1,465
Norfolk	924	34
Northamptonshire	812	12
Northumbria	1,457	51
North Yorkshire	723	52
Nottinghamshire	1,180	43
South Yorkshire	1,510	53
Staffordshire	1,146	13
Suffolk	713	15
Surrey	1,245	64
Sussex	1,578	72
Thames Valley	2,412	7
Warwickshire	503	28
West Mercia	1,233	55
West Midlands	3,012	60
West Yorkshire	2,538	224
Wiltshire	703	24
Dyfed-Powys	502	5
Gwent	607	50
North Wales	703	8
South Wales	1,366	63

Police staff as at 31 March 2003 and Community Support Officers as at 31 March 2004 by police force England and Wales

Police force	*Police Staff as at 31 March 2003*	*Community Support Officers as at 31 March 2004*
Total of 43 forces	62,581	3,459
NCS	524	[2]—
NCIS	[1]—	[2]—
British Transport Poll	624	[2]—
Total other services	1,148	[2]—
Total police service	63,729	3,459
Total police service (excluding BTP)	63,105	3,459

[1] Have not supplied figures
[2] Not applicable
Note
All figures are full time equivalents.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many hours were spent by police officers *(a)* on patrol, *(b)* on reactive policing, *(c)* in offices and *(d)* attending court for each police force in England and Wales in the last year for which figures are available. [173569]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* This information is not available. Later in the year, the Government intends to publish the proportion of time spent by police officers on front line duties in each force.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what use is being made of geographic information systems to match police project funding to area-specific problems *(a)* in Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland, *(b)* by Government Office of the Regions area and *(c)* in England. [141860]

Ms Blears: I understand that Cleveland Police use North East Regional Information Sharing System (NERISS) for crime mapping and data sharing. Cleveland also use Intergraph public safety mapping for command and control and Mapinfo for crime analysis and to inform tasking and co-ordination meetings and patrol patterns.

The Chief Constable of Cleveland Police informs me that resources are distributed locally according to an allocation model that is in part based on levels of deprivation. The force is in the process of adjusting its method of allocation to recognise, for example, the policing environment, in Middlesborough. The adjustment is informed by ongoing analysis of crime and disorder in the force area.

Comprehensive information on a national basis is not available but we are aware of police and local authorities using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in some instances to target funding and other resources.

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in what circumstances the police are entitled to enter private property without a warrant. [172857]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* The main powers of entry available to police officers are set out in the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE). Circumstances in which the police may enter private property without a warrant are:

to arrest someone for an arrestable offence;

to arrest someone for whom an arrest warrant has been issued;

to search the premises of someone who has been arrested for an arrestable offence and where the police have reasonable grounds to believe that they will find evidence relating to that offence or of some similar or connected arrestable offence;

to search the premises in which an arrested person was immediately prior to his arrest, if the officer believes that evidence relating to that offence may be found there;

to recapture a person who is unlawfully at large;

to prevent or stop a breach of the peace;

in order to save life or limb; and to prevent serious damage to property.

A police officer may also enter private property without a warrant where the owner consents to such entry.

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many British-manufactured *(a)* vehicles and *(b)* motorcycles are employed by police forces. [172381]

Ms Blears: This information is not held centrally.

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidelines his Department offers on buying British-built or manufactured vehicles for police forces. [172382]

Ms Blears: Since 1992 the Police Information Technology Organisation, with the support of the National Association of Police Fleet Managers, has put in place a number of national frameworks for the purchase of vehicles by the police service.

Under EC rules references in procurements to national origin are specifically prohibited as this contravenes the principles of the Treaty of Rome, of a single European Community internal market open to all.

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many foreign-made vehicles are used by police forces. [172414]

Ms Blears: This information is not held centrally.

Solvent Abuse

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what training is provided to police on dealing with children engaging in solvent abuse. [169064]

Ms Blears: Nationally, all probationer police officers are provided with training material on how to deal with persons, including children, engaging in solvent abuse.

Individual forces are responsible for determining any further training required by their officers.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what voluntary sector agencies are used by police authorities for training in solvent abuse among children. [169066]

Ms Blears: We do not hold data on this specific issue centrally. However, we actively encourage police forces to seek opportunities to work in partnership with other agencies, including the voluntary sector, in developing and delivering training for the police.

Drug Addiction

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will estimate how many people there are in Greater London, who are addicted to drugs, broken down by borough. [173252]

Caroline Flint: The Home Office does not collect specific information on the number of people in Greater London who are addicted to drugs.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will estimate what proportion of crime in Greater London was connected to drug addiction in each year since 1997, broken down by borough. [173253]

Ms Blears: Recorded crime figures, which are used to measure trends in crime, include statistics on drugs offences, such as possession, and on property crimes, such as burglary, do not record whether the latter are related to an offender's drug habits. There are therefore no figures currently available for the proportion of crime in Greater London, by borough, which was connected to drug addiction.

The Home Office sponsored New English and Welsh Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (NEW-ADAM) survey, which involves interviewing and drug testing those arrested by the police, provides an insight into the proportion of crimes that are drug related. However, this survey does not provide sub-national data and is also not nationally representative.

A comparison of the survey's findings from eight sites across the country (including custody suites in Bethnal Green and Hammersmith) visited in 1999 and 2002, indicate that there was no change in the proportion of arrestees testing positive for one or more of six illicit drugs. Nearly two-thirds (65 per cent.) of arrestees in each year tested positive for any drug.

Timber

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his Department plans to contribute financially to the establishment of the second phase of the central point of expertise on timber. [167630]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Department has no plans to contribute financially to the development of a central point of expertise in timber (CPET). It has not been approached to do so.

Under-age Drinking

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to tackle under-age drinking. [171433]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* The Licensing Act 2003 strengthens the law on selling to under-18s, and increases the penalties for doing so. The Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for England, published on 15 March 2004 sets out the Government's plans to build on this through greater enforcement of existing laws against selling alcohol to minors.

We announced on 29 April 2004 that this summer, the Police Standards Unit, working with the Association of Chief Police Officers, will lead a robust enforcement

campaign in towns and cities across England and Wales to target those who encourage under-age and binge drinking.

In taking forward the Strategy recommendations, we will also look at improving the information about the dangers of alcohol misuse available to young people and encouraging the provision of more alternative activities for young people.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Local Authority Services

8. **Judy Mallaber:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what rewards are being given to local authorities with a record of delivering excellent services to the community. [173986]

Phil Hope: Local authorities that score as "excellent" in their comprehensive performance assessments receive more freedoms and flexibilities than those with lower scores. These include a significant reduction in ring-fencing, a 90 per cent. reduction in inspections, the freedom to trade, complete freedom over the use of income received from fines and fewer requirements to produce service plans.

Better Government for Older People

9. **Sandra Gidley:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on his Department's contribution to Better Government for Older People. [173988]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is playing a key role in relation to improving services for older people, ensuring that they can live full independent lives and contribute fully to society. We are closely involved in the cross-Government drive to develop better quality and more co-ordinated services for older people, an aim which is vital to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's remit of creating sustainable communities.

Travelling Showmen

10. **Miss McIntosh:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what Government policy is on location of winter quarters for travelling showmen. [173989]

Yvette Cooper: The Government's advice to local planning authorities is contained in Circular 22/91, 'Travelling Showpeople'. This recognises the need for showpeople's winter quarters and describes the particular character of showpeople's sites. It puts emphasis on early discussion between local planning authorities and showpeople whenever local development plans are being prepared in order to help ensure suitable sites are available for purchase. It also advises early discussion between local planning authorities and showpeople before land is purchased for the setting up of winter quarters. Where plans do not contain a policy relating to the provision of showpeople's quarters, applications should be determined on their merits.

New Deal for Communities

11. **Dr. Desmond Turner:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the progress of the new deal for communities. [173990]

Yvette Cooper: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to the hon. Member for Brecon and Radnorshire today.

Regional Government

12. **Mr. Grogan:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the potential benefits to the Yorkshire and Humber economy of regional government. [173991]

Mr. Raynsford: Improving the economic performance of the region will be at the heart of the objectives of an elected regional assembly in Yorkshire and Humber. An elected assembly will be expected to agree with Central Government a target for improving its region's economic performance.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the companies to which he has awarded contracts in relation to the Your Say information campaign on elected regional assemblies; and, what the value was of each component of the contract for each. [172753]

Mr. Raynsford: For the Robson Brown contract I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on the 5 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1603–04W.

A self employed copy-writer has been appointed to write for the website and printed materials.

(a) Printed material—£3,100

The following companies have been appointed for individual printing jobs.

	£
(a) Impress	
Printing of calendars	835
(b) Sterling	
Printing of leaflets and fact sheets	59,364
(b) Taurus	
Printing of letterhead, fact sheets, folders	3,199
(c) CW print	
Printing of fact sheets	1,230

Two further companies have been appointed contracts (to date no costs have been paid).

(a) The company Reading Room has been appointed to design and build the website an improved Office of the Deputy Prime Minister about regional governance.

(b) The company Carat is the Office's media buyer and has been appointed to buy the media.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the annual funding for 2004–05 is for *(a)* regional chambers, *(b)* the English Regions Network and *(c)* the Regional Co-ordination Unit; what the total funding has been for each year since their creation; and what the predicted budget is for the next financial year, broken down by (i) region and (ii) specific grant. [172754]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister makes a grant to the regional chambers and the English Regions Network to support their work. Details of the grant they have been allocated since they were designated by my right Hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister are detailed in the following table:

Table 1.

Chamber and Year	*Strengthening Regional Accountability Grant*	*Regional Planning Body Grant*	*Planning Delivery Grant*	*Total*
East				
2001–2002	500,000	—	—	500,000
2002–2003	600,000	—	—	600,000
2003–2004	600,000	758,000	516,000	1,874,000
2004–2005	600,000	758,000	754,000	2,112,000
East Midlands				
2001–2002	500,000	—	—	500,000
2002–2003	600,000	—	—	600,000
2003–2004	600,000	666,000	365,000	1,631,000
2004–2005	600,000	666,000	790,000	2,055,000
North East				
2001–2002	500,000	—	—	500,000
2002–2003	600,000	—	—	600,000
2003–2004	600,000	545,000	263,000	1,408,000
2004–2005	600,000	545,000	563,000	1,708,000
North West				
2001–2002	500,000	—	—	500,000
2002–2003	600,000	—	—	600,000
2003–2004	600,000	868,000	369,000	1,837,000
2004–2005	600,000	868,000	1,068,000	2,536,000
South East				
2001–2002	500,000	—	—	500,000
2002–2003	600,000	—	—	600,000
2003–2004	600,000	1,005,000	581,000	2,186,000
2004–2005	600,000	1,005,000	1,675,000	3,280,000
South West				
2001–2002	500,000	—	—	500,000
2002–2003	600,000	—	—	600,000
2003–2004	600,000	689,000	324,000	1,613,000
2004–2005	600,000	689,000	812,000	2,101,000
West Midlands				
2001–2002	500,000	—	—	500,000
2002–2003	600,000	—	—	600,000
2003–2004	600,000	739,000	332,000	1,671,000
2004–2005	600,000	739,000	732,000	2,071,000
Yorkshire and the Humber				
2001–2002	500,000	—	—	500,000
2002–2003	600,000	—	—	600,000
2003–2004	600,000	730,000	325,000	1,655,000
2004–2005	600,000	730,000	593,000	1,923,000
English Regions Network				
2001–2002	1,000,000	—	—	1,000,000
2002–2003	200,000	—	—	200,000
2003–2004	200,000	—	—	200,000
2004–2005	200,000	—	—	200,000
All-Total				
2001–2002	5,000,000	—	—	5,000,000
2002–2003	5,000,000	—	—	5,000,000
2003–2004	5,000,000	6,000,000	3,075,000	14,075,000
2004–2005	5,000,000	6,000,000	6,987,000	17,987,000

Grant allocations for future years have not yet been agreed.

The Regional Co-ordination Unit was created in April 2001. Its annual funding is:

	£
2001–2002	9,623,600.00
2002–2003	7,496,130.00
2003–2004	14,506,530.00
2004–2005	10,535,730.00

The Unit's funding consists of the running costs for the organisation itself and budgets that it holds centrally on behalf of the Government Office network as a whole which includes staff from 10 Central Government departments. The running costs of the organisation in 2004–05 are £4,522,000.00 The centrally held budgets will be used to fund Government Office activities across the nine English Regions, but they are managed within the Unit and are not split by region.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his Answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 366W, on regional assemblies, what proportion of each of those costs will be spent in *(a)* the North East, *(b)* the North West and *(c)* Yorkshire and the Humber. [172914]

Mr. Raynsford: The £5 million budget allocation for the "Your Say" information campaign is not broken down by individual region. The information campaign operates across all three regions.

Local Government Finance

13. **Paddy Tipping:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of local authority spending in the current financial year is *(a)* provided centrally and *(b)* raised locally. [173992]

Mr. Raynsford: In 2003–04, 74 per cent. of local government revenue expenditure was funded centrally and 26 per cent. locally. Figures are not yet available for the current financial year.

Gypsies/Travellers

14. **Julie Morgan:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to help gypsies and travelling people living on unauthorised sites. [173993]

Yvette Cooper: In England, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is conducting a review of Gypsy and Traveller policy, which will be concluded this summer. The Welsh Assembly are considering a report on service provision for Gypsies and Travellers and consulting on draft guidance on the management of Welsh unauthorised encampments.

Decent Homes Standard

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many houses have been brought up to the Government's Decent Homes Standards by *(a)* registered social landlords, *(b)* arm's length management organisations, *(c)* councils and *(d)* the Public Finance Initiative since targets were fixed; and what proportion these numbers constitute of each sector's stock. [173669]

Keith Hill: The data collected for each of the sectors shows reduction in non-decent homes not numbers of homes made decent. The data from local authorities and registered social landlords (RSL) returns based on 2003 out-turn and plans to March 2004 show that:

(a) RSLs have reduced the number of non-decent homes by 20,000 since April 2001. This includes the impact of the transfer on non-decent homes from local authorities.

(b) Arm's length management organisations (ALMOs) have reduced the number by 30,000. This covers the 19 ALMOs that have received their additional resources. The first ALMOs that passed inspection started operations in November 2002.

(c) Non-decent stock in local authority management between 2001 and 2004 has reduced by 350,000.

(d) Work under the first Public Finance Initiative (PFI) schemes only started in July 2003. Data are not yet available on progress.

Disabled Children

Gregory Barker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what percentage of families with disabled children received assistance from statutory agencies in order to address their housing needs in the latest period for which figures are available; [172870]

(2) which Government agency has lead responsibility for assessing the housing needs of disabled children; [172871]

(3) what plans are in place to improve the provision of housing to families with disabled children; [172872]

(4) what plans he has to abolish the disabled facilities grant means test for children; [172873]

(5) if he will make a statement on the fairness of the disabled facilities grant means test, The Test of Resources for children; [172909]

(6) what assessment he has made of whether the current Test of Resources for disabled children encourages parents to work; [172910]

(7) what progress the Government has made in reviewing the disabled facilities grant programmes and its means test. [172911]

Yvette Cooper: Statistics on the percentage of families with disabled children who received assistance from statutory agencies to address their housing needs are not collected centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Local housing authorities in consultation with social service departments have the leading role in assessing the housing needs of disabled children.

The Government have a number of policy initiatives designed to increase the supply of accessible housing including the provision of suitable housing to families with a disabled child. All newly built homes are required to comply with "Part M" of the building regulations. These provisions are expected to enable occupants to cope better with reduced mobility. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister announced earlier this year that we will carry out a further review of Part M, with the aim of incorporating Lifetime Home standards for accessibility into the Building Regulations.

Furthermore, in relation to new social housing, the Government requires that all schemes funded through the Housing Corporation comply not only with the Building Regulations, but also with additional criteria for accessibility and internal environments set out in the Corporation's scheme development standards. Reforms of the planning system are also seeking to address issues of access and inclusion. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill introduces a statutory requirement for those responsible for preparing regional spatial strategies and local development documents in England to undertake these functions with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. Our consultation draft of Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) makes it crystal clear that development plans should contain clear and comprehensive inclusive access policies.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is not only taking action to improve accessibility in relation to new developments. We have also substantially increased Government resources available to the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) scheme to help with adaptations to the existing housing stock to meet the needs of disabled people. Since 1997, Government funding for DFGs has nearly doubled, rising to £100 million a year. This year, over 33,000 homes will be adapted to meet the needs of disabled people through the programme—a 50 per cent. increase on 1997–98. The 1996 report into the Evaluation of the DFG system published by the Department of the Environment showed that 5 per cent. of all successful DFG applicants were parents with a disabled child.

The Government announced a review of the operation of the DFG programme on 5 January 2004. In answer to a Parliamentary Question from Baroness Wilkins, Lord Rooker in the House of Lords said that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, jointly with the Department of Health will be reviewing the disabled facilities grant programme, including the operation of the means test, in the context of the Spending Review 2004.

This Review is now under way and will include an assessment of the equity of the DFG means test as it affects applications from families with a disabled child and any disincentive effect of the test on a parent's decision to work. The conclusions of this review will be announced by the end of 2004.

Disabled Facilities Grant

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) whether the disabled facilities grant is subject to a review; and if he will make a statement; [173864]

(2) what plans he has to abolish means testing of the disabled facilities grant; [173865]

(3) if he will raise the level of the maximum grant in order to compensate for any loss incurred through the operation of the means test for the disabled facilities grant. [173866]

Yvette Cooper: The Government announced a review of the operation of the disabled facilities grant programme on 5 January 2004. In answer to a parliamentary question from my noble Friend Baroness Wilkins, my right hon. Friend Lord Rooker in the Other Place said that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, jointly with the Department of Health will be reviewing the disabled facilities grant programme, in the context of the Spending Review 2004, *House of Lords, Official Report*, columns 1–4. A number of financial and policy issues affecting the programme, including the operation of the means test and the maximum grant limit will be evaluated.

This review is now under way, and its conclusions will be announced in due course.

Emergency Calls (Speed Cameras)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent representations he has received from fire and rescue authorities concerning the administrative costs of dealing with the paperwork generated by the contravention by their vehicles on emergency calls of speed limits captured on speed cameras. [173808]

Mr. Raynsford: None.

Housing

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the Government achieved its target of reducing the council house repairs backlog by at least 900,000 properties by April; and what the estimated number of council house properties suffering from a backlog of repair was on 1 April. [173419]

Keith Hill: Progress against this target is monitored using the English House Condition Survey. The first results from the continuous survey are due to be published later this year, with the assessment of the stock at April 2004 due to be published in 2005.

Progress against this target is closely linked to progress against the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's decent homes Public Service Agreement (PSA) target. Local authority returns on decent homes indicate that we may achieve this target later in 2004, rather than the original date of April 2004

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when local authorities were allowed to raise resources against their assets and the income stream to improve the quality of their housing. [174602]

Keith Hill: From 1 April this year, local authorities have been free to borrow for capital projects, such as housing improvement, without Government consent, provided that they can afford to service the debt from their revenue resources. They remain prohibited from offering their assets as security for loans.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total cost is of the dowry funding allocated to housing transfers under the Estates Renewal Challenge Fund. [174654]

Keith Hill: Estates Renewal Challenge Fund dowry funding between 1996–97 to 1999–2000 was £488.173 million which generated over £860 million in private finance for investment in the schemes.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the role and mission statement are of his Community Housing Task Force. [174656]

Keith Hill: The current role of the Community Housing Task Force (CHTF) is to lead the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's work on options appraisal. The CHTF offers free, 'hands-on' advice to local authorities who are going through the process, and this advice continues when an authority decides on, and progresses with, any one or more of the options available to them. The Task Force advisers check proposals at key stages, assist with the development and sharing of good practice, and offer support to allow tenants and other key stakeholders to make informed decisions on the future of their housing stock.

The CHTF has never had a formalised mission statement. However, on the front of all CHTF publications there is a quote from the Head of CHTF, which adequately describes the main ethos and aims of the division. This reads as follows:

> "The CHTF is dedicated to ensuring that the Decent Homes target is met. We will work closely with local authorities and tenants from the beginning of the Option Appraisal process to develop the most appropriate option for them. The end result must be sustainable communities where people want to live."

Mr. Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his estimate is of the total amount of debt write-off *(a)* involved in housing transfers in 2004–05 and *(b)* actually paid out in 2003–04; how this is to be funded; and by what Department this is to be funded. [173523]

Keith Hill: It is estimated that if all housing transfers currently estimated to transfer in 2004–05 secure a positive ballot and transfer this financial year then the 2004–05 Office provision for making overhanging debt payments of £616 million would be used in full. £90.9 million was paid to the Public Works Loans Board in 2003–04. The resources used to make overhanging debt payments are part of the Office's Annually Managed Expenditure (AME) and are outside the Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL). The payment reflects the continuing liability the Office would otherwise have to pay subsidy on a local authority's housing attributable debt. It is not possible to use this resource for capital purposes.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) whether his officials vet the promises made by housing associations on transfer proposals; whether offer documents are standardised; and how his officials ensure delivery of the promises; [174100]

(2) whether the Community Housing Task Force supplies *(a)* templates and *(b)* drafts of offer documents to housing associations; and how they advise councils on housing privatisation proposals. [174146]

Keith Hill: It is for Authorities and Registered Social Landlords to develop any transfer proposal with tenants and other stakeholders. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will ensure that these comply with the Housing Transfer Programme criteria.

The Housing Transfer Manual 2003 Programme gives guidance on how to prepare the formal consultation document. It advises authorities to take into account specific local circumstances. The Community Housing Task Force discuss the developments of the proposal and the engagement of all stakeholders. They neither supply a template for nor draft the offer document.

Both transferring authorities and receiving Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) will be required to fulfil annual performance monitoring and evaluation requirements by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Housing Corporation. The exact set of indicators that authorities and RSLs will be asked to

provide will be finalised after a piloting exercise has been undertaken. Authorities and RSLs will be provided with information and support to assist them in completing their returns. This framework applies to all transfers from the 2001 programme onwards.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether civil servants in his Department are allowed to *(a)* campaign for large scale voluntary transfer proposals and *(b)* advise councils on how to win tenant support in ballots. [174101]

Keith Hill: Officials in the Office's Community Housing Task Force are there to provide advice and support to all stakeholders in the transfer process so they can develop housing transfer proposals that maximise the potential benefits in conjunction with the policy guidance contained in the Housing Transfer Manual 2003 Programme.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of tenants eligible to vote, voted *(a)* for and *(b)* against transfer in this year's ballots on (i) large-scale voluntary transfers and (ii) arm's length management organisations. [174102]

Keith Hill: The information requested is as follows.

Large-scale voluntary transfers (LSVT) ballots since January 2004

Local authority	Potential votes	Turnout (%)	In favour (%)	Not in favour (%)
Middlesborough	13,983	59.84	77.16	22.84
Trafford	11,101	63.56	72.91	27.09
Manchester (Woodhouse Park)	2,741	78.5	92.7	7.3
Wirral	16,636	60.63	77.36	22.64
Wakefield	39,282	65.1	73.6	26.4
North East Lincolnshire	9,735	64.87	67.26	32.74

Arm's length management organisations (ALMO) ballots since January 2004

Local authority	Potential votes	Turnout (%)	In favour (%)	Not in favour (%)
Almo Round 3				
Camden	25,300	30	23	77
Harrow	7,783	32	73	27
SS				
Bassetlaw	7,406	58	88	12
Sheffield: Hillsborough, Nether Thorpe	5,606	45	87	13
Sheffield: Parson Cross, Foxhill, Longley	10,854	38	94	6
Sheffield: Westfield, Hackenthorpe	7,851	43	89	11

Local Authority Leisure Services

Mr. Reed: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he made of adjusting planning guidance on sports and leisure facilities to take account of the Government's targets to raise participation. [174054]

Keith Hill: National planning guidance for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (PPG17), published in July 2002, already provides the framework for raising participation. It includes an objective for the planning process to promote healthy living and prevent illness. The guidance requires local authorities to assess the future as well as the existing needs of their communities for sports and recreational facilities. Authorities are expected to keep these assessments up-to-date and to use them to set standards for inclusion in their plans.

Tree Preservation Orders

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will take steps to amend Tree Preservation Order legislation so that dying and dead ancient trees are eligible for protection. [173957]

Keith Hill: Local planning authorities currently have powers to use tree preservation orders for the protection of selected trees in the interests of amenity. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no plans at the present time to amend the legislation for this specific purpose.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Child Employment

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when he will publish his response to the Better Regulation Task Force report on the regulation of child employment. [172449]

Margaret Hodge: I will be replying to the Chairman of the Better Regulation Task Force shortly and will place a copy of my reply in the Library of the House.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment his Department has made of the recommendations made in the Better Regulation Task Force report on the regulation of child employment; and if he will make a statement. [173389]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* The report by the Better Regulation Task Force on the regulation of child employment contains five recommendations, which I have considered carefully. I hope to make a positive response to the report shortly. A consultation process, as recommended in the report, will be undertaken to ensure that any changes in child employment legislation to be introduced will meet the needs of those subject to it. Before any new legislation is introduced, a full regulatory impact assessment will be carried out.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to ensure that existing guidelines and codes of practice regarding the employment of children are enforced at local authority level. [173390]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* Local authorities are currently responsible for determining that child employment legislation is

complied with and it is for local authorities to ensure that any guidelines and codes of practice that they may have are enforced at a local level.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to propose new clauses to the Children's Bill relating to the regulation of child employment in England and Wales. [173391]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* There are no plans to introduce clauses into the Children Bill relating to the regulation of child employment in England and Wales. Any changes to child employment legislation are likely to be introduced by way of a Regulatory Reform Order, as recommended by the Better Regulation Task Force report on the regulation of child employment.

Computers Within Reach Programme

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* teachers and *(b)* families in Manchester, Gorton have benefited from the Computers Within Reach programme. [167443]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Computers Within Reach scheme closed on 31 October 2001 having delivered over 24,000 recycled computers to people in 22 pilot areas, at a cost of £7.1 million over two years. Those eligible were in receipt of certain working age benefits or a state pension with minimum income guarantee.

At the same time as funding was made available for the Computers within Reach scheme, funding was also provided for the Computers for Teachers programme. For teachers who met certain criteria, this programme subsidised the cost of a computer. It was subsequently replaced by the current Laptops for Teachers scheme which dispensed with subsidies, and through which sufficient funding will be provided to enable two thirds of teachers to receive a laptop by March 2006.

Of the 24,000 computers delivered through the Computers within Reach scheme, approximately 2,200 were for people in the Manchester area, including those in and around Gorton.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many families in Tamworth constituency have benefited from the Computers Within Reach programme; and how many teachers have benefited from the Computers for Teachers programme. [173283]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Computers Within Reach (CWR) scheme closed on 31 October 2001 having delivered over 24,000 recycled computers to people in 22 pilot areas, at a cost of £7.1 million over two years. Those eligible were in receipt of certain working age benefits or a state pension with minimum income guarantee.

At the same time as funding was made available for the Computers within Reach scheme, funding was also provided for the Computers for Teachers programme. For teachers who met certain criteria, this programme subsidised the cost of a computer. It was subsequently replaced by the current Laptops for Teachers scheme which dispensed with subsidies, and through which sufficient funding will be provided to enable two thirds of teachers to receive a laptop by March 2006.

Tamworth was not one of the pilot areas for the CWR scheme.

Early Retirement

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many employees in his Department took early retirement, and at what total cost, in the last financial year. [172175]

Mr. Charles Clarke: In the 2003–04 financial year, 28 employees in my Department took early release packages at a total cost of £2,775.639.

The various categories of early retirement and severance, and details of the various schemes, are set out in sections 11.5 to 11.10 of the Civil Service Management Code and can be found at: http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/civilservice/managementcode/.

Education Act Powers

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many times he has exercised his powers under section 58 of the Education Act 2002 to appoint interim executive members to a specially constituted governing body. [173782]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* No interim executive members have been appointed by the Secretary of State to a specially constituted governing under section 58 of the Education Act 2002. However, local education authorities have used their powers under section 57 to establish interim executive boards in weak and failing schools in 11 cases, with the consent of the Secretary of State.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many times he has exercised his powers under section 56 of the Education Act 2002 to *(a)* close schools and *(b)* appoint additional governors. [173781]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* No school closure has been directed under Section 56 of the Education Act 2002.

The power of the Secretary of State to appoint additional governors to a school requiring special measures or which has serious weaknesses is available under section 18 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (SSFA); no appointments have been made under this provision.

However, under section 16 of the SSFA, as amended by Schedule 5 of the Education Act 2002, local education authorities have appointed additional governors to schools causing concern on a number of occasions.

Education Funding

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was spent per pupil in Oldham West and Royton in each of the last seven years. [170911]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than districts within an area. Oldham West and Royton is a district of Oldham local education authority. The information for Oldham LEA is as follows:

Net current expenditure per pupil

	Pre-Primary Education	*Primary Education*	*Pre-primary and Primary*	*Secondary Education*	*Special*
1996–97	n/a	n/a	1,890	2,510	11,540
1997–98	n/a	n/a	1,910	2,530	12,150
1998–99	n/a	n/a	2,080	2,730	14,130
1999–2000	0	2,260	2,330	2,820	16,470
2000–01	0	2,400	2,500	3,050	17,630
2001–02	0	2,690	2,840	3,430	19,210
2002–03	—	2,940	—	3,780	—

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from Oldham LEA'S Section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. Expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of the Section 52 outturn statement in 1999–2000. 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance.
2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA. Figures are rounded to the nearest £10.
3. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.
4. The NCE per pupil figures for pre-primary and primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the pre-primary sector and maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained nursery and primary schools sector.
5. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.
6. The NCE per pupil figures for special schools relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained special schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained special schools sector.
7. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was spent, per pupil, in the Huntingdon constituency in each of the last seven years. [170838]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than districts within an area. Huntingdon is a district of Cambridgeshire local education authority. The information for Cambridgeshire LEA is as follows:

Net current expenditure per pupil

	Pre-primary education	*Primary education*	*Pre-primary and primary*	*Secondary education*	*Special*
1996–97	n/a	n/a	1,940	2,740	14,080
1997–98	n/a	n/a	1,910	2,740	15,210
1998–99	n/a	n/a	2,040	2,750	16,680
1999–2000	14,360	2,080	2,160	2,720	17,240
2000–01	20,900	2,290	2,400	2,930	18,850
2001–02	21,020	2,490	2,600	3,150	20,430
2002–03	—	2,850	—	3,500	—

Notes.

1. The financial data are taken from Cambridgeshire LEA's Section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. Figures up to and including 1997–98 are for Cambridgeshire LEA prior to local government reorganisation. From 1998–99 part of Cambridgeshire LEA became Peterborough LEA. Expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of the Section 52 Outturn Statement in 1999–2000. 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance.
2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA. Figures are rounded to the nearest £10.
3. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.
4. The NCE per pupil figures for pre-primary and primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the pre-primary sector and maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained nursery and primary schools sector.
5. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.
6. The NCE per pupil figures for special schools relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained special schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained special schools sector.
7. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public money was spent per pupil in West Lancashire in each of the last seven years. [171490]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than districts within an area. West Lancashire is a district of Lancashire local education authority. The information for Lancashire LEA is as follows:

Net current expenditure per pupil

	Pre-primary education	*Primary education*	*Pre-primary and primary*	*Secondary education*	*Special*
1996–97	n/a	n/a	1,800	2,590	15,990
1997–98	n/a	n/a	1,820	2,630	17,320
1998–99	n/a	n/a	2,000	2,700	17,770
1999–2000	7,130	2,110	2,170	2,760	18,490
2000–01	11,030	2,330	2,440	2,910	18,770
2001–02	16,390	2,630	2,800	3,230	20,600
2002–03	—	2,900	—	3,400	—

Notes:
1. The financial data are taken from Lancashire LEA's Section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. Figures up to and including 1997–98 figures are for Lancashire LEA prior to local government reorganisation. From 1998–99 onwards parts of Lancashire LEA became Blackpool and Blackburn LEAs. Expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of the Section 52 Outturn Statement in 1999–2000. 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance.
2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA. Figures are rounded to the nearest £10.
3. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.
4. The NCE per pupil figures for pre-primary and primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the pre-primary sector and maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained nursery and primary schools sector.
5. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.
6. The NCE per pupil figures for special schools relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained special schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained special schools sector.
7. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Educational Achievement (Essex)

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many passes in GCSE at grades A*-C or equivalent were achieved by students in *(a)* the County of Essex in each year from 1980 to 1997 and *(b)* the County of Essex and the unitary authorities of Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock in each year from 1998 to 2003. [173327]

Mr. Miliband: The table below shows the number of GCSE grades A*-C (or equivalent) passes achieved by school leavers/15-year-old pupils in maintained schools from 1980 to 2003.

	Essex			*Southend-on-Sea*			*Thurrock*		
	15-year-old pupils[1]	*Number of A*-C passes*	*Percentage achieving 5 A*-C*	*15-year-old pupils*[1]	*Number of A*-C passes*	*Percentage achieving 5 A*-C*	*15-year-old pupils*[1]	*Number of A*-C passes*	*Percentage achieving 5 A*-C*
1980	21,580	50,060	22.9	—	—	—	—	—	—
1981	20,790	47,680	22.8	—	—	—	—	—	—
1982	23,480	56,990	24.7	—	—	—	—	—	—
1983	24,540	58,730	23.4	—	—	—	—	—	—
1984	22,760	59,180	26.7	—	—	—	—	—	—
1985	22,380	57,050	25.5	—	—	—	—	—	—
1986	22,350	57,260	26.0	—	—	—	—	—	—
1987	21,520	52,740	23.6	—	—	—	—	—	—
1988	19,810	59,760	29.5	—	—	—	—	—	—
1989	19,810	56,900	29.3	—	—	—	—	—	—
1990	18,810	60,390	34.1	—	—	—	—	—	—
1991	15,440	51,300	34.7	—	—	—	—	—	—
1992	17,022	58,876	36.8	—	—	—	—	—	—
1993	16,444	60,819	39.1	—	—	—	—	—	—
1994	16,514	64,158	41.4	—	—	—	—	—	—
1995	17,556	71,661	42.8	—	—	—	—	—	—
1996	17,988	73,743	43.1	—	—	—	—	—	—
1997	17,914	76,257	44.6	—	—	—	—	—	—
1998	14,259	66,143	48.6	1,748	8,391	48.4	1,487	5,110	34.5
1999	14,281	67,729	49.3	1,717	9,040	54.1	1,466	5,129	35.9
2000	14,540	70,556	50.8	1,722	9,099	53.3	1,502	5,919	39.7
2001	14,670	73,214	52.0	1,871	10,300	55.9	1,508	6,140	41.8
2002	14,966	77,201	53.5	1,997	11,034	56.0	1,511	6,801	46.8
2003	15,531	83,484	55.0	1,981	11,455	56.6	1,587	7,498	49.4

Notes:
1. Age is at the beginning of academic year.
2. The figures for 1979–80 to 1987–88 are estimated from the School Leavers Survey and cover school leavers of any age. For 1988–89 to 1990–91 the figures are estimated from the School Examinations Survey but cover leavers of any age. The figures relate to maintained schools excluding special schools.
3. The figures from 1991–92 onwards are taken from the database on School Performance Tables and are based on 15-year-old pupils in all maintained schools including maintained special schools and CTCs.
4. "Passes" include achievements at GCE O level grades A-C and CSE grade 1 up to1986–87, GCSE grades A*-C from 1988 (grade A* was introduced in 1993–94) to 2003 and GNVQ equivalencies from 1996–97 to 2002–03.

Excellence in Cities

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Wirral, South have benefited from the Excellence in Cities programme; and what the per pupil spending was in each year since the programme's inception. [173629]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows the number of children in Wirral, South benefiting from EiC, and the annual spend per pupil for the years in question.

	Number of children	*Total EiC expenditure*[1] *(£)*	*Spend per pupil (£)*
2000–01	5,349	473,473	88.52
2001–02	5,376	473,473	88.07
2002–03	5,443	507,764	93.29
2003–04	5,566	1,182,257	212.41

[1] All funding figures supplied by Wirral Excellence in Cities Team.

The increase in the rate of EiC funding in 2002–03 was to pay for extra learning mentors and the increase in 2003–04 was due to the introduction of the Leadership Incentive Grant and the Behaviour Improvement Programme

Further Education Colleges (Salford)

Ian Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will provide funding to help further education colleges in the City of Salford to refurbish and rebuild their estates. [173127]

Alan Johnson: All of the Departments post-16 learning and skills sector capital investment is allocated to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The Department does not provide a specific budget to the LSC for rebuilding and refurbishing property in further education colleges at either the local or regional levels. It is for the LSC to determine for itself the right level of capital investment in further education colleges. Mr. Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to the hon. Member on this matter. A copy of his reply will be placed in the House Library.

Higher Education (North-West)

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on his recent discussions with the North West Regional Development Agency on the links between industry and higher education in the north west. [171014]

Alan Johnson: I have had no recent discussions with North West Development Agency on the links between industry and higher education in the north-west.

History Teaching

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to promote the *(a)* teaching of history and *(b)* testing of historical knowledge in primary schools. [173331]

Mr. Charles Clarke: History is a statutory subject in the National Curriculum for all primary age pupils, which requires that pupils are taught knowledge, skills and understanding through various areas of study. At Key Stage 2 these include studies of local, British, European and world history. Within that framework, schools have considerable flexibility over the detailed content of their history courses as long as the statutory requirements are met. The full Programmes of Study for History can be viewed at www.nc.uk.net.

All primary schools have received copies of the DfES/ Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) scheme of work for primary history. This was specifically developed to help teachers plan courses aimed at developing children's historical knowledge and skills in a coherent and rigorous way. This is widely used and Ofsted has found that it is having a positive impact on standards in many primary schools. The Department is also funding the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to produce an "Innovating with History" website which will provide further support for primary and secondary history teachers encouraging them to explore more innovative and creative approaches to planning in history.

Assessment of historical knowledge is carried out through teacher assessment. Teacher assessment is carried out as part of teaching and learning in the classroom and forms an integral part of the assessment and reporting procedures.

The National Assembly for Wales is responsible for the curriculum and the teaching of history in schools in Wales.

Infant Class Sizes

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average teacher-to-pupil ratio in infant classes was in *(a)* the Jarrow constituency, *(b)* the north-east and *(c)* England in each year since 1997. [173383]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is not available centrally.

Maintained Schools

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils there were in each of the last six years aged 11 to 15 in maintained

secondary schools in England; and how many and what percentage of pupils in the same period were aged 11 to 15 in maintained grammar schools in England. [172380]

Mr. Miliband: The data requested is shown in the table.

Maintained secondary schools and grammar schools[1]: Number of pupils aged 11 to 15 1998–2004[2]—Position in January each year—England

	Maintained secondary schools	*Of which: Grammar school*	
	Number of pupils aged 11 to 15	*Number of pupils aged 11 to15*	*Percentage of pupils aged 11 to 15*
1998	2,686,788	95,511	3.6
1999	2,734,535	104,260	3.8
2000	2,795,415	107,473	3.8
2001	2,846,084	108,232	3.8
2002	2,878,800	109,604	3.8
2003	2,916,582	110,715	3.8
2004[2]	2,917,400	111,500	3.8

[1] Grammar schools were designated by Order in 1999; prior to that schools designated themselves in returns to the Department.
[2] 2004 is provisional data, rounded to nearest 100.
Source:
Annual Schools Census

Marriage and Relationship Support Programme

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 5 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1583W, on Marriage and Relationship Support, if he will list the pilot projects being funded through the Marriage and Relationship Support Grant programme. [173433]

Margaret Hodge: The Marriage and Relationship Support Grant supports the adult couple relationship, helping to prevent or eliminate problems and consequently help improve outcomes for any children in the family. Details of the 41 projects that will receive funding totalling £4.9 million for 2004–05 (as detailed in a press notice issued on Monday 10 May 2004) are:

Sustained Core funding

Organisation	*Allocation (£000)*
Relate	2,104
Tavistock Marital Studies Institute	464
Marriage Care	300
One Plus One	242
2 as 1	150
London Marriage Guidance Council	103
Parentline Plus	62
Asian Family Counselling Service	50
Family Welfare Association	30
Total	3,505

Renewal of R and D funding

Organisation	*Project title*	*Allocation for 2004–05 (£000)*	*Allocation for 2005–06 (£000)*
2 as 1	Bridging The Gap Through Training	85	106
2 as 1	Relationship and On Line Counselling Support Service	63	65
Brighton Oasis Project	Relationship Programme	50	n/a
Care For The Family	Asian Family Matters	37	n/a
Family Matters York	Introduction to FOCCUS	50	51
FWA	Marriage and Relationship Support Within Healthcare	70	81
Marriage Care	Emotional Literacy and Education Project	61	n/a
Poole Community Family Trust	MARS Development Project	50	67
Somerset Family Partnership	Couple Support	50	89
Students Exploring Marriage	Young Offenders Project	25	22
Sussex Family Mediation Service	One Stop Shop	25	n/a
Tavistock Marital Studies Institute	Brief Psychological Evaluation	48	52
The Minster Centre	The Aricas Project	75	n/a
The Richmond Centre	Videos are Valuable	36	n/a
Totnes Community Family Trust	Making Your Relationships Work	46	49
University of Exeter—School of Psychology	Evaluation of FOCCUS	48	n/a
Total		819	582

New funding

Organisation	*Type*	*Project title (if R and D)*	*2004–05 allocation (£000)*
The Cogwheel Trust	Core	n/a	6
The Salvation Army	Core	n/a	48
Lubavitch Youth	Core	n/a	41
Reform Synagogues of Great Britain	Core	n/a	11
Project for Advocacy Counselling and Education	Core	n/a	45
Aquila Care Trust	Core	n/a	22
ARC	Core	n/a	19
Muslim Welfare House	Core	n/a	50
Prisoners Families and Friends	Core	n/a	27
Lesbian and Gay Foundation	R and D	n/a	40
Students Exploring Marriage	R and D	Learning By Experience—Evaluation and Video	25

New funding

Organisation	*Type*	*Project title (if R and D)*	*2004–05 allocation (£000)*
Relate	R and D	Measuring The Outcomes of Marriage and Relationship Support	47
Leeds Animation Workshop	R and D	Minding the Baby	65
Contact a Family	R and D	Making Time For Us—Parental Information and Support Project	10
One Plus One	R and D	Supporting Relationships that need it the Most	60
Partners of Prisoners and Families Support Group	R and D	For better or worse—Supporting relationship breakdown of prisoners and their partners	60
Total			576

National Childcare Strategy

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the number of children in Wirral, South who have gained from the National Childcare Strategy. [173625]

Margaret Hodge: The Department is unable to provide details of child care places for Wirral, South.

However, from April 1999 to March 2004, Wirral local authority created 5,763 new child care places, helping some 10,480 children. This shows an increase in the stock of child care places, taking into account turnover, of 3,358, helping some 6,213 children.

Postgraduate Students

Mrs. Lawrence: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average level of tuition fees charged for a taught postgraduate degree was in the UK last year; and what level of Government funded assistance was offered to students undertaking postgraduate degrees in the UK last year. [174135]

Alan Johnson: Students on Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) courses were liable for a fee contribution of up to £1,100 in the 2002/03 academic year. The Department does not regulate the level of fees for any other postgraduate courses. It is a matter for higher education institutions to determine the level of fees they charge.

Full tuition fee remission and bursaries of £6,000 are available to eligible post graduate students on PGCE courses. Other postgraduate courses are not eligible for fee remission. Eligible postgraduates with a disability will have been able to receive assistance for e.g. specialist equipment, additional travel and non medical help costs through disabled students allowances (DSAs), up to a maximum of £5,245.

Students on all post graduate courses were able to apply to their institution for help from the discretionary Access and Hardship Funds. The total amount awarded from this fund to post graduate students in 2002/03 was £6.5 million. Awards were subject to income assessment and could cover additional course or living costs.

School Inspections

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if he will instruct Ofsted to make positive accreditation awards to schools following Her Majesty's Inspectorate or team validation visits; [173686]

(2) what assessment he has made of *(a)* the level of understanding by school staff of Ofsted's use of the term "satisfactory" in its reports and *(b)* the term's effect on staff morale; and if he will make a statement. [173689]

Mr. Miliband: These matters are for Ofsted. HM Chief Inspector, David Bell, will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of his letter in the Library.

School Sports

Mr. Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what criteria Ofsted applies with regard to inspecting school sports and physical activities; [174062]

(2) what remit Ofsted has to inspect the quality and quantity of school sports and physical activities. [174063]

Mr. Miliband: These are matters for Ofsted. HM Chief Inspector, David Bell, will write to my hon. Friend and place a copy of his letter in the Library.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much has been invested in developing school sports facilities in Bootle since 1997. [173185]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 45W.

School Transport (Norfolk)

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the cost of school transport in Norfolk in each month for the last four years. [171746]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* The information requested is not available on a monthly basis. However, the cost of expenditure on transport in Norfolk in each year for the last four years is shown in the following table:

Cost of home to school/college transport in Norfolk

£ million

	Total transport expenditure	*Transport related income*	*Net current expenditure on transport*
1999–2000	14.50	0.79	13.71
2000–01	15.27	0.71	14.56
2001–02	18.19	0.82	17.37
2002–03	19.71	0.82	18.89

Notes:

1. The financial data are as reported by Norfolk LEA on their Section 52 Outturn Statements submitted to the DfES. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA.

2. The cost of home to school/college transport includes the cost of public transport, contract hire or the use of authority vehicles in transporting pupils/students to school/college under section 509 of the Education Act 1996.
3. Figures include all expenditure by the local authority on transport. This includes the pre-primary, school, education out of school and continuing education sectors.

Trafficked Children

Mr. Dawson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what *(a)* advice and *(b)* information he has issued to local authorities about the use of the trafficked children's resource operated by Integrated Care. [173796]

Margaret Hodge: I am aware that a new independent safehouse, run by Integrated Care Ltd., opened in April 2004. I understand it is open to referrals from local authorities throughout the UK. We have not issued any guidance about this resource.

It is for local authorities to decide how best to provide support and services for children in need in its area, including those who are the victims of trafficking. When a child enters the country alone and claims asylum or there are concerns that he or she may have been trafficked, the immigration service should immediately refer the child to the relevant local authority's social services department. The social services department will undertake a needs assessment and will provide services in the light of the outcome of that assessment. These services should be tailored to the individual needs of the child, just as they should be for any child in need.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Children's Diet

Ms Shipley: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether her assessment of the effect of food promotion on children's health takes into account the *(a)* quantity, *(b)* frequency and *(c)* scheduling of food and drink advertisements in addition to their content. [173745]

Estelle Morris: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has a responsibility only in relation to broadcast advertising. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has made no separate assessment of the effect of food promotion on children's health but the Department continues to participate in the consultation being undertaken by the Food Standards Agency on the possible impact of broadcast advertising on childhood obesity.

The Secretary of State has also asked Ofcom to examine the adequacy of its codes regulating broadcast advertising of food to children and Ofcom has indicated that it will make its own assessment of the evidence.

Ms Shipley: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether she has accepted the conclusions of the Food Standards Agency research, "Does Food Promotion Influence Children? A Systematic Review of the Evidence", conducted by the University of Strathclyde. [173801]

Estelle Morris: The University of Strathclyde review was prepared for the Food Standards Agency (FSA). It is an important contribution to the debate and has therefore informed the FSA's development of its recommendations to Government and others about the promotion of food to children, on which the FSA is currently consulting. It is those recommendations which will be considered by Government and other stakeholders in the context of our commitment to reduce levels of obesity.

Local Authority Leisure Facilities

Mr. Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions her Department has had with representatives of the private sector on the contribution it can make to investing in local authority leisure facilities. [174055]

Mr. Caborn: The Department continues to explore ways to increase investment in our sports facilities working with partners in the voluntary, public and private sectors.

One of the key routes for DCMS to invest in the delivery of local authority leisure facilities is through the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). This is one of a range of Government policies designed to increase private sector involvement in the provision of public services. DCMS is currently supporting 21 local authority PFI projects nationwide, 12 of which include the provision of new or refurbished sports and leisure facilities.

DCMS has participated in various cross-government initiatives aimed at informing both the public and private sector about the PFI process. However, DCMS does not directly enter into discussions with the private sector on individual PFI projects since it is a matter for local authorities to negotiate the specific terms by which they might contribute to the provision of their leisure facilities.

Mr. Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what her Department's assessment is of the impact of trusts on provision of local authority leisure facilities; and if she will make a statement. [174058]

Mr. Caborn: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has not made a formal assessment of the impact of trusts on the provision of local authority leisure facilities. The Department is, however, aware that there are a significant number of trusts operating sports and leisure facilities in partnership with local authorities and will monitor their development.

Mr. Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what her Department's policy is on ensuring that operators of public sector leisure facilities which have been contracted out invest in the long-term future of the facility. [174059]

Mr. Caborn: Whilst the provision of public leisure facilities is not a statutory duty, local authorities do have a duty to ensure that public services are responsive to the needs of their citizens, efficient and of high quality. Under the Local Government Acts (1999 and 2000) all services purchased or provided by local authorities are subject to the duty of best value which

requires them to improve services year on year. Depending on the length of the contract, this would include long-term investments.

Mr. Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what standards the Government set for the acceptable standard of sports and leisure facilities offered by a local authority. [174060]

Mr. Caborn: The provision of sports and leisure facilities is not a statutory duty for local authorities and therefore there are no mandatory standards. However, my Department and its non-departmental public bodies offer extensive and detailed advice on standards; for instance, Sport England offers guidance notes, technical advice and standards for the design and development of sports facilities and Quest, a national quality accreditation scheme for sports facilities and sports development. By December 2003, 430 sports and leisure facilities had achieved a pass or higher in the Quest facility management scheme. The Department is also working with Sport England and other partners to develop "Towards an Excellent Service", a performance management framework for sport.

Mr. Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment her Department has made of the cost of bringing local authority leisure facilities up to what Sport England considers *(a)* a good and *(b)* an acceptable standard. [174061]

Mr. Caborn: The most comprehensive picture of the condition of the existing stock of public sector sports facilities available to the Department is Sport England's report "Condition and Refurbishment of Public Sector Sports Facilities", published January 2003. The report estimates that it would cost £550 million over five years to bring sports centres owned by local authorities in England up to a safe and acceptable standard. The capital cost of maintaining the stock thereafter is estimated at between £144 million and £151 million per annum. These costs are at mid-2002 prices and exclude VAT.

New Opportunities Fund

Albert Owen: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money from the New Opportunities Fund was allocated to Ynys Môn in each year since 1997. [174071]

Estelle Morris: The New Opportunities Fund began making grants in 1999. The awards to Ynys Môn are shown in the table.

Financial Year	*Amount (£)*
1999–2000	0
2000–01	34,336
2001–02	616,125
2002–03	137,704
2003–04	295,923

The information is freely available from the Department's searchable Lottery award database at: www.lottery.culture.gsi.gov.uk which uses information supplied by the Lottery distributors.

Physical Activity

Mr. Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions her Department has had with the private sector on the contribution it can make to raising participation in sport and physical activity to 70 per cent. [174056]

Mr. Caborn: The Department has had a number of discussions with the private, public and voluntary sectors on the role they can play in increasing participation in sport and physical activity across the population. The Government are also keen to engage employers, including the private sector, in encouraging physical activity in the workplace.

Mr. Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what proportion of the target increase in participation in sport and physical activity between now and 2020 is expected to come through membership of private gym facilities. [174057]

Mr. Caborn: It is not known what proportion of the target increase in participation in sport and physical activity will be met through the use of private gym facilities. The Chief Medical Officer's recommendation of at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity a day on five days of the week can be achieved through both lifestyle activity and/or structured exercise or sport.

Public Bodies (Funding)

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much grant in aid funding was given to the regional cultural consortiums and what the administration costs were, in 2002–03, broken down by region. [173706]

Mr. Caborn: The eight regional cultural consortiums are currently advisory non-departmental public bodies. Their remit is to lead the development and implementation of regional cultural strategies, to promote cross-sectoral initiatives and to help develop and support partnership working. In 2002–03, the consortiums were funded as part of the Department's core programme business and all of their costs, including administration costs, were included as part of the 'Administration and Research' heading of the Department's main estimate. Figures for each consortium's administration costs are not available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The consortiums did not receive any grant in aid funding in 2002–03.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the action taken in the case of the two soldiers implicated in the killing of a 20-year-old Afghan on 16 February 2002. [172945]

Mr. Caplin: A full investigation has been conducted by the Special Investigation Branch, following which the case was considered by the Army Prosecuting Authority (APA). The APA judged that there was insufficient evidence to proceed against any of the individuals reported in connection with the incident.

Defence Logistics Organisations

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what items make up the Defence Logistics Organisation-sponsored Support Solutions Envelope. [173702]

Mr. Ingram: The Support Solutions Envelope (SSE) contains guidance to Integrated Project Teams on the current methodology for delivering logistic support, i.e. the current 'envelope' of acceptable support solutions. The guidance is divided into a number of Key Support Areas (chapters) covering: logistic sustainability, engineering and asset management, materiel flow, information knowledge management, contractors on operations and people and training. Each Key Support Area contains several Guiding Principles on specific topics.

The SSE is also available on the internet at http://www.ams.mod.uk/ams/content/docs/sse/default.htm.

Departmental Records Office

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what the process is for the security clearance of *(a)* agency and *(b)* other staff working for TNT at the Departmental Records Office at Bourne Avenue, Hayes; [173656]

(2) how many staff including agency staff employed by TNT at the Departmental Records Office, Bourne Avenue, Hayes have sought security clearance; at what level they have been security cleared; how many have had clearance declined; and what the average length of time taken to obtain security clearance has been. [173657]

Mr. Caplin: Agency staff and staff employed by TNT at the Departmental Records Office are subject to the processes for security clearance in accordance with the Government's vetting policy as announced to the House on 15 December 1994, *Official Report*, columns 764–66W. Personnel are normally to hold a Security Check (SC) clearance, but individuals with a Basic Check (BC) may be employed provided they are escorted and supervised at all times by a member of staff who is SC cleared.

As at 13 May 2004, 272 TNT Records Office staff had completed the security clearance processes. 188 held an SC clearance and 84 held a BC. Two of the SC clearances were subject to restrictions. One individual had had a clearance at the SC level declined.

The average length of time to complete a BC is two weeks, and for an SC clearance 12 weeks.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many complaints have been lodged against the performance of TNT in its handling of records based at the Hayes Departmental Records Office at Bourne Avenue, Hayes. [173658]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence has set-up a Contract Management Team (CMT) whose role it is to monitor the services provided by TNT to all the Departments involved. Between 18 December 2003 and 13 May 2004 the CMT was advised of 46 mostly minor complaints about the performance of TNT. This number of complaints is regarded as very small.

Falklands War

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans will be put in place to commemorate in the UK the 25th anniversary of the Falklands War. [173787]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* Preliminary discussions have taken place with the principal veterans association, SAMA82 about this important anniversary. These will continue in order to develop ideas and when there is agreement I will ensure that an appropriate announcement is made to the House.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether funding will be provided for a visit in 2007 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Falklands War as it was for the 2002 Pilgrimage to the Falkland Islands by the South Atlantic Association. [173789]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* At this early stage, we have yet to decide the detail of our plans for the 25th anniversary of the Falklands Conflict. However, we will be consulting key stakeholders for their views and will give careful consideration to these.

Mine Clearance

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many British service personnel are involved in mine clearance and explosive ordnance disposal; and in which countries such personnel are working. [164326]

Mr. Ingram: There are approximately 170 British service personnel involved in mine clearance and explosive ordnance disposal on overseas operations and exercises. They are deployed to Iraq, Kosovo, Bosnia, the Falklands, Afghanistan, Kenya and Canada. There are approximately 200 held at high readiness for EOD tasks within the United Kingdom.

Nuclear Safety

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 27 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 873W, on Nuclear Installations (Aircraft Incidents), what reviews have taken place of the flight paths taken by RAF planes in United Kingdom airspace following the infringements he listed. [171647]

Mr. Ingram: There are no fixed flight paths in the United Kingdom Military Low Flying System. All low flying sorties are planned individually in order to spread the distribution of low flying across the UK as much as possible and provide maximum training value by ensuring that a variety of terrain is overflown.

The increases to restricted areas around nuclear facilities from one to two nautical miles up to 2,000 ft, effective from November 2001, are considered sufficient to preserve the safety and integrity of the sites.

Paper Recycling

Mr. Breed: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) when his Department expects to implement in full the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for

printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post consumer waste; [171820]

(2) what percentage of paper for printed publications used by the Department in 2002–03 was from recycled sources; and how much post consumer waste this paper contained; [171818]

(3) what measures he has put in place to ensure that his Department meets the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post consumer waste; [171819]

(4) what percentage of copying paper used by the Department in 2002–03 was from recycled sources; and how much post consumer waste this paper contained. [171817]

Mr. Caplin: The number of suppliers of paper across the Ministry of Defence means that the information requested is not readily available. It is likely to take some time to collate and this work is now under way. I will write to the hon. Member when I can and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

RAF Gibraltar

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Royal Air Force aircraft used RAF Gibraltar in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004 broken down by type; how many other air forces used Gibraltar in each year; and how many aircraft were involved in each case. [173775]

Mr. Ingram: The number and type of military aircraft that used RAF Gibraltar in 2003 and up to 30 April 2004 is as follows:

Royal air forceaircraft type	*2003*	*2004*[1]
C130	135	56
Hawk	76	—
Tornado F3	60	32
Tornado GR4	199	—
Nimrod	222	30
HS125	4	2
CH47	12	—
Puma	10	—
Merlin	2	—
Jaguar	14	—
C17	6	2

Royal navy aircraft type	*2003*	*2004*[1]
Falcon DA50	99	18
Hawk	140	30
Sea Harrier	40	—
Jetstream	4	2
Lynx	228	28
Sea King	82	2

Other forces	*2003*	*2004*[1]
USA-C130	2	—
USA-C26	8	—
USA-Learjet	6	4
Canadian-C130	2	—
Canadian-Sea King	78	—
Canadian-CL60	2	—
Morrocan-C560	2	—
Morrocan-CN35	4	4
New Zealand-P3	—	2

1 Until 30 April.

Warship Support Agency

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what criteria are used by the Warship Support Agency's Maritime Support Strategy element to assess support through life for major future naval equipment. [173701]

Mr. Ingram: The Maritime Support Strategy (MSS) is an integral part of the broader Defence Logistics Organisation's Support Solution Envelope. This stipulates the following principles, tailored for each project, against which through life support is assessed:

coherence with wider defence strategies, structures, policies, plans and initiatives;

coherence with related support programmes, existing and planned;

demonstration of achievable, flexible and adaptable operational and through-life sustainability; and

a cost-effective means of delivering optimised military capability or business benefits that offers value for money through life.

The MSS provides further detailed information for the application of these principles within the maritime environment. In addition, the support proposal must be comprehensive, with a demonstrably acceptable level of risk.

Wreck Management

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the Under-Secretary of State's letter reference D/US of S/IC 1295/04/A of 5 April 2004, what action he is taking to resolve the legal principle in international law of the ownership of wrecks; and what lessons have been learned in wreck management for his Department's work on HMS Royal Oak in Scapa Flow. [166925]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence is consulting with other Government Departments, including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, as to the most appropriate means of resolving the legal principle in international law of the ownership of wrecks.

As to HMS Royal Oak, every opportunity has been taken during the wreck remediation work on this vessel to further our understanding of the technical and environmental issues associated with the management of such wrecks. Our investment in Royal Oak has highlighted that detailed risk and environmental assessment is key to remediation work; that removal of oil, rather than containment, may be the best solution in certain circumstances; that it is important to work closely with industry to identify non-intrusive technological solutions to meet the challenging conditions on similar wrecks; and that there is a need for clear and concise mapping of a wreck and the surrounding site before the start of remediation work.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Aid (Africa)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what projects his Department has *(a)* run, *(b)* directly and solely financed and *(c)* directly financed with other contributors in (i) Uganda, (ii) Rwanda, (iii) Burundi and (iv) the Democratic Republic of Congo in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [173813]

Hilary Benn: The following table lists those projects with a commitment of £1 million or more funded by DFID in Uganda, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo since 1997, along with details of when they were started, their total value and whether they are solely financed or financed in partnership with other donors. There were no such projects funded by DFID in Burundi. I have not listed the projects below this level in view of the number of activities that would involve.

DFID acknowledges the importance of working collaboratively within the wider donor community, rather than operating independently. In all of the countries listed DFID is working actively to promote donor collaboration and harmonisation, both to improve the coherence of donor support and to cut down the transaction costs faced by recipient governments. Whenever solely financed projects are supported (e.g. in response to requests from humanitarian agencies) DFID seeks to do so in full knowledge of the support being provided in that field by other contributors.

Project Title / Country	*Spending Code Created*	*Commitment*	*Financed by*
Uganda			
Deregulation project preparation	14 January 1997	1,915,818	Solely funded by DFID
Uganda Prog Aid	28 February 1997	20,000,000	Harmonised with other donors
Forest Sector Pol & Strat	4 March 1997	6,963,000	Co-financed by GOU, NORAD, EU, GTZ, UNDP
Commodities Support to the HIV/AIDS, STI and TB Programmes	5 March 1997	2,395,000	Solely funded by DFID
UNICEF E Polio Immunization/Oral Rehydration Salts	20 March 1997	3,110,000	Harmonised with other partners
Renewable Natural Resources Strategy	12 June 1997	1,031,698	Solely funded by DFID
Uganda Fish Farming	13 June 1997	2,227,000	Solely funded by DFID
Uganda Lake Management	13 June 1997	4,876,000	Solely funded by DFID
Economic Reform and Primary Education	24 September 1997	20,000,000	Solely funded by DFID
Cont. to HIPC Trust fund	19 March 1998	6,402,439	Co financed by other donors
Appropriate Technology (Uganda) Project for Rural Enterprise	25 March 1998	1,057,183	Harmonised with other donors
Improving Rural Livelihoods	21 April 1998	4,985,000	Solely funded by DFID
Education Sector Programme (ESP)	8 May 1998	7,000,000	Solely funded by DFID
Uganda Land Laws (Tenure Project)	11 May 1998	1,350,000	Solely funded by DFID
Cholera and Ebola Uganda Emergency Support	20 May 1998	1,825,060	Solely funded by DFID
In Country Training Programme	20 May 1998	2,600,000	Solely funded by DFID
Poverty Monitoring—Uganda	25 June 1998	1,260,000	Solely funded by DFID
Primary SFAC project	14 July 1998	2,109,050	Solely funded by DFID
Eradication of Polio in East Africa	5 August 1998	5,167,251	Harmonised with other donors
Prog. Aid for Pov.Red.98/2000	12 August 1998	18,000,000	Harmonised with other donors
Education Sector Support	26 November 1998	60,000,000	Harmonised with other donors
National Water & Sanitation Support Programme	6 January 1999	4,987,000	Harmonised with other donors
Civil Society Programme	14 June 1999	8,300,000	Harmonised with other donors
Anti-Corruption Support	6 July 1999	2,000,000	Co-financed by DANIDA
Support to Uganda Bureau of Statistics	1 February 2000	3,250,000	Co-financed by GoU and World Bank
Support to Government Of Uganda/UNICEF Health Programme	22 March 2000	2,850,000	Harmonised with other donors
Prog. Aid Pov. Reduct. 99/00	24 March 2000	14,500,000	Harmonised with other donors
Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) Support	9 June 2000	5,529,930	Solely funded by DFID
Poverty Eradication Action Plan Budget Support Grant	12 December 2000	138,500,000	Harmonised with other donors
HIV AIDS Umbrella Prog	11 April 2001	6,260,000	Harmonised with other donors
Financial Sector Deepening	1 June 2001	7,135,462	Solely funded by DFID
Acholi land Conflict Reduction	14 August 2001	1,755,155	Harmonised with other donors
Business Services Uganda	21 August 2001	1,500,000	Solely funded by DFID
UNICEF Appeal for acholi	9 April 2002	1,270,000	Harmonised with other donors
Assistance to the Pop Census	19 July 2002	1,000,000	Solely funded by DFID
Humanitarian response N Uganda	8 January 2003	7,054,912	Harmonised with other donors
Decentralisation Support Programme	18 February 2003	2,650,000	Co-funded by World Bank
Priority Humanitarian Response in Northern Uganda-UNICEF	17 March 2004	1,000,000	Harmonised with other donors
		383,816,958	
Rwanda			
Gender Mainstreaming Development Programme	26 September 1997	1,670,000	Solely funded by DFID
Rwanda Revenue Authority Phs I	9 January 1998	1,040,000	Solely funded by DFID
Rwanda Revenue Authority 3	19 November 1998	7,218,800	Solely funded by DFID
Rwanda Revenue Authority 4 Local costs	10 January 2001	1,000,000	Solely funded by DFID
Rwanda Revenue Authority Phase 4	17 January 2001	3,565,000	Solely funded by DFID
Demobilisation & Reintegration	13 March 1998	1,000,000	Solely funded by DFID
High Commissioner Human Rights	19 March 1998	2,000,000	Solely funded by DFID
BBC Lifeline	11 November 1998	1,475,588	Solely funded by DFID
Financial Aid	15 December 1998	93,000,000	Harmonised with other donors
Household Survey	25 August 1999	1,300,000	Solely funded by DFID
Poverty Reduction Strategy	13 June 2000	1,410,000	Solely funded by DFID
Rwanda Education Sector Support Programme	23 January 2001	10,000,000	Harmonised with other donors

Project Title / Country	Spending Code Created	Commitment	Financed by
(ESSP)			
Rwanda ESSP	2 January 2002	3,530,000	Harmonised with other donors
Development Central Statistics	22 July 2002	1,500,000	Solely funded by DFID
Demobilisation & Reintegration Committee	30 July 2002	5,500,000	Solely funded by DFID
Rwanda DBS 2003/4–2005/6	25 November 2003	82,000,000	Solely funded by DFID
Rwanda Rev Auth—Phase V	4 December 2003	4,310,000	Solely funded by DFID
		221,519,388	
Congo Dem Rep			
World Bank Trust Fund	19 March 1998	5,977,286	Co-financed with other donors
ICRC Emergency Appeal 2001	13 February 2001	5,500,000	Co-financed with other donors
ICRC Emergency Appeal 2002	9 December 2002	2,500,000	Co-financed with other donors
UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs	20 February 2003	1,000,000	Co-financed with other donors
ICRC Emergency Appeal 2003	18 March 2003	2,500,000	Co-financed with other donors
Insecticide Nets	17 September 2003	3,427,147	Solely funded by DFID
Support to the Poverty Reduction Strategy Process	11 December 2003	1,100,000	Co-financed with other donors
DRC Quick Start Health IRC	22 December 2003	3,414,016	Solely funded by DFID
UNICEF Accelerated Vaccination Activities	25 February 2004	1,000,000	Co-financed with other donors
International Committee Red Cross –Emergency Appeal 2004	4 March 2004	2,500,000	Co-financed with other donors
Medecins Sans Frontieres Primary Health Care	30 March 2004	1,035,150	Solely funded by DFID
		29,953,599	

Colombia

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what assessment his Department has made of the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Co-ordinators' comments on 10 May 2004 concerning the humanitarian situation in Colombia; and if he will make a statement; [173368]

(2) what *(a)* aid and *(b)* relief plans are in place for a possible humanitarian crisis in Colombia; what the predicted roll-out times are; and if he will make a statement. [173369]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID notes that the Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Jan Egeland, indicated that the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), together with the Government of Colombia and Non-Governmental Organisations, intend to launch a new humanitarian plan of action next month focused on the internally displaced. DFID will consider it carefully and discuss the details with OCHA once it is launched.

DFID stands ready to provide appropriate humanitarian assistance in response to humanitarian crises wherever they occur and seeks to respond as quickly as possible against an assessment of priority needs. The extent and nature of any UK response is determined by the magnitude of need and as part of a coordinated international response.

The European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) has already committed €8 million of humanitarian assistance for 2004, of which the United Kingdom's share is some €1.44 million.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many people his Department estimates to be *(a)* internally displaced in Colombia, *(b)* displaced from Colombia to Panama and *(c)* displaced from Colombia to Venezuela; how these figures have changed since 2000; and if he will make a statement. [173443]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: No universally accepted figures of displaced Colombians exist. In his statement of 10 May 2004, the Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Jan Egeland, stated that 2 million people had become displaced in Colombia in the past 15 years. According to CODHES, a Colombian NGO, about 3,090,000 people were internally displaced from 1984–2003, of which 1,247,000 were over the period 2000–03. The Colombian Government figures estimates a figure of 1,148,000 over the latter period.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees estimates that there are 2,430 Colombian 'persons of concern' in Panama and around 8,860 in Venezuela. However, these figures are generally considered to represent only a proportion of displaced people to these countries, particularly in Venezuela given the effect the Venezuelan Government's concern about the influx of displaced Colombians is having on Colombians' desire to register.

Departmental Projects

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when he will publish his strategy referred to on page 190 of the 2004 Departmental Report for improving project scoring of the Department's low-risk bilateral projects. [174119]

Hilary Benn: DFID will outline in both the Autumn Performance Report 2004, and the Departmental Report 2005, the range of measures put in place to improve project scoring. These are likely to centre upon strengthening guidance and lesson learning within DFID as key to improving programme delivery.

Iraq

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what new measures he plans to ensure the safety of British civilians who are helping to deliver aid and reconstruction in Iraq. [173648]

Hilary Benn: Extensive measures are taken to protect all DFID staff and contractors. All DFID staff and consultants employed individually are provided with body armour, safety and communications equipment, security training, briefing and armed protection. Contractors are responsible for the security arrangements of their staff but the costs are covered by the UK Government. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in receipt of DFID support are also responsible for their own security. DFID maintains a regular dialogue with them on security issues and will fund their security needs where appropriate. All of these security arrangements are kept under constant review.

Primary Education

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what percentage of children are in primary education in the top 30 UK development partner countries. [171691]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The percentage of children that are in primary education, as measured by primary school net enrolment rates, in the UK's top 30 development partner countries is as follows:

Country	*Primary school enrolment (Percentage net)*[1]
Angola	37
Bangladesh	89
Cambodia	95
China	93
Cote d'Ivoire	64
Egypt, Arab Republic	93
Ethiopia	47
Ghana	58
India	1,021
Indonesia	92
Jordan	94
Kenya	69
Malawi	101
Morocco	78
Mozambique	54
Nepal	72
Pakistan	66
Philippines	93
Poland	98
Romania	93
Russian Federation	93
Sierra Leone	No Data
South Africa	89
Sri Lanka	97
Tanzania	47
Uganda	109
Vietnam	95
West Bank and Gaza	No Data
Zambia	66
Zimbabwe	80

[1] Percentage gross enrolment figure used as no net figure available.

Note:
The 30 countries in the table are those used to measure the universal primary education (UPE) target included in the PSA 2001–04.

Source:
World Development Indicators 2003 CD rom.

Net enrolment ratio is the ratio of the number of children of official school age (as defined by the national education system) who are enrolled in school to the population of the corresponding official school age. Enrolment ratios, while a useful measure of participation in education, also have significant limitations, which can result, on occasion, on an figure in excess of 100 per cent. for enrolments rates in a year, primarily due to errors in estimates of school age populations. School administrators may also report exaggerated enrolments, especially if there is a financial incentive to do so, overage or underage enrolments frequently occur for cultural or economic reasons and there can be a lack of distinction between new entrants and repeaters. The data for some countries, including Uganda, may be revised as a result of the factors in the table.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what percentage of children are enrolled in primary school in each of the 16 countries in sub-Saharan Africa for which the Millennium Development Goal on enrolment has been set. [171680]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The percentage of children who are enrolled in primary school in each of the 16 countries in sub-Saharan Africa for which the MDG on enrolment has been set is as follows:

Country	*Primary school enrolment (Percentage net)*
Congo, Democratic Republic	33
Ethiopia	47
Ghana	58
Kenya	69
Lesotho	78
Malawi	101
Mozambique	54
Nigeria	No data
Rwanda	97
Sierra Leone	No data
South Africa	89
Sudan	46
Tanzania	47
Uganda	109
Zambia	66
Zimbabwe	80

Source:
DFID's PSA reporting.

Net enrolment ratio is the ratio of the number of children of official school age (as defined by the national education system) who are enrolled in school to the population of the corresponding official school age. Enrolment ratios, while a useful measure of participation in education, also have significant limitations, which can result, on occasion, on a figure in excess of 100 per cent. for enrolments rates in a year, primarily due to errors in estimates of school age populations. School administrators may also report exaggerated enrolments, especially if there is a financial incentive to do so, overage or underage enrolments frequently occur for cultural or economic reasons and there can be a lack of distinction between new entrants and repeaters. The data for some countries, including Uganda, may be revised as a result of the above factors.

World Bank

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what programmes his Department *(a)* (i) runs and (ii) finances through the Inter-American Development Bank and *(b)* finances

through the World Bank aimed at solving the social and economic problems of the native tribes in South America; which (A) countries and (B) tribes are included in each programme; when each was established; and what contribution his Department has made in each year of the programme. [173819]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: 10 per cent. of the Latin American population is indigenous, ranging from less than 1 per cent. in countries such as Brazil and Venezuela, to over 50 per cent. in Bolivia and Guatemala. Most of DFID's programmes in Latin America address the issue of inclusion of various excluded populations, including indigenous people. This includes its support through the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

While both the IDB and the World Bank have a number of projects, or components of projects, specifically targeted at indigenous people, other projects, not so targeted, often have a similar or greater impact. This is particularly the case in countries where indigenous people represent a significant proportion of the population.

DFID is specifically working with the IDB to contribute to its efforts to ensure appropriate account is taken of indigenous people's issues in its policies and their implementation. DFID is providing US$203,500 contribution to the consultation process in the IDE's preparation of an updated strategic framework on indigenous development. At present, DFID does not have any specific programmes targeted at indigenous people in Latin America with the World Bank.

Yemen

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when he next plans to visit Yemen. [R] [173779]

Hilary Benn: I have no plans at present to visit Yemen. I will consider a visit when the DFID programme there is further developed.

CABINET OFFICE

Magistrates

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many magistrates are aged *(a)* 25 to 30, *(b)* 30 to 40, *(c)* 40 to 50, *(d)* 50 to 60, *(e)* 60 to 65 and *(f)* 65 to 70 in (i) Lancashire and (ii) Chorley magistrates' courts, broken down by sex. [173768]

Mr. Alexander: At 31 March 2004 the available figures show that there were 616 men and 526 women serving as Active Magistrates in the Lancashire Commission Area. Of this number, the Chorley Bench comprises of 37 men and 36 women. These statistics are broken down into age categories as shown in the following table.

	Chorley		*Lancashire*	
Age	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
Under 30	0	0	1	2
30–40	0	1	12	17
40–50	3	3	91	89
50–60	16	21	244	249
60–65	17	8	188	118
66–70	1	3	80	51

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office who is responsible for selecting new magistrates in Lancashire; and what process is used. [173769]

Mr. Alexander: As Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancashire, I have the responsibility for the appointment of magistrates in Lancashire, Greater Manchester and Merseyside.

In the Lancashire area, I am aided by the Lancashire Advisory Committee and its five Sub-Committees, who interview and then recommend to me those found suitable for appointment as magistrates. These Sub-Committees generally comprise of six magistrate members and three individuals who are not magistrates.

Throughout the selection process, the Advisory Committees adhere to the guidance set out in the Directions for Advisory Committees. The guidance offered in these Directions is identical to that issued by the Lord Chancellor to his Advisory Committees in the remainder of England and Wales.

Generally, candidates must demonstrate six key qualities to be found suitable for appointment:

Good character

Understanding and communication

Social awareness

Maturity and sound temperament

Sound judgement

Commitment and reliability

These qualities are tested during a two-stage interview process by a panel of a Committee or Sub-Committee comprising of two magistrate and one non-magistrate members.

Departmental Annual Report

Norman Lamb: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how much the production of the Cabinet Office's latest annual report cost; how many copies were printed; how many copies of it were sold at its cover price; to whom copies of the report have been provided free of charge; and how many copies were provided free of charge. [171142]

Mr. Alexander: The Stationery Office Ltd. (TSO) produced the latest Cabinet Office Departmental Report (Cm 6226) . TSO determines the number of copies printed for retail sale and meets the costs of printing and publication. TSO does not charge these costs to departments. Since its publication on 28 April, TSO has sold 306 copies of the 2004 Cabinet Office Departmental Report and has provided the Cabinet Office with 150 copies. The cost to the Cabinet Office is £5,905, covering the design, typesetting, production and printing of this year's Report, as well as for the 150 copies received. The Cabinet Office copies were mainly distributed within the Department and to some other Government Departments. The Report can be

downloaded free of charge from the Cabinet Office website at http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/reports/annualreport/dept-report.asp.

Emergency Communications Network

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how much has been spent in each of the last three years on maintaining and utilising the Emergency Communications Network. [172749]

Mr. Alexander: In each of the last three years the Emergency Communications Network budget has been £5.2 million. This sum is accounted for in the costs of system maintenance, provision of private line connections and location moves required by the users.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Cyprus

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make it his policy to ensure that any new plan for the Cyprus problem will not impose a financial burden on the Greek Cypriots that they find unacceptable. [174137]

Mr. MacShane: The Government, EU, UN and international donor community have worked hard to ensure that fears of financial insecurity may not reasonably be adduced as grounds for opposing a comprehensive settlement to the Cyprus problem.

At the European Commission's international donors' conference for Cyprus on 15 April 2004, the international community and the international financial institutions signalled their strong support for the UN Secretary-General's plan. The IMF explained that much of its advice on fiscal and other economic matters had been reflected in the plan, which it would help the parties implement with technical assistance, and—if necessary—balance of payments support. The IMF's considered view was that the Annan Plan was "economically and financially viable", and would deliver a higher rate of growth for the United Cyprus Republic than was likely to be achieved under the status quo. The World Bank also signalled its intention to support implementation of the plan, including to help address income disparities. The EIB and the Council of Europe Development Bank supported this analysis. Representatives from many countries, with the UK to the fore, made financial and political commitments to support the UNSG's proposals.

European Convention on Human Rights

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the implications of the Loizidou case, concerning Turkey's acts in Northern Cyprus, in relation to the applicability of the European Convention on Human Rights to the actions of UK personnel in Iraq. [171556]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* The applicability of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) to the actions of UK personnel in Iraq is a matter which is in issue in the current cases before the High Court brought by the families of 13 Iraqi civilians. The Government's position in those cases is that ECHR rights have no application in Iraq. The citizens of Cyprus, prior to invasion by Turkey, were the beneficiaries of rights under the ECHR, by virtue of Cyprus' membership of the Council of Europe. The decision of the European Court of Human Rights in Loizidou was to the effect that they did not lose those rights when Turkey assumed sole effective control of part of the territory of Cyprus. The position in Iraq, of course, is critically different. The citizens of Iraq had no rights at all under the ECHR prior to military action by the coalition forces; furthermore, the UK does not exercise the same degree of control over Iraq as existed in relation to the Turkish occupation of northern Cyprus.

Indonesia

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Indonesian authorities concerning the recent resurgence of violence in Ambon, with particular reference to *(a)* the steps needed to stop the violence, *(b)* the need for the security forces to act in an impartial and professional manner and *(c)* the process by which the perpetrators of the violence will be brought to justice. [173760]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We have consistently made clear to the Indonesian authorities our view that long-term solutions to regional conflicts can only be achieved through negotiation and consultation. While we have not made any representations to the Indonesian Government about the recent violence in Ambon, our embassy has kept in close contact with the UN and NGOs in Ambon and is continuing to monitor the situation there. On 29 April the Acting Coordinating Minister for Politics and Security, Hari Sabarno, visited Ambon with the National Police Chief, Da'i Bachtiar and agreed to increase security personnel there in order to restore order. Additional personnel have since arrived in Ambon.

We fully support the Malino Peace Agreement for Sulawesi and Maluku, which brought an end to large-scale inter-communal violence.

Iraq

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the US Central Intelligence Agency comments on the 10 September 2002 draft of the UK Government's Dossier, Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction, included comments on the claim that Iraq sought to procure uranium from Africa. [167278]

Mr. Rammell: The US Central Intelligence Agency did offer a comment, just before the September dossier was finalised, noting that they had concerns about the credibility of the reference to the supply of uranium from Africa. But they provided no explanation for their concerns. UK officials were confident that the statement in the dossier was based on reliable intelligence. A judgment was therefore made to retain the reference.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 30 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 581W, on Iraq, whether the source upon which it based its claim in the September 2002 dossier, that Iraq sought to procure uranium from Africa, is the same information that it understands was discussed with the International Atomic Energy Authority before 7 March 2003. [173387]

Mr. MacShane: I refer my hon. Friend to the answers given by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary on 6 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1733–1734W.

Minority Languages (Europe)

Mr. MacDonald: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the Council of Europe's recent report on implementation of the European Charter on minority and lesser-used languages; and whether the Government will be publishing a response. [174186]

Mr. MacShane: The Government welcomed the Council of Europe's report of 24 March 2004 on the implementation of the Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. The report praises the UK in setting up official bodies for Welsh, Irish and Ulster-Scots. It also applauds the UK for the development of a semi-official body for Scottish Gaelic. The report commends the UK's dynamic approach to the instrument of ratification in recognising Manx and Cornish. It also noted the same approach regarding the ratification for Welsh.

The UK Government have already made a response to the report, and this is included in the full report published by the Council of Europe.

Russia

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assistance has been given to Russia through the Individual Partnership Programme under NATO's Partnership for Peace Programme; what the results have been; whether he expects further assistance to be given to ensure democratic control of the armed forces in Russia; and if he will make a statement. [164649]

Mr. MacShane: I apologise for the late response which was due to an administration error.

Whilst Russia is a member of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and the Partnership for Peace (PfP) initiative, it does not have an Individual Partnership Plan. It has a presence at the PfP's Partnership Co-ordination Cell, and participates in a small number of PfP exercises.

Russia also engages with NATO through the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), which was founded in 2002. NATO's role is not to assist Russia. Rather, the NRC is a forum to facilitate co-operation. The NRC's work plan addresses a broad defence reform agenda that strengthens democratic control of the armed forces. Other areas of joint work include: the struggle against terrorism; crisis management; non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; arms control and confidence-building measures; Theatre Missile Defence; search and rescue at sea; military-to-military co-operation; and civil emergencies.

Through the NRC's Ad Hoc Working Group on Defence Reform, NATO countries and Russia have come together in seminars and other events to share expertise with the aim of enhancing the performance of all involved. The coming year will see a broad range of work, including the development of measures to enhance transparency in defence planning.

Turkey

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Turkish Government on political prisoners being held in Turkish prisons; which individual cases were discussed; and if he will make a statement. [173536]

Mr. MacShane: We are in constant dialogue with the Turkish Government on human rights issues, which includes prisoners' rights. We also raise individual cases, such as that of Leyla Zana and the three other Kurdish Democracy Party MPs. I discussed the case with Leyla Zana's lawyer during my trip to Turkey in January, before raising it with the authorities. The outcome of the retrial is extremely disappointing and at odds with the reform process to which the Turkish Government are clearly committed. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister raised human rights issues with the Turkish Prime Minister during his visit to Turkey as part of the first ever UK-Turkey Prime Ministerial summit.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Turkish Government on the *(a)* health and *(b)* prison conditions under which Mr. Abdullah Ocalan is being held by the Turkish authorities. [173996]

Mr. MacShane: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Hayes and Harlington (John McDonnell) on 8 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1323W.

We note that the Turkish authorities have been in dialogue with the Centre for Prevention of Torture on Ocalan's prison conditions and have agreed to undertake a number of measures in light of recommendations made by the centre.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Civil Service

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer of 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1638W, on staff reduction, (1) what discussions he has had with trade unions regarding plans for a net reduction of 30,000 civil servants in his Department; [171423]

(2) by what date he intends to have reduced civil servant jobs in his Department by 30,000; [171424]

(3) whether the intended net reduction of 30,000 civil servants in his Department will include the reduction of 18,000 for which plans have been in development since 2002; [171425]

(4) what the baseline figure is for the intended net reduction of 30,000 civil servants in his Department; [171426]

(5) if he will break down the net reduction of 30,000 civil servants in his Department by reductions made through *(a)* the new business model being rolled out in Jobcentre Plus, *(b)* the Pensions Transformation Programme and reductions in staffing in the Pension Service, *(c)* the introduction of child support reform and *(d)* savings in back office functions. [171427]

Maria Eagle: The 30,000 reductions are part of a four year programme to 2008 which we are discussing with our unions and include the 18,000 reductions previously outlined in 2002. We met with our Trade Unions on 6 April and 13 May and have a further meeting planned in May.

It is too early to define how the reductions will be profiled across each part of the Department and its businesses. We are using our current staffing level of around 130,000 as the baseline for the reductions.

Departmental Contracts

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the *(a)* nature and *(b)* value was of all contracts, consultancies or other services placed with the accountancy firms (i) Deloitte & Touche, (ii) Ernst & Young, (iii) KPMG and (iv) PricewaterhouseCoopers since 2000–01 by the Department and its agencies. [166087]

Jane Kennedy: DWP was established in June 2001. The information is not available in the form requested and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. However, we are able to provide total spend by this Department with these accountancy firms, which is as follows:

£ million

	2001–02[1]	*2002–03*
Deloitte & Touche	8.1	4.2
Ernst & Young	[2]2.3	3.5
KPMG	1.1	2.6
PricewaterhouseCoopers	0.5	1.4

[1] Estimate.

[2] Cap Gemini Ernst & Young.

The figures for 2001–02 figures are for the complete year and are estimates of the spend for the legacy organisations. Also, 2003–04 figures will be available in June and July 2004.

Pensions

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer of 23 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 709W, on pension forecasts, how many combined pension forecasts have been issued in each month since their introduction; and how frequently they are reissued to individuals. [171103]

Malcolm Wicks: DWP does not hold information on the number of combined pension forecasts that are issued by employers and providers each month. However, the figures in the following table show the number of state pension forecasts that DWP has supplied to an employer or pension provider for inclusion in a combined pension forecast. This information is supplied for each month since the introduction of combined pension forecasts.

All the employers and providers currently delivering combined pension forecasts issue them annually to their scheme members.

Date	*Volume*
Pilot year 1	19,291
Pilot year 2	15,543
2001	
October	0
November	0
December	0
2002	
January	0
February	0
March	0
April	14,602
May	0
June	467
July	9,127
August	0
September	5,537
October	0
November	0
December	1,168
2003	
January	0
February	0
March	0
April	30,005
May	20,497
June	113,223
July	97,310
August	82,945
September	52,543
October	88,324
November	138,152
December	131,317
2004	
January	150,202
February	77,700
March	72,095
Total	1,120,048

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of people who claimed the state pension but lived outside the United Kingdom in each year from 1990–91 to 2003–04; and if he will make a statement. [173908]

Malcolm Wicks: The information requested is in the table.

September	*Number of people*
1990	575,800
1991	609,900
1992	632,000
1993	630,100
1994	674,300
1995	712,800
1996	741,700
1997	770,200
1998	797,300
1999	834,100

September	*Number of people*
2000	857,600
2001	887,700
2002	913,300
2003	952,400

Notes:

1. The figures are for cases outside Great Britain and are rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. Figures for September 1990, 1991, 1992, and 1993 do not include people receiving only additional pension or graduated retirement benefit.

Sources:

1. Figures for September 1990 to September 1994 were taken from the Social Security Statistics publication 1995.
2. Figures for September 1996 and September 1997 were taken from the Social Security Statistics publication 1999.
3. Figures from September 1997 to date were taken from the 5 per cent. samples from the Pensions Strategy Computer System taken on 30 September of each year.

PRIME MINISTER

Iraq

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Prime Minister (1) what *(a)* instruction and *(b)* guidance (i) his officials and (ii) Ministers were following prior to the decision not to make the February International Committee of the Red Cross report available to him as soon as it became available to his office; [173573]

(2) what *(a)* written and *(b)* oral briefing was provided by officials in his office to inform him of the contents of the International Committee of the Red Cross report and actions taken (i) as a result of officials having read the report and (ii) prior to the full report being made available to him. [173574]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave to the right hon. Member for Folkestone and Hythe (Mr. Howard) at Prime Minister's questions on 12 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 347–49.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Community Legal Services Partnerships

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what representation community legal services partnerships have on local strategic partnerships; and if he will liaise with appropriate ministerial colleagues to promote such representation. [173953]

Mr. Lammy: Working relationships between Community Legal Service Partnerships (CLSPs) and Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) are active in all areas. CLSPs are represented in a number of LSPs throughout England (there are no LSPs in Wales). There are variations to the extent to which CLSPs are joining up with LSPs, and to the form of representation, due to the varying nature and structure of each LSP. Ongoing work to develop relationships between CLSPs and LSPs is being actively pursued throughout the English regions.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the workings of community legal services partnerships, with particular reference to *(a)* research into patterns of need, supply and capacity, *(b)* priorities for service development and the deployment of resources, *(c)* disseminating good and best practice and *(d)* publicising services which are available. [173954]

Mr. Lammy: The Independent Review of the Community Legal Service (CLS), which was published on 28 April 2004, provides a detailed assessment of the workings of CLS Partnerships. The Review recommends that CLS Partnerships have their activities re-focused in the short-term, and are placed on a statutory footing in the longer term. My Department is currently seeking views on the Review's recommendations, as part of a process of consultation. We will be considering the best way in which to build on the success of the CLS in the light of the Review's recommendations and the comments we receive. In addition, we have announced a fundamental legal aid review, which will look at the long-term future of the legal aid system, focusing on how best to provide publicly funded legal services to those who need them.

Timber

Ms Walley: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether the Department plans to contribute financially to the establishment of the second phase of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [167624]

Mr. Lammy: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Minister of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 31W.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Criminal Justice

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the progress made on the Attorney General's examination of police powers, bail arrangements and other criminal justice matters announced by the right hon. Member for Hamilton, North and Belshill (Dr. Reid) on 24 July 2002; and if he will publish the Attorney General's conclusions. [172155]

Mr. Pearson: On 29 August 2002 the Attorney-General delivered to the then Secretary of State a paper outlining measures which might be taken to improve the possibilities of successful prosecution for acts of terrorism, violence and organised crime. The paper recommended that policy consideration be given to the introduction of an ASBO regime for Northern Ireland, that consideration be given to the use of section 108 of the Terrorism Act, that the DPP and Police should give further consideration on how co-operation could be improved, and that policy consideration be given to introducing pre-charge bail conditions. In September 2002, the Northern Ireland Law and Order Action Group was established and it has since considered ASBOs and bail in detail.

Following a public consultation on measures to tackle anti-social behaviour in Northern Ireland, a further consultation of legislative proposals to introduce anti-social behaviour orders is under way.

Cases are proceeding through the courts in which section 108 statements have been made.

The two pilot schemes for the new Public Prosecution Service have introduced co-location working practices in which police officers operate from Prosecution Service offices, thus allowing the police immediate access to prosecution lawyers for advice on prosecutorial issues. Co-location will provide a firm basis on which to build closer co-operation.

The introduction of pre-charge bail conditions will be taken forward as part of a review of Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) in Northern Ireland announced by the then Minister of State in a written ministerial statement on 26 February 2004.

Alzheimer's Disease

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what future funding has been allocated specifically in relation to the development of treatment and care for Alzheimer's sufferers. [173272]

Angela Smith: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety is not planning to allocate funds specifically for the development of treatment and care of Alzheimer's sufferers. Allocations are made on the basis of Programmes of Care for different classes of patients and clients, rather than specific conditions. Decisions about funding for treatment and care are made by Health and Social Services Boards in light of local priorities and available resources.

Bill of Rights

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether it is his intention to bring forward a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [172876]

Mr. Spellar: The Government remains committed to facilitating the work of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission for Northern Ireland on proposals for a Bill of Rights. However, it remains our position that it would not be appropriate for the Government to comment until we receive the final advice from the Commission. We have therefore not reached any policy conclusions.

In addition the Government remains committed to establishing a broadly based forum on the Bill of Rights. We will engage the political parties in a renewed effort to build consensus to this end.

Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the dates on which he has had meetings with the Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice since his appointment. [173303]

Mr. Paul Murphy: While my colleague, John Spellar, met Kit Chivers on his appointment to the post of Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland in June last year, I have not yet had occasion to meet him. However, I have corresponded with him on the preparations he is making for the formal establishment of his inspectorate in the autumn and I recently endorsed his work programme along with his corporate and business plans for the period up to March 2006.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions he has had with the Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in relation to an inspection of the Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland. [173305]

Mr. Paul Murphy: I have not had discussions with the Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in relation to an inspection of the Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland. However, I have noted the proposed timing of an inspection of that office within the Inspectorate's work programme for the first 18 months of operation.

Criminal Justice Inspectorate

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many members of staff are employed within the Northern Ireland Criminal Justice Inspectorate; and if he will make a statement on recruitment to the Inspectorate. [173304]

Mr. Paul Murphy: Within recent months the Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland has been engaged in recruiting and appointing staff. A deputy Chief Inspector and Head of Research and Communications have been appointed. The process of recruiting inspectors is progressing as planned. The first of these should be in post by July, trained and ready to start the programme of inspections in the autumn. Senior support staff have also been identified and will be in post by that time.

Crown Employment (Nationality) Bill

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions took place at the recent Anglo-Irish summit concerning the Crown Employment (Nationality) Bill and the need for legislation; and if he will make a statement. [171537]

Mr. Pearson: The Joint Communique issued after the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference on 21 April 2004 confirms that this issue was raised; I have placed a copy in the Library.

However, it would be inappropriate to disclose details of the discussions beyond those contained in the communique in accordance with Part II, Paragraph 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information (defence, security and international relations: information whose disclosure would harm the conduct of international relations or affairs).

Departmental Annual Report

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much the production of his Department's latest annual report cost; how many copies were printed; how many copies of it were sold at its cover price; to whom copies of the report have been provided free of charge; and how many copies were provided free of charge. [171150]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The Northern Ireland Office Departmental Report 2004 was only completed on 30 April 2004 and made available to purchase on 7 May 2004, details of sales and final costs are not yet available. However, the details for the annual report for 2003 which I expect to be very similar to those for 2004, are as follows:

The Northern Ireland Office Departmental Report 2003 was produced by The Stationary Office (TSO). Costs of printing and publication are met directly by TSO and do not fall to Government. The Department was invoiced for the 180 copies that it requested. 856 copies were printed and TSO's records show that eight copies have been sold at its cover price of £30, and an additional 597 copies were sold at a reduced charge. The NIO supplied copies of the report free of charge to 159 parties. A list of those interested parties is set out in the following table.

The 2004 report is available in the Libraries of the House and to the public free of charge on the NIO website at http://www.nio.gov.uk/pdf/deptreport2004.pdf.

Distribution of the NIO Departmental Report 2003

Secretary of State, Ministers, Senior NIO Officials	20
Heads of NIO Agencies and Legal Offices	5
Parliamentary/House of Commons Library	28
NIO Information Offices (Belfast and London)	9
HM Treasury	3
Scottish and Welsh Offices	2
Head of NICS and Northern Ireland Permanent Secretaries	11
Northern Ireland MP's	18
Other interested MP's	3
1 MEP	1
Members of the House of Lords with an interest in Northern Ireland	25
Treasury Select Committee	20
Northern Ireland Select Committee	14
Total	159

Language Public Bodies

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much the Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure has contributed towards the costs of the production and staging of the Ulster Scots Production "On Eagle's Wing". [172763]

Angela Smith: The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure has made no direct contribution to the production and staging of "On Eagle's Wing". However, bodies funded by the Department have offered financial support totalling £175,000 of which £162,500 has been drawn down by the promoter, On Eagle's Wing Ltd.

Ministerial Visits

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list visits made by each Minister in the Department between December 2003 and April 2004, broken down by *(a)* date, *(b)* constituency visited and *(c)* cost. [171564]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The information requested by the hon. Member in relation to dates and constituencies visited is set out below. Information in relation to the cost of visits is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

	Constituency visited by right hon. Paul Murphy MP
2 December 2003	Belfast South
7 January 2004	Belfast South
7 January 2004	Belfast South
19 January 2004	North Down
21 January 2004	Foyle
04 February 2004	Belfast South
24 March 2004	Belfast North

	Constituency visited by right hon. Jane Kennedy MP
1 December 2003	Lagan Valley
17 December 2003	East Londonderry
7 January 2004	North Antrim
7 January 2004	South Belfast
8 January 2004	South Belfast
19 January 2004	Lagan Valley
20 January 2004	North Down
21 January 2004	South Belfast
28 January 2004	Foyle
3 February 2004	North Down
4 February 2004	East Londonderry
11 February 2004	East Londonderry
12 February 2004	South Belfast
16 February 2004	South Belfast
23 February 2004	Lagan Valley
23 February 2004	North Belfast
23 February 2004	North Down
1 March 2004	South Belfast
3 March 2004	North Antrim
3 March 2004	West and North Belfast
8 March 2004	East Belfast
9 March 2004	South Belfast
10 March 2004	Lagan Valley
10 March 2004	Newry and Armagh
10 March 2004	Fermanagh and South Tyrone
15 March 2004	South Belfast
16 March 2004	North Belfast
18 March 2004	South Belfast
18 March 2004	West Belfast
24 March 2004	West and North Belfast
25 March 2004	South Belfast
29 March 2004	Lagan Valley
29 March 2004	West Belfast
1 April 2004	East Londonderry

	Constituency visited by right hon. John Spellar MP
2 December 2003	South Belfast
12 January 2004	North Belfast
13 January 2004	East Antrim
13 January 2004	North Antrim
19 January 2004	South Belfast
19 January 2004	North Down
26 January 2004	Upper Bann
4 March 2004	South Down
4 March 2004	Upper Bann
5 March 2004	South Belfast
15 March 2004	South Antrim
16 March 2004	South Belfast
19 March 2004	South Belfast

	Constituency visited by Ian Pearson MP
2 December 2003	East Antrim
9 December 2003	North Belfast
9 December 2003	South Belfast
10 December 2003	East Belfast
11 December 2003	South Belfast
13 January 2004	South Belfast
13 January 2004	South Belfast
19 January 2004	South Belfast
19 January 2004	East Antrim
19 January 2004	North Antrim
19 January 2004	Foyle
20 January 2004	Foyle
22 January 2004	South Belfast
9 February 2004	East Belfast
13 February 2004	East Belfast
18 February 2004	East Antrim
18 February 2004	South Belfast
24 February 2004	Newry and Armagh
25 February 2004	North Down
25 February 2004	Cities of London and Westminster
26 February 2004	Kensington and Chelsea
3 March 2004	Meridan
4 March 2004	South Belfast
10 March 2004	West Belfast
24 March 2004	Mid Ulster
24 March 2004	Foyle
25 March 2004	South Belfast
26 March 2004	South Belfast
29 March 2004	South Down
29 March 2004	Lagan Valley
30 March 2004	South Belfast
30 March 2004	South Belfast
30 March 2004	Upper Bann
7 April 2004	West Tyrone
7 April 2004	South Belfast
19 April 2004	South Belfast
22 April 2004	Mid Ulster
27 April 2004	South Belfast
27 April 2004	South Belfast

	Constituency visited by Angela Smith MP
8 December 2003	South Antrim
9 December 2003	Foyle
9 December 2003	Mid Ulster
9 December 2003	South Belfast
10 December 2003	South Belfast
17 December 2003	West Tyrone
7 January 2004	South Belfast
7 January 2004	Foyle
8 January 2004	Foyle
9 January 2004	Foyle
9 January 2004	Mid Ulster
12 January 2004	East Belfast
12 January 2004	South Belfast
19 January 2004	South Belfast
21 January 2004	South Belfast
21 January 2004	North Belfast
26 January 2004	South Antrim
09 February 2004	South Belfast
16 February 2004	South Belfast
17 February 2004	North Belfast
17 February 2004	Newry and Armagh
18 February 2004	South Belfast
24 February 2004	South Belfast
02 March 2004	South Antrim
02 March 2004	South Belfast
03 March 2004	Strangford
03 March 2004	South Belfast
03 March 2004	Lagan Valley

	Constituency visited by Angela Smith MP
08 March 2004	South Belfast
09 March 2004	South Antrim
09 March 2004	North Antrim
10 March 2004	North Antrim
10 March 2004	East Londonderry
10 March 2004	Mid Ulster
18 March 2004	Fermanagh and South Tyrone
19 March 2004	Fermanagh and South Tyrone
19 March 2004	South Belfast
22 March 2004	East Belfast
23 March 2004	Newry and Armagh
24 March 2004	Newry and Armagh
24 March 2004	Upper Bann
29 March 2004	North Down
1 April 2004	North Belfast
2 April 2004	Newry and Armagh
2 April 2004	North Belfast
3 April 2004	East Antrim
6 April 2004	North Antrim
7 April 2004	East Londonderry
20 April 2004	East Belfast

	Constituency visited by Barry Gardiner MP
21 April 2004	East Belfast
21 April 2004	South Belfast
22 April 2004	South Belfast
27 April 2004	East Belfast
27 April 2004	East Belfast

MS Treatment

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what funding has been provided to make beta interferon and glatiramer available to multiple sclerosis sufferers; and if he will make a statement. [173606]

Angela Smith: A total of £3.6 million was spent on these disease-modifying therapies for multiple sclerosis sufferers in 2002–03, increasing to £4.1 million in 2003–04. The Health and Social Services Boards have provisionally allocated £4.5 million to cover the cost of these medicines for patients in the current financial year. This represents a 23 per cent. increase in funding since 2002–03.

A further £100,000 (recurrent and uplifted for inflation) has been provided since 2002–03 to enhance the infrastructure required for the delivery of these medicines.

Pressure Ulcers

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what actions are being taken to limit costs resulting from pressure ulcers. [173608]

Angela Smith: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in conjunction with the Northern Ireland Practice Education Council (NIPEC), is taking forward an Essence of Care Project aimed at improving fundamental aspects of patient care across all care settings. A number of areas of care will be examined, including the prevention, care and treatment of pressure ulcers. The Project will test benchmark

standards, support measures to improve quality, and help practitioners take a structured approach to sharing and improving practice, as well as identifying and remedying poor practice that result in unnecessary costs and poor outcomes.

Pupil Numbers (Secondary Schools)

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many pupils aged 11 to 15 there were in each of the last six years in maintained secondary schools in Northern Ireland; and how many and what percentage of pupils in the same period were aged 11 to 15 in maintained grammar schools in Northern Ireland. [172379]

Mr. Gardiner: The enrolment figures for 11 to 15-year-olds in grant aided schools in Northern Ireland for the last six years are as follows:

	Secondary (non-grammar) schools	*Grammar schools*	*Total*
1998–99	85,418	46,263	131,681
1999–2000	85,851	46,479	132,330
2000–01	85,996	46,359	132,355
2001–02	85,247	46,483	131,730
2002–03	84,249	46,453	130,702
2003–04	82,880	46,268	129,148

The percentages for 11 to 15-year-old enrolments in grant aided schools in Northern Ireland for the last six years are as follows:

	Secondary (non-grammar) schools	*Grammar schools*
1998–99	64.9	35.1
1999–2000	64.9	35.1
2000–01	65.0	35.0
2001–02	64.7	35.3
2002–03	64.5	35.5
2003–04	64.2	35.8

Student Nurses

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many nursing students have *(a)* withdrawn and *(b)* been forced to withdraw from their course in each of the past five years at universities in the Province. [173611]

Angela Smith: Information on the number of students who withdrew from their course is only readily available for the last four financial years and is as follows.

Financial year	*Number of permanent withdrawals*
1 April 2000—31 March 2001	50
1 April 2001—31 March 2002	64
1 April 2002—31 March 2003	100
1 April 2003—31 March 2004	70

There are currently in excess of 2,200 students actively pursuing their training.

Students may be asked to permanently withdraw from their course in the event of examination failure, breaches of discipline or continued poor performance while on practice placement.

Other reasons cited for withdrawal include personal reasons, domestic responsibilities and financial difficulties. The Universities can offer an option of a temporary withdrawal, as a possible solution to difficulties a student is experiencing.

SCOTLAND

Advisers/Consultants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much the Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies spent on external consultants and advisers in each of the last three years. [172549]

Mrs. McGuire: Spending on external consultants and advisers was as follows:

	£000
2001–2002	17,864
2002–2003	4,620
2003–2004 (est)	10,044

Departmental Annual Report

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much the production of his Department's latest annual report cost; how many copies were printed; how many copies of it were sold at its cover price; to whom copies of the report have been provided free of charge; and how many copies were provided free of charge. [171152]

Mrs. McGuire: The cost to the Scotland Office of producing the 2004 Annual Report was £4,119. The number of copies printed for the Office was 150 and the report is also available on the Scotland Office website. Copies of the report were provided to the Scottish Affairs Committee, other Government Departments and for use within the Office.

Other costs of printing and publication were met directly by the publisher, The Stationery Office Limited (TSO), and did not fall to the Government. TSO recoups these costs through sales and uses its commercial judgment as to the number of copies printed. TSO printed 550 copies of the report for their own use. As the report has only recently been published, TSO are not yet able to provide figures on sales.

Departmental Procurement

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what percentage of the *(a)* crockery, *(b)* cutlery and *(c)* glassware procured by his Department over the last five years is of British manufacture. [170807]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office has no responsibility for any catering outlets and purchases of crockery, cutlery and glassware have been minimal. Details about the manufacture of such items are not available.

Holyrood (Transport Competences)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what representations he has received from the Scottish Executive concerning the transfer of additional competences to Holyrood on transport matters. [174049]

Mrs. McGuire: No such representations have been received.

Productivity

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what his policy is for *(a)* increasing the productivity and *(b)* cutting the costs of his Department. [172173]

Mrs. McGuire: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my hon. Friend, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 149W.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 20 May 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Fruit Farming

19. **Hugh Robertson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on Government support for fruit farming. [174422]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra funds a substantial research and development programme of benefit to fruit farmers. Growers are also eligible for assistance under the England Rural Development Programme, for the first time, soft fruit will attract support as a result of CAP reform.

Fisheries

20. **Mr. MacDougall:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on Government measures to protect fish stocks in UK waters. [174423]

Mr. Bradshaw: There are a range of national and EU measures to protect stocks in our waters. The Prime Minister's Strategy Unit has made far-reaching recommendations for further measures. We are studying the report and will respond fully by the end of the year.

Egg Regulations

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received from small-scale egg producers about recent changes to regulations, including those about egg stamping; and if she will make a statement. [174414]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra has received an estimated 3,150 inquiries on the Registration of Laying Flocks Order and the Egg Marketing Regulations—by far the majority of these inquiries were from producers wanting to know how to comply with the changes.

Air Quality

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on *(a)* urban and *(b)* rural air quality in 2003. [174406]

Margaret Beckett: The Government's annual Air Quality Headline Indicator, published on 28 April 2004, estimates:

(a) In urban areas in 2003, air pollution was recorded as moderate or higher on 50 days on average per site, compared with 20 days in 2002.

(b) In rural areas, the figure for 2003 was 61 days on average per site, compared with 30 in 2002.

Avian Flu

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the safety of imported chickens from South East Asia since the recent outbreaks of avian influenza; and if she will make a statement. [173681]

Mr. Bradshaw: Under EU rules, imports of live poultry are not permitted from any of the countries in Asia where highly pathogenic avian influenza has been confirmed. This was the case even before the disease outbreaks, as none of these countries had been approved by the European Commission to export live poultry to the EU. Similarly, with the exception of Thailand, imports of meat from the affected countries are not authorised.

The risk of the avian influenza virus spreading to other birds through meat is low. Nevertheless, as a precautionary measure, the European Commission took action on 23 January to ban imports from Thailand of fresh and frozen poultry meat unless accompanied by certification confirming that it was from birds slaughtered before 1 January 2004. In addition, cooked poultry meat that had not been heat treated to at least 70°C, was also banned. The UK took immediate action to implement these measures in domestic law.

The Food Standards Agency advice is that eating chicken is not considered a risk to consumers. This is because the risk to people from Avian Influenza arises from close contact with live chickens that have the disease, and not through eating chicken.

Beef Exports

Sir Archy Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what further steps she will take to promote the export of beef. [174421]

Mr. Bradshaw: Beef exports are currently limited by the requirements of the Date Based Export Scheme. In the light of last week's positive opinions from the European Food Safety Authority, and taking account of any decision to replace the UK's over-30 months rule by testing, we will continue to work with the EU Commission to ensure that controls on UK beef exports are eased as far as possible.

Beekeeping

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations her Department has received on the hazards that can be caused by beekeeping. [173089]

Alun Michael: The Department has received no such representations.

Bioremediation

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research has been conducted by or for her Department on bioremediation using genetically modified organisms. [173118]

Mr. Morley: The Department has recently published research that specifically examines the potential use of genetically modified organisms in bioremediation (final report available at http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/gm/research/epg-1-5-142.htm). The report concludes that genetic modification offers some possible benefits in this area, but that, as with all GMOs, a thorough evaluation of the potential risks is required. This evaluation needs to be carried out in the context of the contaminated environment in which bioremediation is applied and the possible alternative approaches to bioremediation.

We have also commissioned research on bioremediation in general, some of which has considered the use of genetically modified organisms (for a full list see http://www.defra.gov.uk/research/Project_Data/projects.asp?M=KWS&V=bioremediation&SCOPE=0).

Bovine TB

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effect of repeated intradermal skin tests on the ability of the test to detect bovine TB infection in individual cattle. [172530]

Mr. Bradshaw: There is often a trade-off between test sensitivity and specificity. The skin test used in GB has been fine tuned to optimise specificity (i.e. keep false positives to a minimum) while retaining a good sensitivity (i.e. probability of identifying infected herds). However, because of the dynamics of *Mycobacterium bovis* (*M. bovis*—the causative organism for bovine tuberculosis) transmission and the time it takes to mount a detectable immune response to the intradermal injection of tuberculin, the skin test cannot be relied upon to detect every animal infected with *M. bovis* at the time of the disclosing test. This phenomenon is not unique to the tuberculin test and, in fact, this is quite normal for any immunological test.

For these reasons, it is well accepted that the tuberculin tests are more suited to the detection of infected herds rather than the detection of infected individual cattle, i.e. a small proportion of infected animals in reactor herds may escape detection when the herd is first tested (false negatives). In order to increase the sensitivity of the skin test and detect any animals in the early stages of infection, reactor herds are re-tested at 60 day intervals until no further reactor animals are found and restrictions can be lifted. Reactor herds are then re-tested 6 and 18 months after the lifting of restrictions. Additionally, if infection has been confirmed in the herd by post mortem examination or culture, a more severe interpretation of test readings is applied. This further enhances the ability of the test to detect any residual infection after the initial screening. In other words, the imperfect sensitivity of the skin test is compensated for by the application of short-interval testing and severe interpretation.

Defra has also sponsored experimental work at the Institute of Animal Health (Compton), to look into the effects of repeat skin testing. The main finding of this experiment was that repeat testing at 56-day intervals before experimental infection of calves with *M. bovis* had no effect on the animals' ability to respond to an intradermal test carried out seven weeks post-infection. Therefore, no matter how often an animal is skin tested before it contracts TB, the sensitivity of the skin test after infection will not be compromised.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research she has evaluated on the specificity and sensitivity of the Bovigam gamma interferon test; and what conclusions she has drawn. [172550]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA) has reviewed 13 papers reporting gamma-interferon (γ-IFN) field trials in Australia, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Brazil, Italy, Spain and USA. Eight papers gave 20 estimates of sensitivity (80 per cent. were in the range 71–94 per cent.) and 8 papers gave 22 estimates of specificity (80 per cent. were in the range 89–99 per cent.). These estimates for sensitivity are similar to those for the skin test as practiced in the UK, but the estimates for specificity are lower. If the γ-IFN test were used at the same time or shortly after the skin test and animals positive to either test were removed, the combined tests would have a greater sensitivity than the skin test alone. If used with the defined, more specific, antigens developed by VLA, the gamma interferon test can in certain circumstances identify uninfected animals that are positive to the skin test.

The γ-IFN assay is widely considered to be at least as sensitive as the skin tests and, in addition, will detect a proportion of infected cattle that fail to react to the skin tests. This is thought to be because the γ-IFN test detects infection at an earlier stage than the skin test does, although there is also evidence that the two tests detect slightly different populations of tuberculous cattle. However, the γ-IFN test is hardly ever used for mass TB screening on its own. This is because the test is relatively expensive, it does not detect all skin test-positive infected animals, it tends to be less specific than the SICCT (the single intradermal comparative cervical test, which is the version of the skin test used in the UK and Ireland) and, like the SICCT, it is unlikely to detect infected animals that are negative to the tuberculin test due to a depressed immune response to tuberculin (this can occur in cattle with advanced TB). The need to process samples within 24–30 hours of collection also poses some logistical problems for mass screening.

In contrast, it has been postulated that the use of the γ-IFN test in tandem with the skin test could allow the removal of more (but not necessarily all) infected cattle from particular breakdown herds than the skin test alone. If this is correct, use of the two tests in quick succession should speed up the elimination of infection from infected herds. Under this premise, the European Commission approved the γ-IFN test in 2002 for use as an ancillary test in animals that fail to respond to the skin test and it now complements the skin tests in cattle herds with intractable, confirmed infection in many EU member states. It is worth noting that most of these member states use a version of the skin test different to that used in the UK and Ireland.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what level of specificity and sensitivity she has concluded might be applied to control bovine TB in cattle herds which

(a) are subject to repeated and persistent bovine TB breakdowns, *(b)* are subject to a first TB breakdown and which are also in a TB hotspot, *(c)* are subject to a first TB breakdown and which are not in a TB hotspot, *(d)* have not been subject to TB breakdowns and which are in a TB hotspot and *(e)* have not been subject to TB breakdowns and which are not in a TB hotspot. [172551]

Mr. Bradshaw: Sensitivity and specificity of tests for bovine TB in cattle have relative rather than absolute meanings as it is not possible to conclusively demonstrate that an animal with no sign of TB is not in the early stages of infection. In addition, it is possible to increase the sensitivity and decrease the specificity by lowering the reading above which the test is declared positive (as occurs with standard and severe interpretations of the skin test).

The Divisional Veterinary Managers (DVMs) have the discretion to remove cattle from herds that are not skin test positive—they are generally termed Dangerous Contacts. The DVMs use their epidemiological judgment to vary the criteria used to remove animals in cases *(a)* to *(e)* in the question.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment her Department has made of the predictive models used in other countries to assess the feasibility of controlling bovine TB using the Bovigam gamma interferon test. [172552]

Mr. Bradshaw: Other countries with a bovine TB problem comparable to Great Britain's—New Zealand, Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland—have used the gamma interferon test, but there are no published predictive models for its use.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the maximum *(a)* specificity and *(b)* sensitivity achieved by the Bovigam gammas interferon test in experiments conducted in the UK is; and under what conditions these results were achieved. [172553]

Mr. Bradshaw: Specificity and sensitivity must be quoted together as they are inversely related, and they suffer from the lack of an absolute measure of whether an animal is infected. In the UK, the gamma interferon (γ-IFN) test has been used without the skin test only in laboratory studies.

No large-scale validation of the γ-IFN test has been carried out in GB. The ongoing field trial sponsored by Defra and the Welsh Assembly Government in Wales and the Midlands aims to measure the cost effectiveness of using the γ-IFN in infected herds in conjunction with the single intradermal comparative cervical test (SICCT) and provide some data on the γ-IFN test sensitivity under GB conditions. There are also plans in train to assess the specificity of the γ-IFN test in areas of GB with little or no incidence of TB.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the *(a)* maximum and *(b)* minimum (i) sensitivity and (ii) specificity is of the comparative intradermal tuberculin test in the UK. [172554]

Mr. Bradshaw: There is often a trade-off between sensitivity and specificity of a diagnostic test and no test is 100 per cent. sensitive and 100 per cent. specific. When used as a routine screening test in GB, the single intradermal comparative cervical test (SICCT) is designed to maximise specificity while retaining a good sensitivity.

Statistical analysis of TB testing data suggests that the maximum sensitivity of disclosing tests is 90 per cent. and the maximum sensitivity of subsequent (short-interval) tests is 70 per cent. The average specificity of the disclosing test in low-incidence districts of Great Britain is between 99.98 per cent. and 99.99 per cent.

When used in herds with confirmed TB, the cut off point of the test is shifted to increase sensitivity at the expense of specificity.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many studies the Government have funded in the last 15 years into the specificity and sensitivity of the Bovigam gamma interferon test; which research establishments conducted each study; what the conclusions of each study were, with reference to specificity and sensitivity; when the results of each study were drawn to the attention of *(a)* the chief veterinary officers and *(b)* Ministers; and where and when the results were published. [172556]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Bovigam test became commercially available around 1991. Since then, field research in a number of countries, including Britain, has confirmed the test to be a valuable ancillary test to the skin test. We have not conducted studies designed to look particularly at the specificity and sensitivity of the Bovigam test in the UK. However, there are nine current research projects which are looking at the development of more *Mycobacterium bovis* specific gamma interferon antigens or on the validation of the ones already trialled.

Further details of these can be found in Annex 2 of the paper presented to the TB Forum on Gamma Interferon (TBF62) available on line at www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/tb/forum/papers/tbf62.htm.

Work is continuing in the form of the policy pilot field trial. In addition, a number of peer-reviewed papers have been published in academic journals.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of combinations of specificity and sensitivity applied in countries which have a bovine TB problem, in their use of the Bovigam gamma interferon test. [172565]

Mr. Bradshaw: The performance of the gamma interferon (γ-IFN) test (Bovigam) has been assessed by many authors in trials carried out in several countries with bovine tuberculosis (TB) problems. This research has been carefully evaluated by Defra and scientists from the Veterinary Laboratories Agency.

In these trials, the sensitivity of the test has ranged between 55.4 and 100 per cent. and the specificity between 70.0 and 99.6 per cent. However, these results are influenced by the characteristics of the cattle populations in which the studies were carried out, the prevalence of cross-reacting organisms, the cut-off point

used to interpret the γ-IFN test and the criteria used to establish the *M. bovis* infection status of the trial animals (often known as the "gold standard"). It is not, therefore, straight forward to extrapolate specificity and sensitivity estimates directly from one country to another. Ideally, the performance of a diagnostic test for TB should be evaluated under the conditions and in the geographical area in which the test will be used.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department has undertaken a cost and benefit analysis of the use of the Bovigam gamma interferon test. [172568]

Mr. Bradshaw: No large-scale validation of the gamma interferon (γ-IFN) test has been carried out in GB. Although the γ-IFN test is now used in several countries, experimental data is lacking on the cost-effectiveness of using γ-IFN in infected herds in conjunction with the single intradermal comparative cervical test . Desk studies have estimated that significant savings will need to accrue from the use of the γ-IFN before it becomes cost-effective in GB. The on-going field trial sponsored by Defra and the Welsh Assembly Government in Wales and the Midlands aims to resolve this question.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what advice the Central Scientific Laboratory has provided to her Department on the *(a)* specificity and *(b)* sensitivity of the Bovigam gamma interferon test; and what advice it has provided on the applicability of the test as a bovine TB control measure; [172999]

(2) what recent discussions her Department and its agencies have had with Central Science Laboratory on the practical application of its Bovigam gamma interferon test for bovine TB in cattle. [172555]

Mr. Bradshaw: No discussions have taken place with the Central Science Laboratory on the subject of the Bovigam gamma interferon test. The Bovigam test was developed by Commonwealth Serological Laboratories Veterinary Ltd., Australia.

British Produce

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the procurement of British-produced food by public bodies. [173682]

Alun Michael: A key objective of the Government's public sector food procurement initiative is to increase the amount of locally produced food purchased by public sector bodies. This cannot be done by restricting business to UK suppliers because the European Treaty prohibits discrimination on the basis of nationality. However, the legal and policy framework for procurement does allow public bodies to create a competitive environment that will encourage more UK producers to bid for public sector business.

Public bodies are being advised to structure contract requirements so that small and local suppliers have the capacity and opportunity to compete and a realistic chance of being successful. One example is to specify more fresh seasonal produce. We are also asking food service companies to develop opportunities for local producers to become part of their supply chains.

The scope for applying these measures will vary depending on the size and particular requirements of each public sector contract. Public bodies have an overarching duty to secure value for money and so will have to ensure that the measures they adopt to encourage more supplies of local food are proportionate and justified. Nevertheless, the Government are confident that more local produce could be supplied to the public sector through the intelligent application of procurement practice.

More information on this initiative is given on Defra's website at http://www.defra.gov.uk/farm/sustain/procurement/index.htm.

Coastal Defence Strategy

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the Coastal Defence Strategy. [174417]

Mr. Morley: Assuming the question is about the River Arun to Pagham Harbour Coastal Defence Strategy, the Department anticipates receiving submission of the Executive Summary some time in June this year. A complete submission of all documentation is anticipated within the next three months. Defra would anticipate making a response within about three months if the documentation is complete.

Common Agricultural Policy

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will publish the final draft of the mid-term review of the Common Agricultural Policy; how long farmers will have to comply with the requirements of the mid-term review from the date of publication; and if she will make a statement. [174271]

Alun Michael: On 26 June 2003, *Official Report*, column 1220, my right hon. Friend reported to the House on the political agreement that had been reached that morning on the Commission's proposals for reform of the Common Agricultural Policy. That agreement was subsequently given legal effect in Council Regulations 1782/2003, 1783/2003, 1784/2003, 1785/2003, 1786/2003, 1787/2003, and 1788/2003. Member states and individual farmers, where applicable, will have to comply with the requirements of those Regulations until such time as the Regulations are amended or repealed. Some provisions are already in place, for example those relating to the new Dairy Premium Scheme, but most will apply from 1 January 2005, when the new Single Payment Scheme (SPS) is introduced, and some, for example, on the Farm Advisory System, will not apply until later years. Details on these provisions appear on the Department's website (www.defra.gov.uk) and further information will be sent to farmers over the coming months in the lead up to the first application period for the SPS.

Departmental Expenditure (Entertainment)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her latest estimate is of the amount spent by her Department on official entertainment in each year from 1996–97 to 2004–05. [169004]

Alun Michael: The information for Defra is as follows:

	£
2001–02	[1]239,000
2002–03	[1]450,000
2003–04	[2]428,000

[1] Outturn.
[2] Provisional outturn.

It should be noted that Defra only came into being in 2001. An estimate is not provided for 2004–05 since specific budgets are not set for this type of expenditure.

The figures include expenditure on official entertainment made in accordance with the principles set out in "Government Accounting" and can range from tea and biscuits to catering for major events at which the Department—at official or ministerial level—discusses a range of issues from high-level policy issues to highly technical, legal and scientific issues. All such expenditure is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety.

Animal Welfare

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much Government funding was allocated to the protection and welfare of animals in 2003–04, broken down by budget heading. [169945]

Mr. Bradshaw: In 2003–04 a total of £9.2 million was spent on the protection and welfare of animals. This can be broken down as follows:

	Amount
Research (£ million)	3.6
Enforcement (£ million)	[1]2.5
Administration (£ million)	2.2
Scheme (£000)	[2]900

[1] This does not include the cost of enforcement by local authorities.
[2] This figure includes items such as contracts with the Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA) and the Agricultural Development and Advisory Service (ADAS) to support and promote animal welfare.

Fallen Stock

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the contribution made by hunt kennels to the disposal of farm animal carcases. [174206]

Mr. Bradshaw: No formal assessment has been made. Hunt kennels play a useful role in disposal of fallen stock in some areas. However, overall the quantity of material collected is relatively low, and the type of material collected limited, when compared to that collected by the fallen stock collection and disposal industry as a whole.

Milk

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many litres of liquid milk were imported into the UK from EU countries in each of the last five years, broken down by country of origin. [172935]

Alun Michael: The following table shows UK imports of liquid milk from the EU 15 member states in each of the last five years to 2003, broken down by country of despatch.

UK imports of liquid milk from EU 15 countries, 1999–2003

Thousand litres

Country	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*Grand total*
Irish Republic	60,342	60,199	54,835	26,233	135,719	337,328
Denmark	30,334	25,166	9,421	795	425	66,140
Germany	17,078	19,531	11,196	5,629	3,888	57,323
France	13,288	8,514	9,667	10,299	8,600	50,368
Belgium	6,786	6,922	3,811	2,345	3,759	23,624
Netherlands	3,620	462	919	2,198	1,027	8,227
Austria	2,844	1,355	—	—	—	4,200
Italy	114	214	91	101	70	590
Portugal	—	0	—	—	40	40
Spain	23	14	—	—	—	37
Sweden	1	—	—	—	—	1
EU 15 total	134,431	122,378	89,940	47,600	153,527	547,877

Note:
2003 data are provisional and subject to amendment.
Source: HM Customs and Excise.
Data prepared by Statistics (Commodities & Food) Consultancy, Trade & IT, ESD, DEFRA.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Fitness Initiatives

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much has been *(a)* allocated to and *(b)* spent on advertising fitness and exercise initiatives in each year since 1997. [174593]

Mr. Caborn: The Department has not allocated any specific funding to advertising fitness and exercise initiatives since 1997. However, Sport England has earmarked £250,000 from their budget this financial year to test a campaign in the North East region aimed at changing people's attitude to physical activity. The campaign will be launched on 11 June.

National Lottery Disbursements

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much lottery money has been distributed in each year from 1997 to date to the *(a)* Arts Council England, *(b)* Arts Council of Northern Ireland, *(c)* Arts Council of Wales, *(d)* Award for All (England) Joint Scheme, *(e)* Community Fund, *(f)* Heritage Lottery Fund, *(g)* Millennium Commission, *(h)* New Opportunities Fund, *(i)* Scottish Arts Council, *(j)* Scottish Screen, *(k)* Sport England, *(l)* Sport Scotland, *(m)* Sports

Council for Northern Ireland, *(n)* Sports Council for Wales, *(o)* UK Film Council and *(p)* UK Sport.
[174342]

Estelle Morris: The information is shown in the following tables.

£

	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000
Arts Council of England	297,674,958.58	234,629,859.32	201,058,663.29
Film Council	—	—	16,056,392.23
Arts Council of Northern Ireland	10,489,555.03	9,023,485.26	8,167,170.78
Scottish Arts Council	32,276,810.09	26,608,478.86	24,245,201.60
Arts Council of Wales	17,972,111.62	14,661,626.17	13,398,079.06
Community Fund	366,204,936.20	304,414,393.21	275,486,728.98
Heritage Lottery Fund	370,693,625.32	315,021,565.87	287,593,028.02
Millennium Commission	402,696,027.65	397,144,837.84	349,839,026.64
New Opportunities Fund	1,553,847.62	236,630,592.46	302,559,277.80
Sport England	307,000,691.38	255,901,294.48	210,867,545.58
Sports Council for Northern Ireland	10,126,712.03	8,316,253.51	7,162,640.35
Scottish Sports Council	32,853,648.26	27,439,225.26	23,584,603.19
UK Sport	—	—	18,932,242.63
Sports Council for Wales	18,173,106.37	15,053,130.74	12,624,633.25
Scottish Screen	—	—	—

£

	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Arts Council of England	201,707,450.45	207,764,719.59	177,936,423.27	161,048,185.71
Film Council	33,257,300.98	36,272,468.66	32,444,398.13	28,365,460.42
Arts Council of Northern Ireland	9,236,419.17	9,208,707.25	8,543,017.15	7,135,487.05
Scottish Arts Council	20,944,373.78	23,451,472.10	20,747,939.29	18,157,194.45
Arts Council of Wales	14,679,682.54	15,153,183.90	13,416,816.74	11,648,213.52
Community Fund	295,433,473.86	296,124,518.56	250,408,130.69	223,828,328.31
Heritage Lottery Fund	321,858,529.67	320,101,846.34	291,159,343.35	246,378,592.73
Millennium Commission	345,092,502.45	123,760,547.94	21,355,335.16	6,254,496.64
New Opportunities Fund	243,244,793.24	479,770,400.23	418,289,289.56	457,523,040.78
Sport England	226,930,617.00	228,025,901.28	193,744,834.69	170,745,796.93
Sports Council for Northern Ireland	7,709,283.55	8,004,236.17	7,197,218.30	6,321,925.77
Scottish Sports Council	25,850,263.08	25,739,278.08	23,337,098.97	19,758,355.46
UK Sport	24,010,153.18	25,614,739.83	21,461,040.01	19,985,883.40
Sports Council for Wales	13,910,716.32	14, 171,442.54	12,585,730.80	10,521,925.89
Scottish Screen	5,577,636.68	3,368,609.38	2,845,832.59	2,563,477.41

The figures are the income to each distributor in each year as derived from the lottery games and the income accrued on balances held.

Awards for All (England) is a joint scheme under which Sport England, Arts Council England, Heritage Lottery Fund, Community Fund and New Opportunities Fund contribute money to single joint pot. The Awards for All (England) budget is, as such, part of the figures in the table, not additional.

The Awards for All budget in each year was as in the following table.

	£ million
2000–01	39.872
2001–02	40.787
2002–03	45.026
2003–04	43.282

Public Bodies (Funding)

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much grant in aid funding was given to the *(a)* Advisory Committee on Historic Wreck Sites, *(b)* Advisory Committee on the Government Art Collection, *(c)* Advisory Council on Libraries, *(d)* Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art, *(e)* Spoliation Advisory Panel, *(f)* Treasure Valuation Committee, *(g)* Working Group on Human Remains, *(h)* Advisory Group on Illicit Trade, *(i)* Live Music Forum, *(j)* Review of BBC's Digital Television Services and *(k)* Review of BBC's Digital Radio Services in 2002–03; what the administration costs of each were in that year; and what the projected grant in aid (i) is for each in 2003–04 and (ii) will be for each in (A) 2004–05 and (B) 2005–06.
[173705]

Mr. Caborn: English Heritage administers the Advisory Committee on Historic Wreck Sites out of its core grant in aid. The role of the secretariat passed from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) with the successful passage of the National Heritage Act 2002 and has not formed part of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's administration costs since then.

The actual and forecast cost of support to the Committee, which includes travel and subsistence and expenses for board members, is as follows:

(a) Advisory Committee on Historic Wreck Sites

	£000
2002–03	<1
2003–04	5
2004–05	1
2005–06	1

The other Advisory Committees, Groups and Reviews *(b-k)* form part of the Administration and Research budget of DCMS; they are not recipients of grant in aid. Their administration costs are borne by the DCMS whose staff provide secretariat support, accommodation and legal advice. These costs are centrally budgeted and could be disaggregated only at disproportionate cost. Details of the Department's administration costs are published in the DCMS Annual Report 2004, Vol. 1 (CM 6220). Copies may be obtained from the Library of the House.

Other support to the committees *(b-i)*, which includes travel and subsistence, expenses for board members and publications, did not exceed £100,000 in total in both years 2002–03 and 2003–04. Forecast total budgets for 2004–05 and 2005–06 are not expected to exceed £100,000 in either year.

There was no expenditure relating the Review of the BBC's Digital Television and Radio services *(j-k)* in 2002–03 and 2003–04. The combined budget for these reviews in 2004–05 will not exceed £200,000.

TRANSPORT

Civil Contingencies Bill

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether *(a)* port facility security officers and *(b)* airport security officers would be counted as category 2 responders under the Civil Contingencies Bill. [170069]

Mr. Jamieson: The Bill provides that a harbour authority within the meaning of section 46(1) of the Aviation and Maritime Security Act 1990 and an airport operator within the meaning of section 82(1) of the Airports Act 1986 would be considered as category 2 responders. It will be for them to decide on how they carry out their requirements subject to any guidance issued under the provisions of the Bill.

Departmental Officials

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many officials in his Department and associated agencies have initially withheld their salaries from official departmental and parliamentary publications and subsequently disclosed this information in each year since 1997. [172085]

Mr. McNulty: Since the Department was formed in May 2002 there have been no officials who have initially withheld their salaries from official departmental and parliamentary publications and subsequently disclosed this information.

Driving Standards Agency

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many overseas visits have been made by management at the Driving Standards Agency in each year since 1997; and what the total cost of these visits is. [174182]

Mr. Jamieson: In April 2003, the Driving Standards Agency introduced an electronic system for the payment of staff travel and subsistence. This shows that during 2003–04, members of the agency's corporate management team made 28 overseas visits, at a cost of some £30,000.

Before April 2003, travel expense claims were dealt with as paper transactions and it is not possible for the agency to identify the information easily.

Electronic Vehicle Licensing Channels

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the potential effects on Post Offices of setting up electronic vehicle licensing channels. [174173]

Mr. Jamieson: It is estimated that up to 30 per cent. of the eligible population will migrate from re-licensing at Post Office branches to electronic vehicle licensing channels by 2006–07, with this figure increasing to 35 per cent. by 2010–11. This equates to approximately 13 million fewer relicensing transactions at Post Offices in 2006–07.

Network Rail

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what the average period of the maintenance and renewals contracts let by Network Rail is; [173726]

(2) what criteria are used by Network Rail to determine whether maintenance and renewals work should be undertaken in-house; [173727]

(3) how much was spent by Network Rail on maintenance and renewals work *(a)* by external contractors and *(b)* in-house in 2003. [173728]

Mr. Darling: These are operational matters for Network Rail. Details of contracts issued by Network Rail are commercially confidential.

Railways

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the rail projects which have involved the establishment of enhanced Companies (EnCos) since the publication of the Strategic Rail Authority's Strategic Plan. [171402]

Mr. Darling: None, because Enhancement Companies (EnCos) proved to be an unnecessarily complex method of involving the private sector. The preferred method now is by means of Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs), specially formed to take forward an infrastructure upgrade. A number of SPVs are currently under development, including that for the Chiltern Line upgrade.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the impact on his target to increase passenger volumes on the railway of the policy adopted by the Government and the Strategic Rail Authority's to thin rail services. [174073]

Mr. Darling: No specific assessment has been made by the Department in this area. However, the SRA's Capacity Utilisation Policy aims to make the best use of capacity on the rail network. In some instances this involves taking lightly used services out of the timetable in order to increase the resilience and reliability of the network and the services that use it. A reliable rail service is a key factor that people consider when deciding whether or not to travel by rail.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the economic impact of *(a)* regular commuter journeys on the railways and *(b)* long-distance non-commuter journeys. [174078]

Mr. Darling: Advice from the Strategic Rail Authority on the value for money case for investment to enhance passenger rail services includes assessment of the economic impact of the proposal on all rail passengers.

Road Traffic Accidents

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many road traffic accidents took place in bus lanes in the last year for which figures are available. [175086]

Mr. Jamieson: The following table shows the numbers of accidents that took place in bus lanes in 2002, the latest year for which data are available.

	Number
Fatal	6
Serious	142
Slight	864
Total	1,012

Speed Cameras

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many legacy cameras have been removed in each year since 2001. [171922]

Mr. Jamieson: Safety Camera Partnerships are asked to review their sites on a regular basis and will take decisions on which sites should be taken out of operation on either a temporary or permanent basis.

PRIME MINISTER

Appointments

Mr. Michael Jabez Foster: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make an announcement about the re-appointment of His Honour Viscount Colville of Culross QC, His Honour Colin Kolbert and His Honour John Jeremy Fordham as assistant surveillance commissioners, under section 63 of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. [175341]

The Prime Minister: In accordance with Section 63 of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000, I have agreed to re-appoint His Honour Viscount Colville of Culross QC, His Honour Colin Kolbert and His Honour John Jeremy Fordham as Assistant Surveillance Commissioners from 1 May 2004 until 30 April 2007 to assist the Chief Surveillance Commissioner in his duties. The remit of each Assistant Surveillance Commissioner covers the whole of the United Kingdom so that any Assistant Surveillance Commissioner can act in jurisdictions other than his or her own.

His Honour Viscount Colville of Culross QC, His Honour Colin Kolbert and His Honour John Jeremy Fordham have served as Assistant Surveillance Commissioners since 1 May 2001.

Assistant Surveillance Commissioners are appointed under Section 63 of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. Since the authorisation of intrusive surveillance operations forms a key component of the Government's response to serious and organised crime, I attach considerable importance to these appointments, and I am delighted that they have accepted their re-appointment. In conjunction with Sir Andrew Leggatt, their substantial judicial experience, particularly of the criminal justice system, will provide independent oversight of surveillance operations, which although operationally important, must also be subject to stringent safeguards.

Climate Change

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Prime Minister (1) if he will use the British Presidency of the UN Security Council in October to ensure that the Security Council has a detailed discussion on climate change as a global security issue, using the full diplomatic resources of the UK to increase the urgency and effectiveness of global action to combat dangerous climate change; and if he will make a statement; [173306]

(2) if he will make it his policy to include global climate change on the agenda of the next Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in 2005, in Malta; [173307]

(3) if he will make it his policy to include climate change on the agenda for the British Presidency of the EU in 2005. [173311]

The Prime Minister: As I said in my speech at the launch of the Climate Group on 27 April, climate change is the most important long-term challenge the world faces. We will therefore pursue every opportunity to raise this issue with other nations through the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change process, during the UK Presidency of the EU and in other fora where this can help to further effective international action on climate change.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Correspondence

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when the hon. Member for West Worcestershire will receive a response to his letter of 31 March. [174746]

Ms Hewitt: My right hon. Friend the Minister for Industry and the Regions and Deputy Minister for Women and Equality replied on 13 May 2004.

End of Life Vehicles Directive

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the progress of the consultation on the implementation of the End of Life Vehicles Directive. [174407]

Mr. Timms: Public consultation on the draft End-of-Life Vehicles (Producer Responsibility) Regulations 2004, to transpose the remaining provisions (Articles 5 and 7) of the End-of-Life Vehicles Directive, closed on 30 March. 65 responses were received and are being assessed. The Regulations will be presented to Parliament shortly.

Exports (Gambia)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment her Department has made of the number and types of UK companies *(a)* exporting goods to, *(b)* exporting services to and *(c)* investing capital in The Gambia since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [173441]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The total number of UK companies exporting goods, services and investing capital in The Gambia since 1997 is difficult to determine because of the poor records held and maintained by the Gambian authorities, including the Registrar General of Companies, the Department for Trade, Customs and Excise and the Gambian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Nevertheless, from enquiries made by and records held at the British High Commission in Banjul, the number of known such companies is 29. However, UK companies are not required to notify the High Commission or UK Trade and Investment that they are doing business in or with The Gambia, and consequently the list cannot be considered to be exhaustive or complete. The majority on the list are small companies operating in the service industry but also include multinationals such as British American Tobacco and Shell. Furthermore, many UK individuals, as opposed to companies, have businesses in The Gambia such as bars and restaurants.

An indication of the volume of trade between the UK and The Gambia is shown in the following import/export statistics:

£ million

	UK export	*UK import*
1997	19.2	3.1
1998	14.4	2.9
1999	16.7	2.8
2000	14.4	3.5
2001	18.5	7.7
2002	16.4	4.0
2003	18.96	2.77

Identity Theft

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Post Office is taking to minimise identity thefts within its areas of responsibility. [173054]

Mr. Timms: Royal Mail has a duty under condition 8 of its licence issued by the postal services regulator Postcomm to protect the integrity of mail. Security issues are taken very seriously and Royal Mail's security team is dedicated to maintaining standards through specific procedures, practices and investigations. To divulge the details of these security activities would inevitably compromise their effectiveness.

Oil Reserves

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the current strategic reserve of *(a)* crude oil and *(b)* oil products is in the UK. [174108]

Mr. Timms: The UK does not have a strategic reserve. It meets its international stocking obligations by imposing compulsory oil stocking obligations on commercial companies. These amount to 67½ days of average daily consumption for refiners and 48½ days of average daily consumption for non-refiners. As at the end of February 2004, the UK held stocks of crude oil and petroleum products equivalent to almost 76 days of average daily consumption.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the current position on UK stocks of *(a)* crude oil and *(b)* main oil products in relation to average daily consumption. [174111]

Mr. Timms: As at the end of February 2004, the UK held stocks of crude oil and petroleum products equivalent to almost 76 days of average daily consumption. This is some eight days in excess of our EU stockholding obligations of 67½ days worth of average daily consumption.

UK Trade and Investment

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what commercial training or experience is required for each grade of staff of UK Trade and Investment. [172113]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* Commercial training or experience is not a specific requirement for UK Trade and Investment staff prior to recruitment. However, the organisation is committed to offering its staff a career structure in which continuous training and development opportunities are offered to enhance professionalism. All staff undertake induction courses and relevant training to enable them to meet business objectives.

UK Trade and Investment's international trade advisers (based in Business Links) and locally engaged staff overseas also undertake associated commercial training to gain the knowledge and skills relevant to their role. Many international trade advisers and locally engaged staff have practical business experience. Staff are encouraged to take advantage of opportunities to work in the private sector and in our commercial posts overseas. Those within the organisation who are from the public sector also benefit from the knowledge, skills and expertise of the private sector business experts working alongside them.

VAT Registrations

Albert Owen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many registered businesses were registered for VAT in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* Wales, *(c)* Scotland, *(d)* Northern Ireland and *(e)* England in each year since 1996–97. [174067]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in the last quarter of 2003. The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before.

The following table records Barclays business creation data for England and Wales in each year since 1996:

	Business start-ups
1996	406,000
1997	415,700
1998	412,200
1999	374,400
2000	356,400
2001	324,800
2002	390,700
2003	465,100

Source:
Barclays Small Business Survey.

The stock of businesses registered for VAT in the UK, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and England at the start of each year 1996–2003, are as follows:

Stocks	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
UK	1,629,165	1,645,540	1,681,335	1,715,395	1,736,360	1,754,915	1,762,355	1,762,110
England	1,377,300	1,393,070	1,426,265	1,458,720	1,479,900	1,498,425	1,505,575	1,505,495
Wales	77,545	77,170	77,390	77,345	76,905	76,955	76,990	76,310
Scotland	120,225	120,670	122,260	123,355	123,565	123,800	123,980	124,200
Northern Ireland	54,090	54,635	55,420	55,980	55,990	55,735	55,810	56,100

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Stocks 1994–2002, Small Business Service, available from www.sbs.gov.uk/statistics/vatstats.php

VAT stocks do not capture all business activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Wind Turbines

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment has been made of the effect on bird life of additional wind turbines under construction and planned. [174405]

Mr. Timms: Over the years, there have been a large number of studies carried out in the UK of the impact of wind farms on wildlife and in particular birds. Those studies suggest that there is a small risk of bird strikes from the operation of wind turbines, as long as they are properly sited.

Work related to the study of birds is continuing, with DTI funded studies being carried out by the RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) and JNCC (Joint Nature Conservation Committee) to look at the distribution and main flight paths of seabirds including migratory, feeding/roosting patterns and their behavioural response to wind farms.

In addition, no wind farm development can be undertaken without securing the necessary permissions and consents under the normal planning regime or Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989. This process places a requirement on developers to consider all environmental aspects of a project, including any effects a particular development may have on the bird life in that location, and produce an Environmental Impact Assessment. These assessments are available to the public.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Aid (Africa)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* financial aid and *(b)* aid in kind his Department has delivered to (i) Africa, (ii) Central Africa, (iii) Uganda, (iv) Rwanda, (v) Burundi and (vi) the Democratic Republic of Congo in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [173812]

Hilary Benn: The amount of bilateral development assistance DFID has given to Africa and the other specified region/countries is given in the following table. Financial aid (excluding the Aid and Trade Provision) comprises all expenditure in columns 1 and 2, and Aid in Kind forms part of the expenditure in column 5.

£000

	1 Project or Sector Aid	*2 Programme Aid*	*3 Technical Cooperation*	*4 Aid and Trade Provision*	*5 Grants Other Aid in Kind*	*6 Humanitarian Assistance*	*7 DFID Debt Relief*	*8 Total DFID Programme*
(i) Africa								
1987–98	36,134	74,934	130,816	7,648	60,866	24,195	10,419	345,013
1998–99	49,565	125,234	144,272	9,195	63,430	46,251	8,019	445,966
1999–2000	90,617	132,140	163,345	2,652	66,325	32,001	7,513	494,593
2000–01	104,141	245,857	165,340	626	64,308	63,425	6,992	650,690
2001–02	147,860	161,948	177,567	519	48,971	42,755	6,390	586,010
2002–03	135,330	151,208	213,177	-1,052	92,160	153,980	5,414	750,218
(ii) Central Africa (Great Lakes)								
1997–98	20	—	2,111	—	9,095	4,984	—	16,211
1998–99	20	—	991	—	2,184	4,473	—	7,669
1999–2000	19	—	1,307	—	1,463	5,736	—	8,527

£000

	1 Project or Sector Aid	2 Programme Aid	3 Technical Cooperation	4 Aid and Trade Provision	5 Grants Other Aid in Kind	6 Humanitarian Assistance	7 DFID Debt Relief	8 Total DFID Programme
2000–01	17	—	1,896	—	832	10,203	—	12,946
2001–02	16	—	1,792	—	272	11,085	—	13,166
2002–03	16	—	4,091	—	1,295	25,161	—	30,562
(ii) Uganda								
1997–98	9,813	19,145	12,333	—	5,993	657	—	47,941
1996–99	17,785	17,000	11,928	—	5,500	360	—	52,574
1999–2009	41,467	16,000	17,287	—	5,910	543	—	81,206
2000–01	17,826	45,000	15,748	—	7,320	447	—	66,342
2001–02	13,974	35,000	14,611	—	4,563	328	—	68,476
2002–03	13,846	17,500	15,580	—	5,409	2,533	—	54,868
(iv) Rwanda								
1997–98	—	—	335	—	1,843	4,019	—	6,198
1996–99	—	10,000	1,282	—	1,281	1,005	—	13,568
1999–2000	—	10,000	2,341	—	784	1,170	—	14,294
2000–01	1,052	25,400	5,419	—	837	—	—	32,708
2001–02	1,488	18,586	6,212	—	741	—	—	27,027
2002–03	2,348	22,032	6,542	—	1,423	—	—	32,344
(v) Burundi								
1997–98	—	—	3	—	18	1,580	—	1,602
1996–99	—	—	—	—	26	298	—	324
1999–2000	—	—	—	—	203	709	—	912
2000–01	—	—	—	—	43	1,504	—	1,547
2001–02	—	—	—	—	64	540	—	604
2002–03	—	—	65	—	814	1,055	—	1,934
(vi) Congo (Dm Rep)								
1997–98	—	—	48	—	6,056	807	—	6,911
1996–99	—	—	63	—	118	370	—	552
1999–2000	—	—	49	—	15	1,257	—	1,322
2000–01	—	—	23	—	38	3,036	—	3,096
2001–02	—	—	188	—	63	5,307	—	5,558
2002–03	—	—	1,138	—	83	11,650	—	12,871

Note:
Comprises expenditure for Angola, Burundi, DRC, Entrea and Somalia,

The Government's total aid budget has doubled since 1997–98—from £2 billion to £4 billion. As the table shows, assistance to Africa has more than doubled. In the current (2004–05) financial year my Department's bilateral programme in Africa stands at £864 million and in 2005–06 we plan to spend £1.1 billion. These figures demonstrate our real and growing commitment to Africa. But it is not only the quantity of assistance that matters; quality too is vital. In order to improve the quality of aid and hence its impact we are working increasingly closely with other donors to reduce the number of individual and uncoordinated initiatives, and to ensure we use our aid to strengthen—not undermine—national planning and implementation capacity.

Departmental Projects

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the Department's high-risk bilateral projects, referred to on page 189 of the 2004 Departmental Report, which are evaluated as *(a)* successful and *(b)* unsuccessful.
[174113]

Hilary Benn: The high-risk projects referred to on page 189 of DFID's Departmental Report are listed on the tables below. Each DFID project is given a score ranging from 1 to 5 based on the likelihood of achieving their intended objectives. Table *(a)* relates to projects scored 1 and 2, table *(b)* relates to projects scored 3 to 5.

We judge projects receiving a score of 1 or 2 to be successful. Projects receiving a lower score will have achieved some of their objectives

Table A
All high risk projects with a commitment value of £ million or over evaluated as successful during 2003

£

Region	Title	Commitment
Africa Division		
DFID Nigeria		
Nigeria	Insecticide Treated Nets	2,131,094
	CeP	3,365,346
	Contraceptive Social Marketing	14,000,000
DFID Rwanda		
Rwanda	R Revenue Authority 3	7,218, 800
DFID Southern Africa		
Lesotho	Agricultural Policy and Cap Bld	1,200,000
DFID Uganda		
Uganda	Acholi land Conflict Reduction	1,755,155
DFID Zambia		
Zambia	Venture Capital Fund	1,762,000
Asia Division		
DFID Bangladesh		
Bangladesh	Manusher Jonno (HUGO Fund)	16,520,000

Table A

All high risk projects with a commitment value of £ million or over evaluated as successful during 2003

£

Region	Title	Commitment
DFID South East Asia		
Indonesia	Community Recovery Prog	7,050,000
Sri Lanka	ICRC Programme 1998–1999	3,500,000
DFID Vietnam		
Vietnam	Vietnam Proverty Reduction Support Credit Confinancing	14,000,000
Western Asia Department		
Pakistan	NWFP SRSP Community infrastructure initiative	1,120,000
Europe, Middle East and Americas Division		
DFID Caribbzan		
Belize	Belize Southern Highway Upgrade	1,400,000
	Belize Southern Highway Project	7,835,000
Guyana	Guyana Enterprise Privatisation	3,572,000
DFID Russia		
Russian Federation	Revitalisation of Insolvent Farms Project (RIFP)	3,539,158
Latin America Department	OSI Ham Reduction	4,200,000
Brazil	Plantas do Nordeste Project	1,953,000
Peru	San Martin Rural Development Project	1,515,000
Middle East and North Africa Department		
West Bank and Gaza	SCF Water and Sanitation—Jabalia	1,190,537
	SCF Water and Sanitation—Rafah	2,013,836
	SCF Water and Sanitation—Dura	2,233,000
	SCF Water and Sanitation—Anabta	2,290,565
	World Bank NGO Project	
Private Sector Infrastructure and CDC Department		
Africa Regional	Africa Private Infrastructure Financing Facility (APIFF)	70,500,000

Table B

All high risk projects with a commitment value of £ million or over evaluated as only partly achieving their purpose and output during 2003

£

Region	Title	Commitment
Africa Division		
DFIP Ghana		
Ghana	Sub-Vented Agencies Ref Proj	2,300.000
	Programme Aid Grant 2002	30,000,000
	Integrated Personnel Payroll Database Replacement Project	1,500.000

Table B

All high risk projects with a commitment value of £ million or over evaluated as only partly achieving their purpose and output during 2003

£

Region	Title	Commitment
DF1D Malawi		
Malawi	Economic Activities programme (EAP)	1.490,736
DFID Mozambique		
Mozambique	Agricultural sector public expenditure programme (PROAGRi)	1,800,000
DFID Nigeria	Nigeria Change Agent Programme	1,600,000
	Nigeria Governance Fund	2,400,000
	Sigp	20,871,000
DFID Southern Africa		
Sthrn Af Dev Coord Ctte	Regional Aids Programme	7,850.000
DFID Zimbabwe		
Zimbabwe Great Lakes and Horn Department	Credit for the Informal Sector Project	1,84 1.000
Angola	Luanda Urban Poverty Prog	7.471.188
Sudan	ICRC 2002 Appeal Sudan	2,500.000
West Africa Department		
Sierra Leone	MRC Tonkolili	1,195,000
	Sierra Leone—Security Sector Programme	2,030,100
Asia Division		
DFID Bangladesh		
Bangladesh	SHAPLA: Public/ Private Partaership	2.300.000
	SHAPLA: Organisation and Management Development	5,265.000
	SHAPLA : WB Time Slice Funding	25,000,000
	Rural Hygiene, Sanitation and Water Supply	27,250,000
	SHAPLA: Human Resources Planning and Development Project	1.405000
	Parliamentary Committees	2,077.554
	SHAPLA: Hospital Management	3,300,000
	Reforms in Revenue Admin (RIRA)	5.550.000
	Proshika Phase VI	23,000,000
DFID China		
China	HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care(TC)	8,217.100
	HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care(FA)	11.682.900
DFID India		
India	Madhya Pradesh Technical Assistance for Power Sector Reform	10.000.000
	AP Power Sector Restructuring Project	28,000.000
DFID Nepal		
Nepal	Achham Poverty Reduction Project—JIBIKA	2,150,000
	Hill Agriculture Research Project	11,661.000

Table B

All high risk projects with a commitment value of £ million or over evaluated as only partly achieving their purpose and output during 2003

£

Region	Title	Commitment
DFID South East Asia		
Indonesia	Multistakeholder Forestry Programme	25.160.000
Pakistan	Social Action Prog 2	50.000.000
Europe, Middle East and America Division		
DFID Caribbean		
Guyana	Guywa Technical Cooperation Water Authority Twinning Project	1,125,000
	Guyana Water Supply and Rehabilitation Project	3.870.000
DFID Russia		
Russian Federation	Samara STIs including Togliam	1,000,000
	Tuberculosis (TB) treatment training programme in Tomsk	1.426,224
Europe and Central Asia Department		
Bosnia	Public Broadcasting	3.710.000
Private and Sector Infrastructure and CDC Department		
Non Specific Country	Public/Private Partnership for the Urban Environment (PPPUE)	3.614,000

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when he will publish his assessment of the reasons for the decline referred to on page 190 of the 2004 Departmental Report on the number of low-risk departmental projects evaluated as successful. [174118]

Hilary Benn: The number of low risk projects judged as likely to be successful was reported as 75 per cent. in DFID's Departmental Report, against a baseline of 81 per cent. This increased to 78 per cent. in the first quarter figures for 2004.

The figure gives a forecast of success for projects of £1 million or more that have been in operation for at least two years. It fluctuates on a quarterly basis because it is recording work in progress and is a 12-month snapshot view on a particular date reflecting those projects that meet the above criteria. The decline was caused by a small number of successful projects ending and therefore graduating from the scoring system.

We will continue to report both the underlying data, and our assessment of it, in our Autumn Performance Report and in the annual Departmental Report.

Efficiency Reviews

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when he will publish the outcome of the rolling programme of efficiency reviews referred to on page 190 of the Departmental Report 2004. [174112]

Hilary Benn: In addition to the information in DFID's Departmental Report, DFID will make a report covering all aspects of DFID's efficiency programmes available on our public website in the autumn. This will incorporate plans under development in response to the Government's Efficiency Review.

Electronic Applications

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development for what reasons the Service Delivery Agreement target to provide 100 per cent. capacity to receive and process electronic applications from UK offices by 2003 has not been met. [174139]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: As indicated in Annex 3 of DFID's 2004 Departmental Report, the introduction of a Human Resource (HR) Integrated Management System in DFID has initially focused on the payroll and data base elements. Now that these modules have been successfully introduced complimentary e-recruitment systems will be considered and introduced in 2004. The facility to receive full details of vacancies and return application forms on line already exists through the civil service recruitment gateway and DFID websites.

Iraq

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the trauma caused to children in Iraq from *(a)* the coalition invasion and *(b)* the continuing violence; and what assistance his Department is providing to mitigate trauma in Iraqi children. [174374]

Hilary Benn: DFID's support for the health sector in Iraq, including psychosocial support, is being channelled through the multi-donor Trust Fund managed by the United Nations. The work of the UN in this area will focus on the provision of technical assistance for the development of mental health and psychosocial support services at the primary level. DFID has made an initial contribution of £30 million to the UN Trust Fund.

DFID has not undertaken an assessment of the levels of trauma suffered by children in Iraq, but such an evaluation is planned by the UN as part of the World Health Organisation's mental health plans.

Trade Negotiations

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when he will publish the evidence base referred to on page 189 of the 2004 Departmental Report that aims to underpin pro-poor UK/EU trade negotiating positions. [174114]

Hilary Benn: The evidence based referred to is not a single document but includes the numerous pieces of research already published, commissioned or in the pipeline. DFID is putting together a research matrix detailing issue specific research projects funded by the Department to inform the development of pro-poor trade policies, and I will write to the hon. Gentleman very shortly with more details.

Yemen

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much aid was given to Yemen in each of the last five years; and what plans he has to increase such aid. [R] [173746]

Hilary Benn: Total aid from all donors to Yemen in each of the last five years for which OECD DAC figures are available was:

$ million

	Amount
1998	370
1999	458
2000	265
2001	461
2002	584

DFID has provided the following aid to Yemen in each of the last five financial years:

£ million

Financial year	*Amount*
1999–2000	1.49
2000–01	2.73
2001–02	2.58
2002–03	5.44
2003–04	[1]6.55

[1] Estimate

The amount for 2000–01 includes a one off payment of £1.52 million for pensions, and for 2002–03 a one off payment of £3.16 million for Paris Club debt relief.

DFID's share of European Community (EC) spending in Yemen from 1997–2001 was around £7 million; we have also contributed through the World Bank and the United Nations (UN).

The aid framework for DFID's programme in Yemen is increasing to £5.9 million for 2004–05 and £9.9 million for 2005–06. I will be considering allocations for future years in the light of the Government's Spending Review later this year, and progress with the Yemeni Government's use of our existing aid. The UK is also arguing for an increase in EC spending in Yemen, as the only low income country in the region.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Emergency Services' Communication Systems

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how far advanced Government plans are to ensure that police, ambulance and fire services communications systems are able to be used underground. [174679]

Ms Blears: The fire service and the British Transport Police already have radio communication facilities in the London Underground. Work commissioned by the Home Office has confirmed the feasibility of extending the new Airwave radio system to the London Underground. The implementation phase is currently under discussion. The new underground system is scoped to accommodate police, ambulance and fire requirements.

Speed Cameras

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much money was raised from speed cameras located at motorway construction and repair sites during 2002–03. [169940]

Caroline Flint: Information on the amount of revenue generated by speed cameras or camera location is not collected centrally.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent representations he has received from *(a)* police authorities, *(b)* fire and rescue authorities and *(c)* health service trusts concerning the administrative costs of dealing with the paperwork generated by the contravention by their vehicles on emergency calls of speed limits captured on speed cameras. [173809]

Caroline Flint: None.

We are, however, aware of the difficulties which may arise. Home Office officials have already had very useful discussions with the Department of Health and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) with the aim of minimising the level of bureaucracy involved.

Animal Research

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information his Department collects on assaults on those working in animal research during the course of their work. [170857]

Caroline Flint: It is not possible from the information collected centrally by the Home Office to identify whether a victim of crime works in animal research. However, from regular discussions from the police and industry, we are aware that one individual who works in animal research was physically assaulted in 2001. The Government are working closely with the police and other criminal justice agencies to ensure a proper response to harassment of people working in this area.

Animal Rights Protesters

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to meet the members of Victims of Animal Rights Extremism. [172623]

Caroline Flint: I have not been invited to meet members of the Victims of Animal Rights Extremism, but I would be happy to meet them to discuss their concerns.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans there are to establish a specific police unit for dealing with criminal activity connected to animal rights protesters. [172624]

Caroline Flint: The Home Office is funding a new unit which has recently been set up to provide a tactical coordinating role for the policing of extremist protests.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many *(a)* arrests and *(b)* convictions there have been for criminal activity connected to animal rights protesters in each year since 1999; [172636]

(2) how many animal rights protesters who have been convicted of criminal activity have been given a custodial sentence in each year since 1999. [172641]

Caroline Flint: It is not possible from the information collected centrally by the Home Office to identify whether a defendant is an animal rights protestor. However, we understand from the police that there were 117 arrests of animal rights activists during the first four months of 2004 compared with 15 arrests during the same period in 2003. The Home Office is working with the police and other agencies to improve availability of information in this area.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list visits made by each Minister in the Department to animal rights groups since 1997. [172640]

Caroline Flint: Home Office Ministers have not made any visits to extremist groups involved in the harassment and intimidation of individuals or companies licensed under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986.

Home Office Ministers are, however, willing to meet groups prepared to engage in reasoned debate and discussion about the use of animals in scientific procedures, whatever their point of view, provided they do not support extremist activity. Ministers have, therefore, met groups involved with the protection of animals, such as the RSPCA, as well as groups opposed to animal experimentation, such as the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection, the National Anti-Vivisection Society, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, Uncaged Campaigns, Animal Aid and Naturewatch, and organisations seeking humane alternatives to animal experiments, such as the Fund for the Replacement of Animals in Medical Experiments.

Similarly, Ministers have met a wide variety of industry and science groups with an interest in the use of animals in scientific procedures, including Amicus MSF, the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry, the Association of Medical Research Charities, the BioIndustry Association, the BioSciences Federation, the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council, the Institute of Animal Technicians, the Japanese Pharmaceutical Group, the Laboratory Animals Breeders Association, the Laboratory Animals Science Association, the Laboratory Animals Veterinary Association, the Medical Research Council and the Research Defence Society.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what plans there are to make *(a)* harassment, *(b)* intimidation and *(c)* terrorism against companies, or conspiracy to carry out these acts, specific offences; [172642]

(2) what plans there are to change the law relating to harassment, with particular reference to harassment by animal rights protesters. [172643]

Caroline Flint: It is a key part of the Government's strategy in tackling animal rights extremism to identify new legislative powers where needed. Police must have the right powers to do the job, but legislation needs to be accompanied by robust enforcement.

There is a range of legislation currently available to deal with extremism. We recently made changes to strengthen police powers to deal with intimidatory protests and office occupations in Anti Social Behaviour Act.

We are looking carefully at what further changes might be made to strengthen police powers to deal with protests outside someone's home and protecting companies from harassment.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans there are to provide funds for the protection of businesses targeted by animal rights protesters. [172644]

Caroline Flint: The Home Office has provided the police with additional funding to assist with additional costs arising from animal rights protests. The Home Office is also funding a new unit to co-ordinate the tactical response to extremism.

Burglary

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many burglaries per 1,000 households there have been in the Metropolitan Police Authority area in each year since 1999; and what the detection rate each year was for domestic burglaries. [170491]

Ms Blears: The available information is given in the table:

Recorded offences of burglary in a dwelling in the Metropolitan Police District

	Number of burglaries per 1,000 households	*Detection rate (%)*
1999–2000	28.6	9.4
2000–01	25.2	9.9
2001–02	26.6	9.3
2002–03	24.0	14.8

Note:
Figures for 2002–03 will have been affected by the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard on 1 April 2002.

CCTV

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much public funding has been spent on CCTV cameras in Blackpool, South since 1997. [173062]

Caroline Flint: Since 1997, the Home Office has provided £737,350 to Blackpool for CCTV schemes.

Allocation of that funding locally, is a matter for Blackpool Borough Council and Lancashire Constabulary. The information is not held centrally.

Counter-terrorism

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what role officials from *(a)* his Department, *(b)* the Home Security Services and *(c)* members of the Joint Terrorism Control Unit played in the simulation exercise to counter nuclear-armed terrorists carried out at the NATO headquarters

on 4 May; and what assessment he has made of its applicability to situations in the United Kingdom. [172313]

Mr. MacShane: I have been asked to reply.

Officials from the Cabinet Office represented the UK Government at a seminar hosted by the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Brussels on 3 May. In total, over 55 officials and experts from 15 countries and half a dozen international bodies were present at the event.

The seminar addressed issues associated with the terrorist use of weapons of mass destruction in Europe, and focussed on the means by which terrorists might be prevented from acquiring and using such weapons.

The Government already has an extensive programme to develop our ability to manage threats posed by terrorism. This includes regularly-reviewed preparations to deal with the consequences of a Chemical/Biological/Radiological/Nuclear (CBRN) attack. The Government also takes seriously the threat posed by poorly secured CBRN material, and has worked with others to improve security in countries holding such material.

Crime (Manchester)

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in *(a)* overall recorded crime, *(b)* recorded violent crime, *(c)* burglaries and *(d)* vehicle thefts in Manchester, Central has been since 1997. [174277]

Ms Blears: The information requested is not available centrally.

Manchester, Central is a Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) area. Data at CDRP level has only been published from 1999–2000 onwards. Detailed statistics at CDRP level are available for 2002–03 on the new Home Office website: http://www.crimestatistics.org.uk

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in *(a)* overall recorded crime, *(b)* recorded violent crime, *(c)* burglaries and *(d)* vehicle thefts in Manchester, Blackley has been since 1997. [172891]

Ms Blears: The information requested is not available centrally.

Blackley comes within the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership's (CDRP) in the Greater Manchester area. Data at CDRP level has only been published from 1999–2000 onwards. Detailed statistics at CDRP level are available for 2002–03 on the new Home Office website: http://www.crimestatistics.org.uk

Crime Statistics

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in *(a)* overall recorded crime, *(b)* recorded violent crime, *(c)* burglaries and *(d)* vehicle thefts in Sittingbourne and Sheppey has been since 1997. [170288]

Ms Blears: The information requested is not available centrally.

Sittingbourne and Sheppey lies within the Swale Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) area. Data at CDRP level has only been published from 1999–2000 onwards. Detailed statistics at CDRP level are available for 2002–03 on the new Home Office website: http://www.crimestatistics.org.uk

Cyclists

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what advice the Government offers *(a)* the police and *(b)* transport authorities about cyclists cycling on pavements. [165964]

Caroline Flint: Chief officers of police are best placed to assess the nature and cause of cycling offences locally.

To help the police with enforcement we have made it possible for Community Support Officers (CSOs) appointed under the Police Reform Act 2002 to issue £30 fixed penalty notices for cycling inconsiderately or irresponsibly on pavements.

The cycling infrastructure and environment are currently under improvement as a result of our National Cycling Strategy. We expect this improvement to reduce the incentive to cycle on the pavement.

Dangerous Driving

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to require drivers to display *(a)* insurance and *(b)* MOT documentation on their car windscreens; and if he will make a statement. [169069]

Caroline Flint: We have no current plans to require drivers to display insurance or MOT documentation.

Driving without insurance or MOT are, however, serious offences and we are determined that they should be tackled effectively.

We appointed Professor David Greenaway of the University of Nottingham to carry out an independent review of motor insurance arrangements in the UK and to advise on how to improve its effectiveness and reduce uninsured driving. Professor Greenaway has just presented his report and we shall be studying it carefully with a view to appropriate action as soon as possible.

The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency are intending to establish in 2004–05 an MOT database. This will enable the police to query MOT status details immediately from the roadside and make enforcement easier.

Diesel Spillages

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many drivers of diesel vehicles have been prosecuted for overfilling fuel tanks not fitted with non-spill fuel caps, which then caused dangerous diesel spillages, in each of the past three years. [168626]

Caroline Flint: Available information held centrally on prosecutions does not include the circumstances of the offence so that offences involving fuel spillages cannot be distinguished from other offences within the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 group of offences.

Driving Licences

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answers of 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1398W, and 12 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 351–52W, on driving licences, if he will obtain from the Driving and Vehicle Licensing Agency an estimate of the number of people who have five points or more on their driving licence. [173995]

Caroline Flint: I understand from DVLA that such an estimate could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 10 May, reference 169445, how many people lost their driving licence under section 35 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988 (penalty points system) in each year since 1990. [174120]

Caroline Flint: Information, taken from the Home Office Court Proceedings Database, is given in the table.

Number of persons disqualified[1] under section 35 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988 (penalty points system) by type of court, England and Wales, 1990–2002

	Type of court		
	Magistrates court	Crown court	Total all courts
1990	33,017	275	33,292
1991	26,705	146	26,851
1992	29,194	121	29,315
1993	31,824	43	31,867
1994	33,128	21	33,149
1995	31,652	262	31,914
1996	31,006	427	31,433
1997	30,939	181	31,120
1998	23,695	170	23,865
1999	34,146	64	34,210
2000	33,497	57	33,554
2001	30,004	75	30,079
2002	30,336	162	30,498

[1] The Home Office Court Proceedings Database does not identify the individual offence under which the disqualification on reaching 12 points within three years was ordered by the courts.

Drug Testing

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his statement of 14 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 279WH, on drug testing, which organisation trained the Drug Action Team (DAT) nominated trainers; what the cost was to the Home Office; what the lengths and the dates were of the training courses which the DAT nominated trainers undertook; who accredited the courses; for how many companies the DAT nominated trainers have helped to write drug policies; how the trainers have advertised their availability to train companies; what budget has been allocated to this advertising; and how the Home Office is evaluating the effectiveness of the new DAT nominated trainers. [161186]

Caroline Flint: 188 nominated Drug Action Team (DAT) business trainers from 149 DATS have been trained by an independent training company chosen by the Home Office Business Engagement Team and Hertfordshire DAT. In total, 15 training days took place across the country and the overall cost of training, plus the production of a 'Drugs in the Workplace Training Pack' has been approximately £270,000. This came from confiscated asset fund monies that were successfully bid by Kent and Hertfordshire DAT. The training courses so far have not been accredited but plans are being considered for the training to be accredited by the accrediting body City and Guilds.

In total 74 workplace policies have been introduced into companies by DAT business trainers. The way the DAT business trainers have advertised their service varies from DAT to DAT and region to region. As a first approach, DAT business trainers are encouraged to use their network and approach safety critical companies in their area. Other ways of targeting include direct marketing and organising business breakfasts, lunches and seminars to highlight to employers the importance of a drug and alcohol workplace policy. To date there has not been a budget allocated to DATs to promote the workplace policy service however, for those DATs that need additional funding there are a number of funding programmes that Government Office Drugs Teams facilitate. The Home Office as part of Phase 3 (March-December 2004) of the National Workplace Initiative plans to evaluate each of the 74 companies workplace policies. This evaluation will in principle be qualitative and focused on improving services and understanding the usefulness of the policy in the workplace. After this, evaluations at a local level will be down to each DAT.

Heroin

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the impact on the UK heroin market of changes in poppy production in Afghanistan over the past two years; and if he will make a statement. [168724]

Caroline Flint: According to the annual UN surveys the poppy crops in Afghanistan in 2002 and 2003 were 74,000 and 80,000 hectares. The change does not appear to have had any appreciable effect on the market in the UK.

Emergency Services (Insurance Cover)

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what insurance cover is provided, and by whom, for members of the emergency services who are called out to terrorist incidents. [173514]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* Emergency service employers make provision for their employees and their dependants in the event of death or injury on duty. The details of such provision are a matter for employers.

Firearms

Mr. Salter: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 22 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 531W, on firearms legislation, when his Department intends to publish the review of firearms legislation. [170093]

Caroline Flint: The consultation paper was published on 12 May.

Internet Auction Sites

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the National Hi Tech Crime Unit will investigate cases of fraud associated with internet auction sites. [166356]

Caroline Flint: The National Hi Tech Crime Unit (NHTCU) investigates serious and organised computer-enabled criminality at national and international levels within or which impacts upon the UK. Individual cases of fraud associated with internet auction sites do not fall within their remit, and such investigations remain the responsibility of local police forces.

Mobile Phones

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what change he has made in the police grant to take account of the enforcement of the ban on using mobile phones while driving. [173557]

Ms Blears: No additional government grant has been made available specifically for this policing activity, which is less demanding on police resources than previous arrangements.

We have put significant extra resources into the police service in England and Wales over the last few years. Since 2000–01 total provision for policing to be supported by grant or spent centrally on services for the police has risen by over 30 per cent. or £2.3 billion.

North London Mosque

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost has been of policing the meetings outside the North London Mosque on Fridays *(a)* on average per meeting and *(b)* in total. [169780]

Ms Blears: The Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis informs me that in general no additional policing costs have been incurred in routine policing of the meetings. The officers used to police the meetings have been drawn from non-operational staff in police support roles. This approach has ensured that there has been no reduction in the number of officers on Response Teams.

On a few occasions, demonstrations opposed to the meetings have required additional police resources. The Metropolitan Police Authority would be expected to meet any extra costs from its £2.3 billion budget.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of whether the Friday meetings outside the North London mosque are *(a)* political demonstrations and *(b)* religious services; and if he will make a statement. [169792]

Caroline Flint: The Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis tells me that prayers take place during the Friday meetings outside the North London mosque and it is policed accordingly.

Police National Computer

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the target time period is for entering records on the police national computer in relation to *(a)* arrests and summonses and *(b)* outcome of court proceedings. [173776]

Ms Blears: At present, police forces in England and Wales operate to standards set by the Association of Chief Police Officers, as follows:

arrest/summons reports—90 per cent. within 24 hours of the event.

court results—100 per cent. within 72 hours of receipt from the courts.

Performance standards have been under review, and a code of practice under the Police Reform Act 2002 has been drafted and circulated for comments. The final code will be published in the near future.

Policing (North Wales)

Albert Owen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many community support officers are operating in the North Wales police force. [174066]

Ms Blears: On 30 April 2004, eight Community Support Officers were employed by North Wales Police.

Positive Futures Initiative

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment has been made of the effectiveness of the Positive Futures initiative in *(a)* reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training and *(b)* reducing substance misuse among participants. [172825]

Caroline Flint: Positive Futures has an ongoing national monitoring and evaluation strategy that aims to identify and establish the value that both the national programme and individual projects have for participants and the communities in which they live.

(a) Reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training.

Approximately 20,000 young people are engaged with the 107 projects at present. Of these, in the previous six months:

over 2,400 have made some kind of educational achievement (e.g. returned to education, doing better in school, improved school attendance);

nearly 600 have secured a job or are now looking for a job[1];

over 1,500 project participants have achieved some form of training or award (e.g. sports/leadership awards, Duke of Edinburgh, drugs education)[2].

Source:

[1] MORI (figures from a minimum base of 83 projects)

[2] MORI

(b) Reducing substance misuse among participants.

As a sport and activity based social inclusion programme, Positive Futures creates opportunities to address the multiple issues associated with problematic substance misuse. It is targeted at marginalised young people in the 10–19 age range living in the most deprived communities, who are at increased risk of involvement in problem drug use and crime.

Substance misuse prevention work offered by Positive Futures projects includes:

drop-in surgeries, often with specialist advisors on hand;

one-to-one sessions;

leaflets/literature;

informal advice through sport, e.g. staff will adapt sessions to focus on fitness and healthy lifestyles. This creates opportunities to address drugs and alcohol issues.

During March 2004 around 200 front-line Positive Futures staff across the country received comprehensive substance misuse training as part of the programme's Workforce Quality Initiative.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost of the Positive Futures initiative has been in each year since its launch. [172826]

Caroline Flint: The table shows the total amount of government funding allocated by the Positive Futures programme to local projects for each financial year, since its launch in 2000.

Financial year	*Total government funded project grants (£)*
2000–01	545,000
2001–02	2,915,000
2002–03	2,295,000
2003–04	6,085,000
2004–05	5,200,000

Notes:

1. For 2000 and 2003 the figures include funds from the Home Office, Sport England, the Communities Against Drugs fund and the Recovered Assets Fund. From 2003–04 onwards the Home Office funded the total cost of project grants.
2. 2000 to 2003—these figures have been approximated to financial years as Sport England originally allocated funding in variable 'project years'.
3. From 2003–04 onwards there was:
An extension of the programme to include 17 to 19-year-olds, with a focus on links to education, training and employment.
Additional funding to projects in the top 30 high crime Basic Command Unit areas (BCU).
4. From 2004–05 onwards there was a reduction in the core grant to established projects from 100 per cent. to 60 per cent. while support was given to identifying and negotiating gap funding. The programme has secured support from a range of local and national organisations, including £1 million per annum from the Football Foundation for new projects. Local projects have individually secured additional partnership funding ranging from £10,000 to £150,000.
5. In addition to the project grant costs shown in the table, the programme also incurs some central costs associated principally with monitoring and evaluation, communications and the training and development of project staff. Estimates of these costs are not available for all the years shown in the table. However, for 2004–05 the total central costs are expected to be approximately £0.5 million.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much funding has been provided to voluntary youth organisations through the Positive Futures initiative in each year since its launch. [172827]

Caroline Flint: Records held about Positive Futures projects classify their lead delivery agency as either statutory or non-statutory. 55 per cent. of 107 Positive Futures projects currently operating have a non-statutory lead delivery agency.

The table shows the amount of government funding that has been allocated to non-statutory agencies for Positive Futures projects since the programme began in 2000.

	Funding (£)
2000 to 2003[1]	2,350,000
2003–04	965,000
2004–05	2,565,000

[1] Figures for 2000 to 2003 have been amalgamated because during this period Sport England allocated funding in variable 'project years'.

Sexual Offences

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to repeat the Spiked initiative. [171026]

Caroline Flint: The Spiked campaign is an educational film which raises awareness of drink and drug related sexual assault. It is not a Home Office initiative, and no direct funding has been made available by the Home Office. Funding totalling £9,275 was provided to support the project from the Drugscope Millennium Awards Scheme. It was initiated by an independent film maker based in Hertfordshire and there has been some take up in other local areas, but this has not been organised by the Home Office.

Solvent Abuse

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research his Department has commissioned into the extent of solvent abuse by children. [169063]

Caroline Flint: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Minister for Children, on 29 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1273W.

Terrorism

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department who would be responsible for meeting the cost of temporary mortuaries in the event of a large-scale terrorist attack. [170067]

Mr. Blunkett: Section 198 of the Public Health Act 1936 states that local authorities may or shall, if directed to do so by the Minister, provide a public mortuary. Additionally, Section 27 of the Coroners Act 1988 sets out that county councils and lead boroughs in metropolitan areas are responsible for providing support to coroners.

However, we recognise that a large-scale terrorist attack could have the potential to overwhelm existing local or regional mortuary capacity.

We are issuing national guidance shortly on dealing with fatalities in emergencies. Following publication, we will be working with the regions, devolved administrations, local responders and specialists to review existing levels of national capacity and to consider a framework for a national response. The guidance will be updated in light of this work.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy, in the event of a large-scale terrorist attack that affected several counties, to establish a helpline for concerned family members to gain information about relatives. [170068]

Mr. Blunkett: In the event of a terrorist incident affecting several counties the Metropolitan Police Service would respond to any request from the Association of Chief Police Officers, the Home Office or from other UK Police Forces, to open the Central Casualty Bureau.

Each UK Police Force will have a Casualty Bureau but in the event that several counties were affected by a major terrorist incident, obviously it would be expected that the Central Casualty Bureau would be opened.

The Casualty Bureau provides a central contact point and is set up to deal specifically with missing persons, survivors, evacuees and witnesses involved in the incident. It is designed to receive and collate information relating to the incident.

If approached, the Central Casualty Bureau may also be opened for foreign events involving British subjects, as it has previously.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Fine Collection

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps his Department is taking to improve collection rates of fines. [174010]

Mr. Leslie: Driving up performance in the collection of fines is a key priority in increasing confidence in the Criminal Justice System. That is why I announced last June my action plan to deliver significant improvements. A wide range of initiatives have been delivered or are planned. These include:

The piloting of new enforcement tools and measures included in the Courts Act 2003

the introduction earlier this year of a policy of no longer writing off fines;

the introduction from April 2004 of a new incentives package for enforcement teams;

direct support for poorer performing magistrates courts committees (MCCs) through targeted intervention;

"Operation Payback", a national blitz on outstanding warrants which raised £630,000 during the week commencing 22 March and will be repeated later in the year; and

improving the information available to MCCs when offenders are difficult to trace.

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will set targets for percentage collection rates of fines imposed by the courts for *(a)* the current year and *(b)* each of the next two years. [174011]

Mr. Leslie: As a result of the progress made in 2003–04, with the payment rate in the final quarter at 76 per cent. against the target of 75 per cent., I have set a new national payment rate target for 2004–05 at 78 per cent. This will sustain the performance improvement achieved to date and build on it.

Performance during 2004–05 will inform decisions to be taken on targets for future years.

SCOTLAND

Scottish Development International

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what the annual running costs of Scottish Development International were over the last three years; and how much inward investment has been attracted and how many new jobs have been created over this period. [174721]

Mrs. McGuire: As this is a devolved matter for the Scottish Executive, the Scotland Office does not hold any information on the financial or operational performance of Scottish Development International.

Information relating to Scottish Development International is also available on their website, at www.scottishdevelopmentinternational.com.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Community Housing Task Force

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people work in his Community Housing Task Force; what their average salary is; and how many are *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* consultants. [174099]

Keith Hill: There are a total of 16 people working in the Community Housing Task Force. The average salaries for the twelve senior advisers who support local authorities, tenants and other stakeholders across the country is £44,032; salaries for the head of the task force is £79,288 pa and the average salaries for three support staff is £26,497. There are 13 civil servants and three advisers on secondments arrangements from local authorities and the National Housing Federation. There are no consultants working in the task force.

Mobile Homes

Jim Knight: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will review the way in which the Valuation Office Agency assesses mobile homes for council tax purposes. [174971]

Mr. Raynsford: Mobile homes are not in themselves subject to council tax, but liability may arise in respect of the land on which the mobile home stands. Most mobile homes pitches which are subject to council tax are rated at band A. The 2001 White Paper "Strong Local Leadership—Quality Public Services" recognised that council tax bands are not fine grained enough to reflect differences in value at the bottom end of the property market and noted the concerns of mobile home owners about this. This issue has been further considered by his Balance of Funding Review. The Government have

announced that work on a council tax revaluation will start in 2005, with council tax bills based on updated property values issuing in 2007.

Ahead of revaluation the Government will listen to the views of taxpayers and local authorities about council tax bands to help inform the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's decisions on future band structure.

Housing (North-east Lincolnshire)

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much public money per council property has been allocated to *(a)* Hull and *(b)* Grimsby in each year since 2000–01; and what the projected total is for 2004–05. [174634]

Keith Hill: The table shows the expenditure allowances within Housing Revenue Account Subsidy for north east Lincolnshire and Kingston upon Hull for 2000–01 to 2004–05.

The allowances include the funding provided to meet the costs of past and new borrowing carried out to finance renovation and improvement work. It is also open to authorities to fund such work from their own resources, for example from capital receipts. Decisions on this are for individual authorities to take in the light of local priorities.

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
North East Lincolnshire					
Management and maintenance	8,129,578	8,045,574	8,412,641	8,770,557	10,430,125
Major repairs	—	4,785,687	4,837,178	4,792,778	4,807,644
Charges for capital	4,271,913	3,926,612	3,724,527	3,940,902	2,656,856
Other items of reckonable expenditure	40	43	46	46	42
Tenant Participation Compacts	17,874	18,692	—	—	—
Resource Accounting	43,903	45,887	—	—	—
ALMO allowance	—	—	0	0	0
PFI allowance	—	—	—	—	0
Admissible allowance	—	—	—	—	45,051
Anti-social behaviour allowance	—	—	—	—	1,000
Negative subsidy transitional measures transfer allowance	—	—	—	—	0
Assumed expenditure in HRA subsidy	12,463,308	16,822,495	16,974,392	17,504,283	17,940,718
Stock for subsidy calculations	9,481	9,378	9,278	9,146	8,973
Assumed expenditure per dwelling	1,314.56	1,793.83	1,829.53	1,913.87	1,999.41
Kingston upon Hull					
Management and maintenance	29,060,826	29,046,493	27,783,703	29,494,830	38,976,355
Major repairs	—	17,621,940	16,267,665	16,602,040	15,982,654
Charges for capital	20,363,712	19,478,339	17,656,181	16,807,405	12,775,370
Other items of reckonable expenditure	0	0	0	0	0
Tenant Participation Compacts	37,563	40,098	—	—	—
Resource Accounting	124,647	130,254	—	—	—
ALMO allowance	—	—	0	0	0
PFI allowance	—	—	—	—	0
Admissible allowance	—	—	—	—	16,463
Anti-social behaviour allowance	—	—	—	—	1,000
Negative subsidy transitional measures transfer allowance	—	—	—	—	0
Assumed expenditure in HRA subsidy	49,586,748	66,317,124	61,707,549	62,904,275	67,751,842
Stock for subsidy calculations	37,127	36,097	32,595	33,309	31,957
Assumed expenditure per dwelling	1,335.60	1,837.19	1,893.16	1,888.51	2,120.09

Sources:
Claim Forms 0004, 0104, 0204, 0302, 0401

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what common design, lay-out and publicity services were provided by his Department for the literature, the formal consultation document and the videos distributed to tenants in different recent large scale voluntary transfer campaigns were so similar to each other. [174635]

Keith Hill: Annex O of the Housing Transfer Manual 2003 Programme contains good practice guidance on producing consultation material which is based on feedback from tenants who have gone through the transfer process. Authorities should take into account specific local circumstances in their consultation material but as they are all consulting on transferring stock there will inevitably be similarities in presentation.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the fact that 44 per cent. of eligible tenants have voted to give away the council housing stock of north-east Lincolnshire is a sufficient mandate for transfer. [174660]

Keith Hill: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister cannot grant consent to a housing stock transfer if it appears that the majority of tenants are opposed to it. 64.98 per cent. of tenants in north-east Lincolnshire participated in the ballot and 67.3 per cent. of those who voted were in favour of the transfer. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister considers that a simple majority of those voting being in favour is sufficient to indicate tenant support for a transfer.

Renewal Areas (Physical Activity)

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what progress his Department's Neighbourhood Renewal Unit has made on developing a toolkit for delivering sport and physical activity in renewal areas; and if he will make a statement. [173707]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister intends to launch a multi-agency toolkit showing how best to deliver sport and physical activity in renewal areas on its good practice website, renewal.net. in summer 2004.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much his Department's Neighbourhood Renewal Unit has spent on sport and physical activity, and who has received grants from that spending, broken down by *(a)* year and *(b)* region. [173709]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is unable to provide a breakdown of how much its Neighbourhood Renewal Unit has spent on sport and physical activity.

The NRU does not allocate funding specifically for sport and physical activity, but funding can be used in this way to meet local priorities in delivering the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal.

Stamp Duty

Mr. Watson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people live in areas that are exempt from stamp duty on properties up to the value of £150,000, broken down by local authorities in England. [174464]

Keith Hill: The selection of areas eligible for stamp duty exemption was based on the 15 per cent. most deprived wards in England as determined by the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2000 (IMD 2000). This index was based on ward boundaries in existence in April 1998. Using the IMD 2000 there are just over 11 million people living in these wards. A table with the breakdown of this population by local authority district has been made available in the Library of the House.

Thames Gateway

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what progress has been made by the Thames Gateway Strategic Executive with the Environment Agency on the production of working maps of environmental and flooding constraints for the zones of change in the Thames Gateway; and when he expects these maps to be published. [174360]

Keith Hill: In the Thames Gateway and elsewhere, the Environment Agency provides local planning authorities with information on flood risk for use in local planning processes. In summer 2004 the Environment Agency will be issuing local planning authorities with flood zone maps, which show the different zones of flood risk as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 25 on 'Development and Flood Risk'. These flood zone maps will be incorporated into the Flood Map on the Agency's website in the autumn. Updates to the Flood Map (which also includes information on flood defences) will be provided to local planning authorities every three months.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is working closely with the Environment Agency on the management of flood risk in the Thames Gateway. As elsewhere, new development is expected to comply with guidance on flood risk as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 25. In addition, all Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's funded local delivery vehicles in the Thames Gateway zones of change are required to ensure the production of flood risk assessments for their area so that the appropriate siting and design of development is considered. Where we are funding individual projects in the Thames Gateway this will also be conditional on an appropriate flood risk assessment being carried out.

CABINET OFFICE

Emergency Communications Network

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what plans he has *(a)* to upgrade and *(b)* to modernise the Emergency Communications Network. [172750]

Mr. Alexander: Departmental officials are currently exploring options for modernising Emergency Communications.

EU Regulations

Mr. Alan Duncan: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if he will list the EU regulations which have taken effect in the UK since May 1997; and which such regulations have subsequently been *(a)* revised and *(b)* repealed. [171440]

Mr. MacShane: I have been asked to reply.

Based on the records in the *Official Journal* of the European Union (copies available in the Library of the House) we assess that the number of EC, ECSC and Euratom Regulations made was as follows:

	Number
1997	2,339
1998	2,852
1999	2,802
2000	2,882
2001	2,600
2002	2,125
2003	2,176

We also assess that the number of EU directives issued was as follows:

	Number
1997	85
1998	109
1999	100
2000	91
2001	83
2002	159
2003	134

All the data covers the period from December (of the preceding year) to November of that year inclusive.

The number of regulations subsequently revised and repealed is not held centrally and it would incur disproportionate costs to supply such a figure.

WALES

Early Retirement

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many staff in his Department took early retirement, and at what total cost, in the last financial year. [171866]

Mr. Touhig: None.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Mr. Jon Owen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will discuss with the National Assembly for Wales the procedure for applying for Education Maintenance Allowance. [173110]

Mr. Touhig: The National Assembly Wales are currently collaborating with the Northern Ireland Office on a single delivery system for Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) for both countries.

The introduction of EMAs in Wales is following the success of the pilot schemes in England and Scotland over the last three years. Wales and Northern Ireland will now join the scheme on a common basis for the UK. The criteria and eligibility for young people throughout the UK wishing to apply for the EMA is already available on the DfES website, and is outlined in the Assembly Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning's press notice of 27 April.

Although full details of the workings of the Welsh system are not yet available, they will be in place in time for young people aged 16 starting full-time education in September this year.

Mr. Jon Owen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will discuss with the National Assembly for Wales the timetable for enabling people in Wales to apply for Education Maintenance Allowance. [173111]

Mr. Touhig: The Assembly Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning announced on 27 April the introduction of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) in Wales for the academic year starting in 2004.

The Assembly is currently working on their system for the delivery of EMAs for young people in Wales aged 16–19 and aims to have detailed information on their website as soon as possible. Young people will be able to apply when they return to their chosen education path in the new academic year in September.

Welsh Development Agency

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what the annual running costs of the Welsh Development Agency were over the last three years; and how much inward investment has been attracted and how many new jobs have been created over this period. [174722]

Mr. Hain: The Welsh Development Agency provides this information in its latest annual report. A copy of which can be found on its website at www.wda.co.uk.

DEFENCE

Falklands War

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether veterans of the Falklands War will be eligible for grants under the 'Hero's Return' scheme to enable them to return to the Falkland Islands to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the War. [173788]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* The 'Heroes Return' scheme is part of a special lottery programme called Veterans Reunited, set up to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the events that led to the end of the Second World War. For this reason, only veterans of the Second World War and their widows are eligible. It is too early to say whether there will be similar programmes in the future to commemorate other conflicts.

Geneva Convention

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps are taken to make service personnel aware of the provisions of the Geneva Convention. [173007]

Mr. Hoon: All Service personnel are made aware during their initial training of the provisions of the Geneva Conventions in respect of the treatment of Protected Persons (including Prisoners of War). This training is reinforced during specialist and career courses.

Before deployment on operations the Permanent Joint Headquarters directs that any capability offered by the three Services must meet the pre deployment training standards laid down in the relevant mounting instruction. This requires all personnel to undergo training in the Law of Armed Conflict; and applies equally to regular and non-regular Service personnel.

In view of the particular nature of the Army's operational role it is mandatory for its personnel to receive Law of Armed Conflict training annually. Since August 2003, the Army has implemented additional cultural training to enable commanders and units to understand the cultural and social differences of other countries. From October 2003 combat units in the Army were mandated to provide eight to 10 Senior Non Commissioned Officers trained in Prisoner of War handling, thereby providing a trained pool of instructors and specialist supervision. Those specialist elements of the Army (such as the Military Provost Staff) who are responsible for carrying out routine handling of detainees conduct further specialist training covering such aspects of their role.

MOD Land

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how the Department acquired rights over land and foreshore not owned by, or leased to the

Department in Scotland in the period of *(a)* 1980 to 1990, *(b)* 1990 to 2000 and *(c)* 2000 to the present; and if he will make a statement. [173440]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence has consistently utilised the expertise of professional Estates Advisors who work within Defence Estates to undertake negotiations with land owners to secure rights over land and foreshore where there has been an operational military requirement to do so. These rights are formalised in legal agreements usually known as "Minutes of Agreement" or similar.

Special Investigation Branch

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Special Investigation Branch files recommendations for proceedings have not been acted upon in the past year. [172867]

Mr. Ingram: The Royal Military Police (Special Investigations Branch) do not make recommendations for proceedings. At the conclusion of any Royal Military Police investigation a report, together with supporting evidence, is submitted to the appropriate Commanding Officer and to the Army Legal Services.

Territorial Army

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what the latest strength against establishment of the Territorial Army is, broken down by *(a)* unit and *(b)* location; [174590]

(2) what the size of the Territorial Army was in each of the last five years; and what his estimate for each of the next three years is. [174591]

Mr. Caplin: Figures for the strength and establishment of the Territorial Army (TA) by unit and location are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The current strength of the TA, as at 1 March 2004, is 36,900 (including 2,760 mobilised reservists) against an establishment of 41,900.

For historical information on the strength of the TA, I refer the hon. Member to Tri-Service Publication 7 (TSP 7), which is available from the House of Commons Library, or through the Ministry of Defence website. Forecasts of projected strength are not available.

Iraq

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of whether the activities of *(a)* UK and *(b)* Coalition forces in Iraq fully comply with the Geneva conventions; and if he will make a statement. [171635]

Mr. Ingram: The provisions of the Geneva conventions underpin the missions and activities carried out by the United Kingdom and their Coalition partners in Iraq. Any credible suggestions that the UK forces have not observed the provisions of the conventions are investigated and appropriate action is taken.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many women *(a)* have been detained by the UK military since the occupation of Iraq began and *(b)* are being detained by the UK military in Iraq. [172699]

Mr. Hoon: Since the occupation of Iraq began, UK Armed Forces have interned one woman in Iraq who posed or was likely to pose a threat to Coalition Forces. As of 16 May 2004, no women were being detained by UK Armed Forces.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements are in place for *(a)* the Red Cross and *(b)* other aid agencies to visit Iraqi detainees held by United Kingdom military forces. [172904]

Mr. Hoon: The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has unrestricted access to the UK detention facility in Shaibah. The ICRC are the recognised international authority for visiting and checking on conditions of detainees, internees, prisoners of war and any other persons held.

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when ministers first read the International Committee of the Red Cross draft report on Iraqi prisoners delivered in February. [172995]

Mr. Hoon: Defence Ministers first read the International Committee of the Red Cross's (ICRC) report of the Treatment by the Coalition Forces of Prisoners of War and other Protected Persons by the Geneva Conventions in Iraq during Arrest, Internment and Interrogation, dated 10 February 2004, over the weekend of 8/9 May.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the age of the *(a)* youngest and *(b)* oldest Iraqi (i) man and (ii) woman being held in United Kingdom-run prisons in Iraq is. [173999]

Mr. Hoon: Of internees held by United Kingdom forces in Iraq, as at May 15, the oldest was 68 and the youngest 18 years old. There were no female internees.

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 31 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1480–81W, on Iraq, what the total cost was of all surveys conducted over the last 12 months; what further surveys have been conducted since those disclosed to the hon. Member for North Norfolk subsequent to the answer; and if he will place copies of each in the Library. [174334]

Mr. Caplin: Information on the totality of quantitative and qualitative surveys carried out by the Ministry of Defence and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. However, in the Financial Year 2003–04 the total cost of external corporate-level public opinion surveys undertaken by Ministry of Defence was £86,450.62 (including VAT). This includes expenditure on survey work carried out in late 2002–03 but not paid for until Financial Year 2003–04. This figure is provisional and subject to final audit.

No further surveys have been conducted subsequent to my answer of 31 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1480–81W.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

College Funding

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether it is his policy that funding for 16 to 18-year-olds in colleges should match that provided to schools. [173895]

Alan Johnson: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply given to my hon. Friend Member for Wolverhampton, South-West (Rob Marris) on 14 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 623W.

Adult Community Learning

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to his answer of 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1414W, on the adult community learning budget, when he will write to the hon. Member for Altrincham and Sale, West giving the details of the adult and community learning budget for each English local authority area. [175077]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Further to my reply of 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1414W, I have written to the hon. Member separately, as promised, to provide him with the details of the adult and community budget for each English local authority area expressed *(a)* in cash terms and *(b)* per head of population.

Apprenticeships

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate his Department has made of the number of 14 to 16-year-olds that will register for young apprenticeships in each of the next three years. [173748]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We estimate that 1,000 pupils will participate in the Young Apprenticeship programme from September 2004. It is our intention to rapidly accelerate the number of places in year two.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps his Department will take to ensure the *(a)* young apprenticeship, *(b)* apprenticeship and *(c)* advanced apprenticeship schemes are successful in recruiting and retaining trainees. [173749]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: For young apprenticeships, the strategy is to set high quality standards, offer attractive learning opportunities alongside the statutory curriculum and ensure that recruits have good means of support for the duration of the programme. First, we have set demanding entry criteria for both the candidates and the partnerships that want to participate in the programme. Second, recruits will have every incentive to complete the programme as they will gain worthwhile skills, experience and qualifications as well as more training opportunities. Third, the programme will provide generous funding as well as comprehensive advice and support from partners such as the Sector Skills Councils. Finally, we believe the programme will meet an unmet need and will therefore prove itself popular among the recruits.

For apprenticeships post 16 accurate initial assessment by the Learning and Skills Council working with the Connexions Service will ensure that young employees are placed on the programme most appropriate to their training need. In addition the LSC published its 'Quality Improvement Strategy to 2006' in February 2004. This sets out how the LSC will set out to improve training provider performance including the setting minimum performance levels. Where these are not met the LSC will withdraw contracts from providers. We are looking to SSCs to work with the LSC to raise levels of employer engagement in apprenticeship programmes.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what financial incentives will be available to *(a)* apprentices and *(b)* employers providing (i) young apprenticeships, (ii) apprenticeships and (iii) advanced apprenticeships; what the cost to the public purse will be of incentives to (A) apprentices and (B) employers in the next three years; and whether those costs will be met from his Department's existing budgets. [174037]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: As we announced on 10 May 2004, financial incentives for apprentices and employers are being reviewed as part of a range of reforms to ensure apprenticeships are fit for purpose and meet employers' needs. Decisions are subject to subject to post-Spending Review allocations and announcements will be made when appropriate.

Attitude Surveys

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what surveys of public perceptions of *(a)* his Department, *(b)* schools and other education institutions and *(c)* teaching unions have taken place over the last 12 months; what the (i) title and (ii) nature of these surveys was; what the findings of each survey were; where these findings have been published; what the cost of all such surveys was; and if he will place copies of the surveys in the Library. [174339]

Mr. Stephen Twigg *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* In the past 12 months my Department has contributed to the British Social Attitudes Survey and commissioned a survey of public perceptions of education.

The British Social Attitudes Survey is an annual independent survey on a range of issues which is managed by the National Centre for Social Research. The Department contributes to a module of questions around education and skills issues. The Department's contribution to the survey in 2003 cost £62,700. Findings are published by the National Centre for Social Research in hardcopy and on their website and results for 2003 are due to be published in November 2004.

The Public Perception of Education Survey is an annual survey commissioned by the Department that asks the public's view of the education service nationally. It was last carried out in November 2003 and cost £51,140. The findings will be published on the Department's internet site in June 2004 and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Timber

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether his Department plans to contribute financially to the establishment of the second phase of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [167627]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Minister for the Environment and Agri-environment on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 31W. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs are the lead Department for the central point of expertise on timber procurement and will be consulting with my Department to determine objectives and resources required.

Class Sizes

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how average class sizes have varied in the last 20 years in England. [171314]

Mr. Miliband: A table showing how class sizes have changed over the last 20 years has been placed in the House of Commons Library. This shows an overall rise in the size of primary school classes between 1984, when the average class contained 25 pupils, to a peak in 1998 of 27.8. Primary class sizes have fallen steadily from 1999 to 2004, with the average class now containing 26.3 pupils.

The average secondary class contained 20.9 pupils in 1984, peaking in 2000 at 22.2, and falling to 21.8 in 2004.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Wirral, South were taught in classes of more than 30 pupils on the latest date for which figures are available. [173627]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* Tables giving the requested class size information for all parliamentary constituencies have been placed in the House of Commons Library. Final figures for 2003 and the latest provisional figures for 2004 have been provided. Further details on the 2004 provisional figures on class sizes by local education authority can be found on http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000457/index.shtml.

Dentistry

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many undergraduate dentists started university degrees in each year since 2001, broken down by university. [157357]

Alan Johnson: The available information is given in the table.

Intakes to English dental schools, 2001/02 to 2003/04

University Dental Schools	Academic Year 2001/02	2002/03	2003/04[1]
Birmingham	73	77	76
Bristol	55	58	60
King's College London	150	168	151
Leeds	61	65	59
Liverpool	57	56	66
Manchester	79	87	90
Newcastle	70	70	72
QMW (Barts & The London)	68	61	78
Sheffield	59	69	72
Total England	672	711	724

[1] Provisional until November 2004 when a finalised figure will be declared.

Source:
Higher Education Funding Council for England.

Figures do not include intakes to Scottish, Welsh or Northern Irish Dental schools, which are the responsibility of the devolved administrations, although students from these institutions will be eligible to work in England.

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Stockton South were taught in classes of more than 30 on the latest date for which figures are available. [171478]

Mr. Miliband: Tables giving the requested class size information for all parliamentary constituencies have been placed in the House of Commons Library. Final figures for 2003 and the latest provisional figures for 2004 have been provided. Further details on the 2004 provisional figures on class sizes by local education authority can be found on http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000457/index.shtml

Education Funding

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Oldham, West and Royton were taught in classes of more than 30 on the latest date for which figures are available. [170917]

Mr. Miliband: Tables giving the requested class size information for all parliamentary constituencies have been placed in the House of Commons Library. Final figures for 2003 and the latest provisional figures for 2004 have been provided. Further details on the 2004 provisional figures on class sizes by local education authority can be found on http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000457/index.shtml.

Education Services

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching assistants there were in schools in Blackpool, South *(a)* in each of the last seven years and *(b)* on the latest date for which figures are available. [173068]

Mr. Miliband: The following table gives the numbers of full-time equivalent teaching assistants in maintained schools in Blackpool, South constituency in January of each year between 1997 and 2003, the latest year for which data are available.

	Teaching assistants
1997	130
1998	150
1999	160
2000	180

	Teaching assistants
2001	240
2002	140
2003	290

Source:
Annual Schools Census.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Bootle were taught in classes of more than 30 on the latest date for which figures are available. [172679]

Mr. Miliband: Tables giving the requested class size information for all parliamentary constituencies have been placed in the House of Commons Library. Final figures for 2003 and the latest provisional figures for 2004 have been provided. Further details on the 2004 provisional figures on class sizes by local education authority can be found on http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000457/index.shtml

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* primary school teachers, *(b)* secondary school teachers and *(c)* education support staff there were in Tamworth constituency in each of the last 10 years. [173280]

Mr. Miliband: The following table gives the full time equivalent number of teachers and support staff in maintained primary and secondary schools in Tamworth constituency in each year between 1997 and 2003, the latest year for which constituency level data are available. Information is not available prior to 1997.

	Teachers	Support staff
Primary		
1997	370	120
1998	360	140
1999	370	150
2000	360	160
2001	360	190
2002	370	190
2003	360	220
Secondary		
1997	360	60
1998	360	70
1999	350	80
2000	360	80
2001	360	90
2002	370	100
2003	380	100

Source:
Annual School Census.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching assistants there were in schools in Tamworth constituency *(a)* in each of the last seven years and *(b)* on the latest date for which figures are available. [173282]

Mr. Miliband: The following table gives the numbers of full-time equivalent teaching assistants in maintained schools in Tamworth constituency in January of each year between 1997 and 2003, the latest year for which data are available.

	Teaching assistants
1997	110
1998	120
1999	140
2000	140
2001	170
2002	150
2003	210

Source:
Annual School Census.

Education Statistics

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cost per pupil of education in *(a)* primary school, *(b)* secondary school and *(c)* sixth form in the Borough of Havering was in the last academic year for which figures are available. [169948]

Mr. Miliband: My Department collects financial data according to the financial year. The available information is provided in the following table for the financial year 2002–03:

Net current expenditure per pupil—2002–03

	£
Primary education	2,740
Secondary education	3,810

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from Havering LEA's section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES. Section 52 is collected on a financial year basis and not an academic year basis. 2002–03 data are subject to change by the LEA. Figures are rounded to the nearest £10.
2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers.
3. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.
4. The NCE per pupil figures for primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained primary schools sector.
5. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector and includes those secondary schools with sixth forms. Separate figures cannot be calculated for costs of sixth forms.
6. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching assistant posts there have been in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in Brent in each year since 1997; and what the average figures for (i) English borough councils and (ii) London boroughs were in each year. [172812]

Mr. Miliband: Teacher assistants are not available at borough council level. The following table gives the numbers of full-time equivalent teaching assistants in maintained schools in Brent local LEA, the average

number in London LEAs and in all LEAs in England. The figures are as at January of each year between 1997 and 2003, the latest year for which data are available.

	Brent	London average	England average
Nursery and Primary			
1997	160	170	270
1998	200	180	280
1999	230	200	300
2000	250	240	340
2001	300	310	420
2002	330	320	460
2003	350	370	530
Secondary			
1997	10	20	50
1998	10	20	60
1999	30	20	70
2000	30	30	80
2001	40	50	100
2002	60	60	130
2003	60	70	150

Source:
Annual School Census.

Medical Students

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the estimated intake in medical schools in Great Britain is in each of the next three years. [173430]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* The available figures from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) are given in the table. Data are given for English medical schools only. Allocation of places for Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish medical schools is the responsibility of the devolved administrations.

Target[1] medical school intakes to English institutions, 2004–06

Academic year	Target intake
2004/05	5,777
2005/06	5,894
2006/07	5,894

Target figures cover UK and overseas domiciled students.
Source:
HEFCE

Postgraduate Students

Mrs. Lawrence: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average expenditure per postgraduate student was in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* the US and *(c)* the OECD in the last year for which figures are available. [174132]

Alan Johnson: International comparisons of expenditure on higher education cover all 'tertiary' education which includes both under and postgraduate study. The OECD's "Education at a Glance 2003" gives figures for the year 2000, the latest year for which comparable figures are available. It shows expenditure per higher education student per year in the UK was US $9,657, above the OECD average (US $9,571). Expenditure per student was highest in the USA (US $20,538). At current rates of exchange, equivalent figures in sterling are: UK £5,461, OCED £5,413 and USA £11,615.

Prison Education

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills why the Offenders' Learning and Skills Unit cancelled the re-tendering exercise for prison education contracts due to take place this year; what the cost of this exercise was; and when the unit will next be seeking bids for prison education contracts. [172424]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Ministers took the decision to cancel the re-tendering exercise on the basis that it was no longer the most appropriate method of delivering provision. This decision was based on a number of key changes in the offender learning and skills environment:

The creation of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) and the introduction of new sentencing arrangements which offer an important opportunity to refocus work in this field and to improve coherence of offender learning across the custodial system and into the community;

Central Government initiatives to free resources for front line delivery and to reallocate operational responsibilities between government and partners; and

The need to reap the skills and workforce benefits of closer partnerships between key agencies such as Jobcentre Plus and the Learning and Skills Council, and the desire to bring offender learning and skills into the mainstream of post-16 provision.

The Offenders' Learning and Skills Unit is now working with these partners towards a phased introduction of a new integrated service by developing prototypes in up to three regions or areas. These prototypes will inform the development of comprehensive proposals for a national delivery framework for offender learning and skills, so that from the summer of 2005 we can move towards a new delivery partnership led by the LSC.

In the meantime, officials are negotiating extensions to existing contracts from September 2004 as we develop the new service, with minimal changes to avoid disruption.

The total cost to my Department of the re-tendering and re-contracting project up until the change in policy was £346,000. The majority of this would have been spent anyway in conducting policy development and administration, but it also includes professional, legal and technical advice specific to the project. Money spent on the latter has not been wasted as there will still be improvements to the delivery of prisons education, just not via a tendering exercise. Indeed, the main output of this project was a detailed specification for the new future service delivery; this was a valuable investment, as with some tailoring, this will form the key input to our new approach.

Pupil Funding (Preston)

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was spent per pupil in Preston in each of the last seven years. [168134]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than districts within an

area. Preston is a district of Lancashire local education authority. The information for Lancashire LEA is as follows:

Net current expenditure per pupil

	Pre-Primary Education	*Primary Education*	*Pre-primary and Primary*	*Secondary Education*	*Special*
1996–97	n/a	n/a	1,800	2,590	15,990
1997–98	n/a	n/a	1,820	2,630	17,320
1998–99	n/a	n/a	2,000	2,700	17,770
1999–00	7,130	2,110	2,170	2,760	18,490
2000–01	11,030	2,330	2,440	2,910	18,770
2001–02	16,390	2,630	2,800	3,230	20,600
2002–03	—	2,900	—	3,400	—

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from Lancashire LEA's Section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. Figures up to and including1997–98 figures are for Lancashire LEA prior to local government reorganisation. From 1998–99 onwards parts of Lancashire LEA became Blackpool and Blackburn LEAs. Expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of the Section52 outturn statement in 1999–2000. 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance.
2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
3. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.
4. The NCE per pupil figures for pre-primary and primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the pre-primary sector and maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained nursery and primary schools sector.
5. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.
6. The NCE per pupil figures for special schools relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained special schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained special schools sector.
7. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Regional Assemblies

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which functions and responsibilities would be transferred from his Department to elected regional assemblies where they are established. [172755]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The aim of elected assemblies is to ensure that regional functions are carried out effectively and better reflect the needs of the region. Assemblies will also play an important role in supporting delivery of the Department's skills agenda, specifically in three key areas: (i) the assembly will appoint two members to the Boards of each local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in its region, one of whom will have a business background, and will be consulted on other appointments; (ii) the national LSC will be under a statutory duty to consult assemblies on its guidance to the local LSC; and (iii) local LSCs will be obliged to have regard to the strategies of the ERA; and will be under a statutory duty to consult the assembly on their plans for the local area, in the same way that RDAs are consulted now (a statutory requirement under the Learning and Skills Act 2000).

Schools (South Ribble)

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary school children in South Ribble were taught in classes of more than 30 on the latest date for which figures are available. [171664]

Mr. Miliband: Tables giving the requested class size information for all parliamentary constituencies have been placed in the House of Commons Library. Final figures for 2003 and the latest provisional figures for 2004 have been provided. Further details on the 2004 provisional figures on class sizes by local education authority can be found on http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000457/index.shtml

Selective Admissions

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of pupils there were in years seven to 11 in *(a)* grammar, *(b)* modern and *(c)* comprehensive schools in each local authority retaining a selective admissions system in each of the last four years. [172377]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 19 May 2004]:* The information requested has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of pupils in maintained *(a)* grammar and *(b)* non-selective schools in each local authority retaining a selective admissions system were (i) eligible for free school meals, (ii) statemented and (iii) from ethnic minorities in each of the last four years. [172378]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 19 May 2004]:* The information requested has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Social Sciences

Mrs. Lawrence: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what *(a)* financial assistance and *(b)* grants his Department offers students undertaking postgraduate degrees in social sciences. [174131]

Alan Johnson: Research awards to postgraduate students in the social sciences are awarded on a competitive basis by the Economic and Social Research Council, funded by the Office of Science and Technology. Research council awards include increased tax free stipends (from £9,000 for 2004–05 to £12,000 by 2005–06) to cover living expenses.

Post graduate students, regardless of discipline, are not eligible for student loans and grants. They are free to apply for a Career Development Loan, a scheme which is administered by my Department. Postgraduates with a disability are able to receive assistance for specialist equipment, for example, as well as additional travel and non medical help costs through

Disabled Students Allowances (DSAs), up to a maximum of £5,370 in academic year 2003/04 and £5,500 in 2004/05.

Mrs. Lawrence: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action he is taking to widen participation in postgraduate study of social sciences. [174133]

Alan Johnson: The Government are investing significant sums in widening access to higher education. This will have the additional benefit of increasing the supply of potential postgraduate students, including students in the social sciences. The increased funding available for science and research, (up £1.25 million by 2005/06 compared to 2003/04) will also expand the opportunities for research across all disciplines. Financial support for postgraduate study is available through the Career Development Loan Scheme which is administered by my Department.

Surplus School Places

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills under what powers local education authorities may be required to reduce the number of surplus places in schools. [173100]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* Under Schedule 7 to the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, the Secretary of State may direct a local education authority (LEA) to bring forward statutory proposals where there is, or is likely to be, an excess of school places. If the LEA does not publish proposals or if the proposals are time expired, Schedule 7 allows the Secretary of State to publish his own proposals. Both types of proposal fall to be considered by the School Organisation Committee (SOC) or schools adjudicator if the SOC cannot reach a unanimous decision. The powers granted to the Secretary of State under Schedule 7 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 have never been used.

Teachers

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if he will make a statement on the methods used to allocate initial teacher training places to each subject; [174563]

(2) if he will make a statement on the number of initial teacher training places allocated to religious education. [174564]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* The allocation of undergraduate and postgraduate teacher training places in England by phase and subject is informed by the outputs of the Teacher Supply Model. Details of how the model works may be found in the paper "Teacher Supply and Demand Modelling: A Technical Description", a copy of which has been placed in the Library.

On 27 December last year, I announced that, for 2004/05, 730 training places would be available for religious education, 30 more than in the current year. These do not include places on employment-based training programmes.

Teaching Assistants

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching assistants were employed in schools in *(a)* Leeds and *(b)* Elmet constituency for each year since 1996. [173392]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* The following table shows the full-time equivalent number of teaching assistants employed in all maintained schools including non-maintained special schools in Leeds local education authority for each January since 1996 and for Elmet constituency in each January since 1997. Information is not available at constituency level prior to 1996.

	Leeds LEA	*Elmet*
1996	1,470	—
1997	1,570	180
1998	1,680	190
1999	1,670	190
2000	1,790	220
2001	1,950	220
2002	2,390	260
2003	2,480	290

Source:
Annual Schools Census

Transport Workers (Centres of Excellence)

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many centres of excellence for transport workers have been established since 1997. [174155]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* Since 1997 20 Centres of Vocational Excellence have been established covering the transport sector and associated engineering sectors. These include logistics, automotive engineering and rail industry engineering.

Truancy

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children played truant at least once from *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in each year since 1997, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [167565]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Universities

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the rate of return on each subject studied at each university. [172109]

Alan Johnson: The Department does not conduct a formal cost-benefit assessment, or rate of return, to university qualifications by subject or by institution.

However, the Department has commissioned research to estimate the earnings benefits of different degree subjects. Table 1 shows the estimated percentage wage premium by subject over and above someone with A levels alone.

Table 1: Wage benefits to HE by subject[1]

Percentage

Subject	*Women*	*Men*
Languages	20	4
Health	24	23
Nursing	12	10
Science	7	11
Maths	19	22
Engineering	11	18
Architecture	21	10
Economics	20	23
Law	24	23
Education	2	-3
Social science	4	6
Arts	-2	-8
Combined	5	11

[1] *Source:*
Analysis provided by Ian Walker and Yu Zhu, from data used in their research: "The Returns to Education: Evidence from the Labour Force Surveys—DfES research report No.313.

Recent research evidence has also found up to 44 percentage point differences in average graduate earnings depending on the institution attended.[1]

[1] Conlon and Chevalier (2000) Financial Returns to Undergraduates and Tuition Fees, CIHE.

Vocational Qualifications

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many adults achieved an NVQ level 2 or equivalent qualification in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [172977]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* Table 1 shows the number of NVQs (National Vocational Qualifications) and OVQs (Other Vocational Qualifications), at level 2, achieved by adults in each year since 1997/98. Data are for England and are taken from the National Information System for Vocational Qualifications (NISVQ).

Table 1: The number of level 2 qualifications[1] *achieved by adults*[2]*, in England, 1997/98 to 2001/02*

Thousand

	NVQs	*OVQs*	*Total level 2 awards*
1997/98	171	58	229
1998/99	161	65	226
1999/2000	167	76	243
2000/01	152	96	247
2001/02	139	79	218

[1] NVQ figures are based on information relating to all awarding bodies that award NVQs. OVQ data are for City and Guilds, OCR and Edexcel only.
[2] Adults are defined as those who are academic age 18 or over. Academic age is age of the person at the start of the academic year e.g. in 2001/02 age would be calculated against 31 August 2001.
Source:
NISVQ

Youth Education

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to his answer of 13 May 2004, ref 171718, if he will make it his policy to publish data for 16 to 18-year-olds participating in education, training and employment by ethnic group. [174336]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Annual population estimates are not available by ethnic group and hence the published participation rates for 16 to 18-year-olds in education, training and employment cannot be broken down by ethnic group, as they use population estimates as the denominator to calculate the percentages.

However, each of the separate sources used to produce the numbers of 16 to 18-year-olds in education and LSC funded work based learning (WBL) do publish information by ethnic group, though not specifically for the 16–18 ages. These are available on the departmental website for those in schools; in HE institutions; and in LSC funded further education and work based learning.

Information on the labour market status of young people comes from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), which also supplies the numbers in non-college based employer funded training (EFT) and other education and training (OET). Due to sample sizes, LFS numbers cannot be broken down by ethnic group for single years of age.

Some information is also available on the Departmental website from the Youth Cohort Study, for single years of age. This is a sample survey of school pupils monitoring their transition from school to further (then higher) education or to the labour market and is not directly comparable with the participation rates.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Bribery

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 3 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 837W, on bribery, how many reports of concerns of bribery registered by UK companies about foreign competitors have been made by his Department to foreign governments since February 2002. [174267]

Mr. MacShane: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has no record of having received any approaches since February 2002 as a result of concerns registered by UK companies about foreign competitors; and has not therefore had any reports to pass to foreign governments.

British Prisoners Overseas

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on behalf of how many British citizens in prison outside the United Kingdom he has discussed their cases since 1 January; and if he will make a statement. [174121]

Mr. Rammell: Ministers frequently raise cases of British nationals detained overseas, with foreign governments, where it is appropriate to do so. However, such statistics are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate costs.

Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 22 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 541W, on the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty,

what representations he has received from Russia about the Adaptated Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty; for what reasons the enlargement of NATO went ahead without an agreement for the continuance of a CFE Treaty; whether the new NATO states were required to give a commitment to join a CFE Treaty; whether they have given such a commitment; what commitments on *(a)* restraint on troop numbers and *(b)* build-ups NATO has given in the absence of an agreed CFE Treaty; and if he will make a statement. [173386]

Mr. MacShane: My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Bill Rammell) discussed CFE issues with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Chizov during their meeting in Moscow on 6 April 2004.

The Adapted CFE Treaty (ACFE) cannot come into force until it has been ratified by all States Party. To date only three States have done so: Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Ratification by NATO Allies is delayed by continued Russian failure to meet the political commitments entered into at the 1999 OSCE Istanbul Summit, in relation to their presence in Georgia and Moldova. Until the ACFE is ratified, the 1990 CFE Treaty remains in force.

There is no link between NATO Enlargement and accession to the CFE Regime. However we welcome the stated intention of all the new Allies involved to seek accession to the ACFE once the Treaty has entered into force.

Investigations in Foreign Jurisdictions

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what dates in the last two years *(a)* his Department and *(b)* UK diplomatic posts abroad have given advice to law enforcement agencies about pursuing investigations in foreign jurisdictions; and which jurisdictions that advice concerned. [174006]

Mr. Rammell: Staff in many departments within the Foreign and Commonwealth Office have frequent contact with UK law enforcement agencies on a range of issues and covering different foreign jurisdictions. In addition there are over 140 Law Enforcement Liaison Officers based in UK diplomatic missions overseas. These officers are in daily contact with UK law enforcement agencies in the course of their work which includes giving advice about investigations. To list all such contacts for the last two years would incur disproportionate costs.

Iran

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the Iranian authorities concerning human rights, with particular reference to religious liberty. [173759]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary frequently raises our grave concerns about Iran's human rights record, including restrictions on religious freedom, with the Iranian authorities, including the Iranian Foreign Minister. The EU as a whole has raised cases of religious persecution in Iran through an EU Human Rights dialogue with Iran.

Iraq

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what status of forces agreement is proposed for Iraq following the proposed transfer of sovereignty; whether it will be different from that currently pertaining; whether the private security forces and other quasi-military personnel contracted to Coalition forces operating in Iraq will *(a)* be covered by it and *(b)* be subject to any form of control by the proposed new Iraqi administration; what plans he has for a new United Nations resolution which would cover the status of forces including private and quasi-military contractors; and if he will make a statement. [172281]

Mr. Rammell: The precise new arrangements for the Multinational Force and private security companies operating in Iraq after the transfer of sovereignty are being discussed. We expect a new United Nations Security Council Resolution to endorse the future role of the Multinational Force.

Middle East Peace Plan

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how the international community will ensure that the future Palestinian Government installs democratic institutions as part of the Middle East Peace Plan. [173243]

Mr. Rammell: The UK has long supported the development of more effective and accountable Palestinian institutions in preparation for Palestinian statehood. The Palestinian Authority has made progress on developing better accountability and a transparent legal environment. The international community is supporting the Palestinian Authority in their efforts. Encouraging free and fair elections, at all levels, is one part of the process. We hope that the Palestinian Authority will hold elections as soon as possible as called for in the roadmap.

As a priority, the Palestinians need to take the necessary steps to finalise their election laws, and to complete the work, funded by the EU, on voter registration. We also recognise that free and fair elections cannot take place while Israeli restrictions on the freedom of movement remain in place.

Overseas Posts (Costs)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the running costs were for the UK high commissions in *(a)* Australia, *(b)* Canada, *(c)* India and *(d)* Pakistan, and how many staff were employed in each of these embassies, in the last year for which figures are available. [173647]

Mr. Rammell: The information is as follows.

Total operating costs for financial year 2002–03 are:

	£ million
Canberra	1.3
Ottawa	3.32
New Delhi	14.34
Islamabad	11.46

These costs include an element in respect of support incurred in the UK.

Staff numbers for financial year 2003–04 are:

Post	FCO UK	OGD[1] UK	FCO LE[2]
Canberra	18	6	80
Ottawa	19	10	75
New Delhi	61	42	490
Islamabad	79	15	333

[1] Other Government Department
[2] Locally employed

The figures reflect the total number of full-time equivalents.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the running cost was of the UK embassy in *(a)* Japan and *(b)* China in 2003–04; and how many staff were employed in each of these embassies. [173886]

Mr. Rammell: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office account for 2003–04 has not yet been finalised.

However, total operating costs for financial year 2002–03 were:

	£ million
Tokyo	19.45
Beijing	11.92

These costs include an element in respect of support incurred in the UK.

Staff numbers for financial year 2003–04 are:

	Post	
	Tokyo	Beijing
FCO UK	40	68
OGD[1] UK	20	10
FCO LE[2]	135	166

[1] Other Government Department
[2] Locally employed

The figures reflect the total number of full-time equivalents.

Saudi Arabia

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to encourage Saudi accession to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights. [173757]

Mr. Rammell: We continue to have wide-ranging concerns about human rights in Saudi Arabia including aspects of the judicial system; corporal and capital punishment; restrictions on the freedoms of religion, expression and assembly; and discrimination against women and Non-Muslims.

The UK Government is committed to encouraging Saudi Arabia to improve its human rights record. We discuss our concerns about human rights with the Saudi authorities at working, ambassadorial and ministerial level.

In bilateral discussions with Saudi Arabia we have not recently specifically discussed accession to the ICCPR or ICESCR.

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the Saudi authorities regarding the rights of members of minority faiths in Saudi Arabia; [173758]

Mr. Rammell: We continue to have wide-ranging concerns about human rights in Saudi Arabia including aspects of the judicial system; corporal and capital punishment; restrictions on the freedoms of religion, expression and assembly; and discrimination against women and Non-Muslims. The UK Government is committed to encouraging Saudi Arabia to improve its human rights record. We discuss our concerns about human rights with the Saudi authorities at working, ambassadorial and ministerial level.

Seal Culling

Miss Widdecombe: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if the Government will support a pan-European ban on the clubbing of baby seals. [173406]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* I have been asked to reply.

The Department is not aware of any such proposed agreement. In the event that one was forthcoming, we would consider such a proposal carefully.

Sudan

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the progress being made in securing the rights of the Nuba people in the peace talks concerning the Sudan. [173653]

Mr. Mullin: The arrangements for the administration of the Nuba Mountains Region of Sudan is currently under discussion at the peace talks in Naivasha, Kenya. We hope that agreement will be reached on this and the other outstanding issues soon.

UK Personnel

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the countries where UK personnel are involved in providing training in interrogation techniques; whether the hooding of those being interrogated forms part of the training; and if he will make a statement. [173238]

Mr. MacShane: The Government does not offer training in interrogation techniques to overseas governments. Our training on interviewing techniques for police, military and intelligence agencies complies with UK and international law. This training does not involve the use of hooding.

Venezuela

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions *(a)* he, *(b)* members of his Department and *(c)* other United Kingdom representatives have (i) had and (ii) sought with (A) members and (B) representatives of the Government of Venezuela concerning the arrest of the Venezuelan National Guard Colonel Orlando Castro; and if he will make a statement. [173814]

Mr. Rammell: We have neither had nor sought discussions with members or representatives of the Venezuelan Government about this issue.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions *(a)* he, *(b)* members of his Department and *(c)* other United Kingdom representatives have (i) had and (ii) sought with (A) members and (B) representatives of the (1) Government of and (2) the opposition in Venezuela concerning the arrest of 80 Colombian nationals on 9 May; what these individuals are being charged with; and if he will make a statement. [173815]

Mr. Rammell: We have neither had nor sought discussions with members or representatives of the Venezuelan Government or Opposition about this issue. To date, we are not aware of any charges having been brought against these individuals.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the possibility of a referendum in Venezuela this year. [173816]

Mr. Rammell: The Venezuelan constitution allows for the possibility of a recall referendum against elected officials, including the President, provided certain conditions are met. It is not yet clear whether these conditions will be met, and therefore not possible to determine if a referendum will take place at this stage.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he last discussed Venezuela with his United States counterpart. [173817]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has regular discussions with Secretary Powell on a wide range of issues, including Venezuela.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the claims of cross-border activity by the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia in Venezuela; when this assessment was last revised; and if he will make a statement. [173818]

Mr. Rammell: Alleged cross-border activities by the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia and other illegally armed groups are a matter for the Governments of Venezuela and Colombia. The border between the two countries covers more than 2,200 km. It is porous and difficult to secure completely with the resources available. British diplomatic staff in Bogota and Caracas periodically visit the border region.

Websites

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the total annual cost of his Department's websites, including those of its agencies, was in the most recent year for which figures are available. [159518]

Mr. Rammell: For the past three years the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has been implementing a major ICT infrastructure project to co-ordinate and host its global web presence. This includes a secure platform for launching and maintaining multiple websites: FCO website (www.fco.gov.uk), a new UK Visas website (www.ukVisas.gov.uk), separate websites for over 100 British missions worldwide, and a new portal site about the UK (www.i-uk.com). It will also host the UK G8 Presidency website next year. The total cost of the project is £10 million funded by the Treasury's Capital Modernisation Fund.

The Wilton Park Executive Agency (www.wiltonpark.org.uk) spent £26,720 on their website in 2003–4.

Simon Mann

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what information he has assessed on the treatment of Mr. Simon Mann in Zimbabwe; [173548]

(2) whether the authorities in Zimbabwe have indicated that they consider Mr. Simon Mann to be British; [173549]

(3) what representations he has made about the treatment of Mr. Simon Mann and his condition. [173550]

Mr. Rammell: Mr. Simon Mann is a dual British/South African national who requested our consular assistance on 23 April. Our rules on consular confidentiality mean that we cannot discuss the specific details of his case. However, the Zimbabwean authorities recognised his nationality status by allowing our Consul to visit him on 7 May, where we were able to discuss his welfare and treatment. We welcomed the Zimbabwean court's decision on 7 May to remove handcuffs and manacles from all of the accused while they are detained in Chikurubi Prison, Harare. We will continue to be guided by Mr. Mann about his treatment and are in regular contact with his lawyers and family.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Claimants (Over-50s)

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of incapacity benefit claimants aged between 50 and state pension age have claimed for *(a)* more than one year, *(b)* more than five years and *(c)* more than 10 years, broken down by gender; and if he will make a statement. [172541]

Maria Eagle: The information is in the table.

Number of incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) claimants between the ages of 50 and state pension age, by gender and claim duration as at November 2003

Thousand

	Men		Women	
Duration of claim	*Aged 50 to 64*	*Percentage*	*Aged 50 to 59*	*Percentage*
All	804.1	100	451.7	100
Up to 1 year	86.9	11	50.0	11
From 1 to 5 years	235.6	29	135.3	30
From 5 to 10 years	353.6	44	196	43
Over 10 years	128.0	16	70.4	16

Notes:

1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest hundred and are expressed in thousands.
2. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
3. Numbers are based on a 5 per cent. sample, and are therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.

Source:

IAD Information Centre 5 per cent. sample.

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what proportion of people between the age of 50 and state pension age claimed *(a)* sickness and *(b)* disability benefits in each year since 1997, broken down by gender; and if he will make a statement. [172542]

Maria Eagle: The information has been placed in the Library.

Child Support Agency

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when existing Child Support Agency cases will be transferred to the new scheme; and if he will make a statement. [174279]

Mr. Pond: I refer my hon. Friend to the written answer I gave the hon. Member for Castle Point (Bob Spink) on 18 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 1092W.

Council Housing

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cumulative extra cost to the social security budget of the transfer of council housing to registered social landlords has been in each year since 1997. [172275]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available. To determine such a figure would require detailed assumptions about the rents each authority might theoretically have charged had it retained the stock. However, the potential impact on housing benefit where stock is transferred to registered social landlords is considered as part of the overall value-for-money assessment of transfers.

Departmental Annual Report

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost of his Department's annual report has been in each of the last seven years. [172918]

Maria Eagle: The Department for Work and Pensions has published three Departmental Reports since it was established in June 2001. The costs falling directly to the Department for production of these reports are shown in the table.

Other costs of printing and publication are met directly by the publisher, TSO (The Stationery Office) and do not fall to government.

Date of publication	*Cost to Department for Work and Pensions (£)*
May 2002	94,940
May 2003	73,089
April 2004	38,897

Departmental Policies (Sustainable Development)

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what work his Department's Green Minister has undertaken in his capacity in the last three months; [165665]

(2) what meetings his Department's Green Minister has attended in his capacity in the last 12 months; [165668]

(3) if he will list the meetings at which a representative of his Department had been present regarding the delivery of sustainable development across Government as co-ordinated by the Ministerial Sub-committee of Green Ministers. [165667]

Mr. Pond: The Green Minister for the Department for Work and Pensions is my noble Friend Baroness Hollis of Heigham, but it has been established practice under successive Governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees. This practice is now formalised by Exemption 2 of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. Additionally, officials regularly attend the working groups which report directly to ENV(G), particularly related to the Development of the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate.

Departmental Procurement

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of the *(a)* crockery, *(b)* cutlery and *(c)* glassware procured by his Department over the last five years is of British manufacture. [170808]

Jane Kennedy: This Department does not procure the items specified for its staff canteens or catering facilities because these services are delivered by our contractor for the provision of estate and property services. Information on the country of manufacture of these items procured for other purposes is not collected centrally.

Employers' Insurance

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of representations from the Association of British Insurers

on matters relating to employers' liability compulsory insurance; and whether he has taken steps to confirm their accuracy. [169401]

Jane Kennedy: The Association of British Insurers (ABI) represents many of the major underwriters of employers' liability compulsory insurance (ELCI) and the Department worked closely with the association in the recent review of ELCI. However, we draw information from a wide range of other sources, such as Lloyd's of London, and Datamonitor, and work closely with a range of other key representative organisations such as the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL), the British Insurance Brokers' Association (BIBA), the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), the Engineering Employers' Federation (EEF), the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and the Trades Union Congress (TUC).

The formal response of the ABI to the review of ELCI was one of 86 received by the review team.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many personal injury claims were made to general insurers in specific relation to employers' liability in each of the last five years, broken down by region; and what the total value of all costs and claims in relation to such claims was, broken down by region. [174048]

Jane Kennedy: Figures for the number of personal injury claims in relation to Employers' Liability for 1999–2000 are not available. Figures for the number of personal injury claims in relation to Employers' Liability for 2001 to 2003 are in the table.

	Number
2001	219,183
2002	170,554
2003	183,342

Source:
Compensation Recovery Unit.

A regional breakdown of the figures would be available only at disproportionate cost. Separate figures for just the total value of costs and just the total value of settlements are not available. However the total value of costs and claims combined for 1999–2002 are shown in the table.

	£ million
1999	468
2000	427
2001	639
2002	926

Note:
Figures are not yet available for 2003.
A regional breakdown of the figures is not available.
Source:
Association of British Insurers.

It is important to note that because of the long tail nature of certain claims, settlements may accrue for many years to come. The figures in the table only relate to the value of claims thus far settled in each of those years.

Pensioner Income

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners entitled to council tax benefit were non-recipients in the financial years *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; and how much the unclaimed benefit amounted to in each year. [172883]

Mr. Pond: The information requested is not available.

Latest estimates of the number of pensioners who are entitled to but not receiving council tax benefit and the amount of benefit unclaimed relate to financial year 2001–02. These are published in the DWP report: "Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take-Up in 2001/2002"; copies of the publication can be found in the Library. DWP statisticians will announce the publication date of the next set of statistics in 'Updates'—the bulletin of National Statistics releases.

Local authorities have a statutory duty to promote awareness of council tax benefit. To support them in this I launched a national campaign on 1 March 2004 to particularly encourage pensioners to claim council tax benefit.

Pensioners' Benefits

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 20 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 447W, on pensioners' benefits, how many people are projected to be on *(a)* disability and *(b)* carer's benefits in the years shown in the answer. [172948]

Maria Eagle: The information requested is in the table.

Number of pensioners (historical and projected) in receipt of disability and carer's benefits for selected years

Thousand

	Disability benefits [1]	*Carer's benefits* [2]
1997–98	1,738	19
2002–03	2,026	19
2010–11	2,487	46
2020–21	2,967	54
2030–31	3,561	62
2040–41	3,879	66
2050–51	4,022	68

[1] Disability living allowance and attendance allowance.
[2] Invalid care allowance/ carer's allowance.
Notes:
1. Numbers are based on estimates from the 5 per cent. Quarterly Statistical Enquiry and therefore subject to some sampling variation.
2. Projected numbers are consistent with the long term projections of benefit expenditure as published in the HM Treasury publication "Long-Term Public Finance Report: Fiscal Sustainability with an ageing population" at the pre-Budget report 2003.
3. Numbers are rounded to the nearest thousand.

Poverty (Greater London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of *(a)* men, *(b)* women and *(c)* children in each ethnic group are living in poverty, defined as below 60 per cent. of median income (i) before and (ii) after housing costs, in each Greater London borough. [173333]

Mr. Pond: The information requested is not available due to insufficient sample size.

Productivity

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his policy is for *(a)* increasing the productivity and *(b)* cutting the costs of (i) his Department and (ii) its agencies and non-departmental public bodies. [172188]

Maria Eagle: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 148–49W.

Timber

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department plans to contribute financially to the establishment of the second phase of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [167622]

Jane Kennedy: The Department is keen to ensure that all its timber is procured from legal and sustainable sources, and is developing a supply chain mechanism to track these sources and their levels of certification. DEFRA will set out the current position regarding the CPET in their reply on behalf of Her Majesty's Government.

Labour Statistics

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what percentage of single non-working people between the age of 50 and state pension age are in each decile of overall income distribution, broken down by gender; and if he will make a statement; [172537]

(2) how many and what proportion of people between the age of 50 and state pension age, who are not working, are in each decile of overall income distribution, broken down by gender; and if he will make a statement. [172539]

Mr. Pond: The Government are committed to tackling age discrimination in employment, extending opportunities for older workers. From Spring 1997 to Spring 2003 the employment rate for those aged 50 to State Pension Age has increased from 64.5 per cent. to 70.1 per cent. We are committed to further increasing the employment rate for the over 50s by 2006.

Through Age Positive, we are promoting the business benefits of an age diverse workforce by encouraging employers to adopt the voluntary Code of Practice: Age Diversity at Work, A Practical Guide For Business, which was first developed in 1998 and updated in 2002. The Budget 2004 announced a new high profile national guidance campaign to raise employers' awareness of, and ability to adopt, flexible employment and retirement opportunities in order to increase the recruitment, training and retention of older workers.

The information is in the tables.

Percentage of non-working single people between age 50 and state pension age by each decile group of income distribution

	Decile								
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9&10*
Before housing costs									
Male	24	16	16	14	9	9	6	3	3
Female	25	21	16	11	10	7	6	3	3
After housing costs									
Male	27	18	15	10	10	6	6	3	5
Female	28	23	9	13	5	8	5	5	4

Number of non-working people between age 50 and state pension age by decile of income distribution

Thousand

	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*
Before housing costs										
Male	390	240	240	190	170	130	120	80	80	50
Female	250	180	170	140	140	120	110	80	80	80
After housing costs										
Male	370	260	200	220	160	130	120	90	100	50
Female	240	180	130	180	120	130	110	100	80	100

Proportion of non-working people between age 50 and state pension age by each decile of income distribution

	Decile									
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*
Before housing costs										
Male	23	14	14	11	10	8	7	5	5	3
Female	18	13	12	11	10	9	8	6	6	6

Proportion of non-working people between age 50 and state pension age by each decile of income distribution

	Decile									
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*
After housing costs										
Male	22	15	12	13	9	7	7	5	6	3
Female	18	13	9	13	9	9	8	7	6	7

Notes:

1. Figures are for 2002–03, the latest date for which data are available.
2. Estimates are for Great Britain. Numbers are rounded to the nearest 10,000, and proportions to the nearest per cent. Decile 1 is the lowest income decile.
3. Estimates relate to the status of individuals at the time they were interviewed for the FRS.
4. FRS-based estimates for both the number of people aged between 50 and state pension age, and the number of workless in this group exceed estimates sourced from the Labour Force Survey, the main source for employment statistics. The estimate of percentages should therefore be considered more robust than the estimate of numbers in this group.
5. The estimates are based on sample counts, which have been adjusted for non-response. Estimates are subject both to sampling error and to variability in non-response.
6. The income measure used is weekly net (disposable) equivalised household income (income that is adjusted to reflect the composition of the household).
7. The Households Below Average Income series presents analysis of income of two bases: Before Housing Costs (BHC) and After Housing Costs (AHC). This is principally to take into account variations in housing costs that themselves do not correspond to comparable variations in the quality of housing.
8. The Households Below Average Income series assumes that both partners in a couple receive the same income. Therefore any differences in the above between genders can be driven only by differences from single adults, which will themselves be diluted by the figures for couples.
9. Deciles nine and 10 of the tables relating to non-working single people have been combined as individually, these deciles contained too few households to provide robust estimates.

Source:

Family Resources Survey (FRS).

HEALTH

A and E/Paediatric Departments

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospitals have an accident and emergency department and a paediatric department which is not open for 24 hours a day. [174562]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is not available in the form requested.

Alzheimer's Disease

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what percentage of his Department's budget was spent on the development of treatment and care for Alzheimer's sufferers in each of the past three years; and if he will make a statement on the provision for those with Alzheimer's; [173269]

(2) what future funding has been allocated specifically in relation to the development of treatment and care for Alzheimer's sufferers. [173271]

Dr. Ladyman: Funding for the development of treatment and care for people with Alzheimer's disease is not identified separately, but is part of general allocations to local health and social care organisations. It is for local primary care trusts, in partnership with other local national health service and social care organisations, to assess the needs of the local population and meet them from general funding allocations.

The Government are committed to improving standards of health and social care and people with Alzheimer's disease will benefit from the new investment that is being made available to support this commitment. For the NHS there is an annual average funding increase of 7.5 per cent. above inflation over the five years 2003–04 to 2007–08. This is now the largest ever sustained increase in NHS funding. There have also been substantial increases in the level of funding provided for social services in recent years. Social services resources will increase by an annual average of 6 per cent., in real terms from 2003–04 to 2005–06. These significant funding increases will help provide new and better health and social care services for people with Alzheimer's disease.

Asthma

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to require health care professionals to establish a policy to reduce the number of deaths from severe asthma. [173739]

Dr. Ladyman: The chronic disease management programme, introduced in July 1993, provides arrangements for health promotion under the general practitioner (GP) contract. Participating GPs, around 94 per cent. of the total, receive a fixed annual payment for running organised programmes of care for patients with asthma.

The new general medical services contract, launched in February 2003, includes a specific quality indicator for treatment and care of people with asthma. This builds on the chronic disease management programme.

People with asthma will benefit from the expert patients programme (EPP), currently being piloted in primary care trusts around the country. The EPP is providing national health service based training in self-management skills for people with long-term chronic illness.

Bowel Cancer

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps he will take to tackle increases in workload for NHS staff working in *(a)* pathology, *(b)* radiology, *(c)* oncology and *(d)* surgery arising from the bowel cancer screening programme; [173829]

(2) what plans his Department has to introduce a targeted and tailored national recruitment programme to increase participation in social groups in whom colonoscopy uptake is particularly low; [173830]

(3) what estimate he has made of the cost to the NHS of introducing the national bowel cancer screening programme; [173831]

(4) what type of diagnostic test will be used in the national bowel cancer screening programme; and if he will make a statement; [173832]

(5) when the national bowel cancer screening programme will become fully operational; and if he will make a statement; [173833]

(6) what plans he has to change the *(a)* lower and *(b)* upper age limit for bowel cancer screening. [173834]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The methodology for a national bowel cancer screening programme is not clear cut. Following the publication of the results of a pilot using faecal occult blood (FOB) testing in May 2003, and early signs of the potential of flexible sigmoidoscopy, the Government re-affirmed their commitment to introducing bowel screening and to improving symptomatic services. The Department is addressing these difficult issues with the assistance of key stakeholders from the voluntary sector, patient and professional groups, and the national health service through the NHS bowel cancer programme and the bowel cancer advisory group.

The first phase of the pilot study of FOB testing showed that the performance of the original research can be replicated in a routine NHS setting. We have commissioned a second phase of the pilot at a cost of £1 million per annum to enable us to monitor the acceptability and effectiveness of repeat screening and to try and investigate service improvements, including

encouraging hard to reach social groups to accept their screening invitations. We are also considering a potential pilot of screening using flexible sigmoidoscopy.

NHS cancer screening programmes have commissioned a formal options appraisal of bowel cancer screening from the School of Health and Related Research in Sheffield. The options appraisal is due to report in the autumn, and will consider all the issues associated with bowel cancer screening, including the age range at which men and women will be invited for screening.

In addition, as part of the NHS bowel cancer programme, we are investing in the expansion, training and modernisation of the bowel cancer workforce, streamlining services for patients with bowel cancer symptoms, and considering communications issues for the general public and health professionals.

In order to gather evidence on screening methodology and to ensure symptomatic services are expanded and modernised to take on the extra work required, it is unlikely that a national screening programme will start before 2006–07. It is currently estimated that a national bowel cancer screening programme will cost around £80 million a year to run.

Care Provision

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many referrals to care homes there have been in each of the last five years in *(a)* the Ribble Valley, *(b)* Milton Keynes, *(c)* the Isle of Wight and *(d)* Eastbourne. [173473]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the number of referrals to care homes is not available centrally.

The table shows the number of admissions to care homes, for adults aged 18 and over, financially supported by Lancashire, Milton Keynes, Isle of Wight and East Sussex Councils with social services responsibilities (CSSRs), for the years 1998–99 to 2002–03. As data are collected by CSSR, separate figures for Ribble Valley and Eastbourne are not available. Figures for the CSSR in which Ribble Valley (Lancashire) and Eastbourne (East Sussex) are located have been provided.

Number of supported admissions[1] to care homes, 1998–99 to 2002–03

rounded numbers

CSSR	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03[2]*
Lancashire	10,885	10,315	10,595	11,250	12,225
Milton Keynes	745	850	1,030	905	865
Isle of Wight	3,030	2,265	2,480	2,400	2,765
East Sussex	4,115	4,940	4,095	3,960	5,175

[1] The table refers to the number of admissions into care homes, not the number of people. It is possible for a person to have more than one admission to a care home during the year.
[2] Includes those clients formally in receipt of preserved rights.
Source:
SR1, Tables 5a, 5b and 6.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in Lancashire received more than £400 a week in domiciliary care packages in each of the last five years. [173474]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people received care in care homes in the Ribble Valley in each of the last five years. [173475]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the number of people receiving care in care homes in the Ribble Valley is not centrally available.

The table shows the number of care home places in Lancashire, as at 31 March for the years 1999 to 2001.

Figures for later years have been collected by the National Care Standards Commission but comparable details broken down by council are not available.

Number of care home places[1] in Lancashire[2], 1999 to 2001

Rounded numbers

At 31 March	*Number of places*
1999	18,900
2000	18,700
2001	17,800

[1] Nursing data includes places in general nursing homes, mental nursing homes and private hospitals and clinics.
[2] Residential data refers to Lancashire CSSR. Nursing data refers to South Lancashire, East Lancashire and North West Lancashire health authorities.
Source:
RA and RH(N) form A

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if, pursuant to his letter dated 3 April to the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mrs. B. Preston, he will obtain for the right hon. Member the letter from the Chief Executive of the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority promised in that letter. [172260]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A reply from the Chief Executive of the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority was sent to the right hon. Member on 12 May 2004.

Departmental Staff (Drugs)

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many of his Department's employees have been dismissed for drug abuse misconduct in the last five years. [171627]

Ms Rosie Winterton: None according to our records.

Diabetes Mellitus

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of his Department's expenditure was allocated to diabetes mellitus in *(a)* 1984, *(b)* 1989, *(c)* 1994, *(d)* 1999 and *(e)* the latest date for which figures are available. [173735]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is not collected centrally on how much is spent on the treatment of diabetes. However, it has been estimated that around five per cent. of total national health service resources are used for the care of people with diabetes.

In his 2002 Budget, my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced an historic five-year settlement for the national health service, which provides a sustained high level of growth in funding across the whole period. These plans mean that,

for the period 2003–04 to 2007–08, expenditure on the NHS in England will increase on average by 7.3 per cent. a year over and above inflation, a total increase over the period of 42 per cent. in real terms. However, in keeping with the philosophy of "Shifting the Balance of Power", primary care trusts are free to decide the allocation of resources locally.

Disposable Surgical Instruments

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how frequently and for what type of surgeries disposable instruments are used in NHS hospitals; [173177]

(2) what research he has commissioned on the possible risk of haemorrhages when using disposable instruments during operations; [173178]

(3) what action he would take in response to research which showed a correlation between using disposable instruments and increased risk of haemorrhages. [173179]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Single-use instruments are used in a range of surgical procedures. The Department does not collect data on the frequency and the type of procedures where single-use instruments are used.

The Department has not commissioned any research on the possible risk of haemorrhaging when single-use instruments are used. The national prospective tonsillectomy audit is looking at different techniques used in tonsillectomies, including the use of single-use instruments.

The Chief Medical Officer has asked the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) to issue guidance on the safety of single-use instruments in tonsillectomies following the initial findings of the national prospective tonsillectomy audit. NICE issued interim guidance on the use of diathermy on 24 March and definitive guidance will be issued after it has conducted a full review.

Eating Disorders

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total cost was of formulating the National Institute for Clinical Excellence guidelines on the treatment of eating disorders. [172476]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The estimated cost of formulating the National Institute for Clinical Excellence's guidance on eating disorders was about £240,000.

Fossetts Farm

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when work on Fossetts Farm for the new NHS treatment centre will begin; and if he will make a statement. [174149]

Dr. Ladyman: Southend Primary Care Trust has lodged a planning application with Southend borough council for the new treatment centre at Fossetts Farm.

Health Services

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people aged over 60 in Derby, North have benefited from the abolition of charges for eye tests; and what percentage this represents of over 60-years-olds in Derby, North. [173741]

Dr. Ladyman: Figures for the number of sight tests by constituency, or senior citizens are not collected centrally.

In 2002–03, the total number of national health service sight tests paid for patients aged 60 and over in Trent Strategic Health Authority was 231,650. The total number eligible for free sight test for those aged 60 and over was 584,620.

Sight tests can not be equated to the numbers of patients. Although most people do not come back for a sight test within the year, some patients suffering from medical conditions are advised to have re-examinations sooner.

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS doctors were working within Nottinghamshire health authority areas in each year since 1997. [173524]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is shown in the tables.

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS) Doctors[1] and General Medical Practitioners (excluding retainers)[2] for Trent Strategic Health Authority and selected organisations—as at 30 September

Number (headcount)

		1997		
		All doctors[1]	*of which: HCHS doctors*[1]	*General Medical Practitioners*[2]
of which selected organisations				
Ashfield PCG	4ME54	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bassetlaw PCG	4ED35	n/a	n/a	n/a
Broxtowe and Hucknall PCG	4GM13	n/a	n/a	n/a
Gedling PCG	4QV83	n/a	n/a	n/a
Mansfield District PCG	4NT23	n/a	n/a	n/a
Newark and Sherwood PCG	4GA33	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City Central PCG	4CC42	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City North and West PCG	4EA27	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City South and East PCG	4VW19	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rushcliffe PCG	4XH33	n/a	n/a	n/a
Mansfield District PCT	5AM	n/a	n/a	n/a
Newark and Sherwood PCT	5AP	n/a	n/a	n/a
Gedling PCT	5EC	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City PCT	5EM	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bassetlaw PCT	5ET	n/a	n/a	n/a
Broxtowe and Hucknall PCT	5EV	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ashfield PCT	5FA	n/a	n/a	n/a

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS) Doctors[1] and General Medical Practitioners (excluding retainers)[2] for Trent Strategic Health Authority and selected organisations—as at 30 September

Number (headcount)

		1997		
		All doctors[1]	*of which: HCHS doctors[1]*	*General Medical Practitioners[2]*
Rushcliffe PCT	5FC	n/a	n/a	n/a
Central Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	RFJ	64	64	n/a
Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	RCS	342	342	n/a
Nottingham Community Health NHS Trust	RCT	64	64	n/a
Nottingham Healthcare NHS Trust	RK6	108	108	n/a
Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	RHA	n/a	n/a	n/a
Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham University NHS Trust	RFK	572	572	n/a
Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust	RK5	184	184	n/a

		1998		
		All doctors[1]	*of which: HCHS doctors[1]*	*General Medical Practitioners[2]*
of which selected organisations				
Ashfield PCG	4ME54	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bassetlaw PCG	4ED35	n/a	n/a	n/a
Broxtowe and Hucknall PCG	4GM13	n/a	n/a	n/a
Gedling PCG	4QV83	n/a	n/a	n/a
Mansfield District PCG	4NT23	n/a	n/a	n/a
Newark and Sherwood PCG	4GA33	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City Central PCG	4CC42	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City North and West PCG	4EA27	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City South and East PCG	4VW19	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rushcliffe PCG	4XH33	n/a	n/a	n/a
Mansfield District PCT	5AM	n/a	n/a	n/a
Newark and Sherwood PCT	5AP	n/a	n/a	n/a
Gedling PCT	5EC	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City PCT	5EM	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bassetlaw PCT	5ET	n/a	n/a	n/a
Broxtowe and Hucknall PCT	5EV	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ashfield PCT	5FA	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rushcliffe PCT	5FC	n/a	n/a	n/a
Central Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	RFJ	77	77	n/a
Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	RCS	346	346	n/a
Nottingham Community Health NHS Trust	RCT	54	54	n/a
Nottingham Healthcare NHS Trust	RK6	105	105	n/a
Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	RHA	n/a	n/a	n/a
Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham University NHS Trust	RFK	568	568	n/a
Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust	RK5	187	187	n/a

		1999		
		All doctors[1]	*of which: HCHS doctors[1]*	*General Medical Practitioners[2]*
of which selected organisations				
Ashfield PCG	4ME54	39	n/a	39
Bassetlaw PCG	4ED35	56	n/a	56
Broxtowe and Hucknall PCG	4GM13	75	n/a	75
Gedling PCG	4QV83	54	n/a	54
Mansfield District PCG	4NT23	49	n/a	49
Newark and Sherwood PCG	4GA33	67	n/a	67
Nottingham City Central PCG	4CC42	48	n/a	48
Nottingham City North and West PCG	4EA27	72	n/a	72
Nottingham City South and East PCG	4VW19	55	n/a	55
Rushcliffe PCG	4XH33	63	n/a	63
Mansfield District PCT	5AM	n/a	n/a	n/a
Newark and Sherwood PCT	5AP	n/a	n/a	n/a
Gedling PCT	5EC	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City PCT	5EM	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bassetlaw PCT	5ET	n/a	n/a	n/a
Broxtowe and Hucknall PCT	5EV	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ashfield PCT	5FA	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rushcliffe PCT	5FC	n/a	n/a	n/a
Central Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	RFJ	82	82	n/a
Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	RCS	382	382	n/a

		1999		
		All doctors[1]	of which: HCHS doctors[1]	General Medical Practitioners[2]
Nottingham Community Health NHS Trust	RCT	50	50	n/a
Nottingham Healthcare NHS Trust	RK6	113	113	n/a
Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	RHA	n/a	n/a	n/a
Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham University NHS Trust	RFK	568	568	n/a
Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust	RK5	193	193	n/a

		2000		
		All doctors[1]	of which: HCHS doctors[1]	General Medical Practitioners[2]
of which selected organisations				
Ashfield PCG	4ME54	43	n/a	43
Bassetlaw PCG	4ED35	59	n/a	59
Broxtowe and Hucknall PCG	4GM13	77	n/a	77
Gedling PCG	4QV83	56	n/a	56
Mansfield District PCG	4NT23	45	n/a	45
Newark and Sherwood PCG	4GA33	68	n/a	68
Nottingham City Central PCG	4CC42	50	n/a	50
Nottingham City North and West PCG	4EA27	74	n/a	74
Nottingham City South and East PCG	4VW19	58	n/a	58
Rushcliffe PCG	4XH33	69	n/a	69
Mansfield District PCT	5AM	n/a	n/a	n/a
Newark and Sherwood PCT	5AP	n/a	n/a	n/a
Gedling PCT	5EC	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City PCT	5EM	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bassetlaw PCT	5ET	n/a	n/a	n/a
Broxtowe and Hucknall PCT	5EV	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ashfield PCT	5FA	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rushcliffe PCT	5FC	n/a	n/a	n/a
Central Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	RFJ	82	82	n/a
Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	RCS	313	313	n/a
Nottingham Community Health NHS Trust	RCT	55	55	n/a
Nottingham Healthcare NHS Trust	RK6	114	114	n/a
Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	RHA	n/a	n/a	n/a
Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham University NHS Trust	RFK	555	555	n/a
Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust	RK5	195	195	n/a

		2001		
		All doctors[1]	of which: HCHS doctors[1]	General Medical Practitioners[2]
of which selected organisations				
Ashfield PCG	4ME54	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bassetlaw PCG	4ED35	n/a	n/a	n/a
Broxtowe and Hucknall PCG	4GM13	n/a	n/a	n/a
Gedling PCG	4QV83	n/a	n/a	n/a
Mansfield District PCG	4NT23	n/a	n/a	n/a
Newark and Sherwood PCG	4GA33	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City Central PCG	4CC42	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City North and West PCG	4EA27	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City South and East PCG	4VW19	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rushcliffe PCG	4XH33	n/a	n/a	n/a
Mansfield District PCT	5AM	66	19	47
Newark and Sherwood PCT	5AP	70	n/a	70
Gedling PCT	5EC	56	n/a	56
Nottingham City PCT	5EM	186	8	178
Bassetlaw PCT	5ET	67	8	59
Broxtowe and Hucknall PCT	5EV	92	13	79
Ashfield PCT	5FA	47	3	44
Rushcliffe PCT	5FC	72	n/a	72
Central Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	RFJ	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	RCS	388	388	n/a
Nottingham Community Health NHS Trust	RCT	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham Healthcare NHS Trust	RK6	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	RHA	201	201	n/a
Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham University NHS Trust	RFK	642	642	n/a
Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust	RK5	223	223	n/a

		2002		
		All doctors[1]	of which: HCHS doctors[1]	General Medical Practitioners[2]
of which selected organisations				
Ashfield PCG	4ME54	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bassetlaw PCG	4ED35	n/a	n/a	n/a
Broxtowe and Hucknall PCG	4GM13	n/a	n/a	n/a
Gedling PCG	4QV83	n/a	n/a	n/a
Mansfield District PCG	4NT23	n/a	n/a	n/a
Newark and Sherwood PCG	4GA33	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City Central PCG	4CC42	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City North and West PCG	4EA27	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City South and East PCG	4VW19	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rushcliffe PCG	4XH33	n/a	n/a	n/a
Mansfield District PCT	5AM	64	16	48
Newark and Sherwood PCT	5AP	74	3	71
Gedling PCT	5EC	56	1	55
Nottingham City PCT	5EM	189	9	180
Bassetlaw PCT	5ET	67	9	58
Broxtowe and Hucknall PCT	5EV	92	14	78
Ashfield PCT	5FA	44	2	42
Rushcliffe PCT	5FC	110	34	76
Central Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	RFJ	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	RCS	423	423	n/a
Nottingham Community Health NHS Trust	RCT	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham Healthcare NHS Trust	RK6	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	RHA	204	204	n/a
Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham University NHS Trust	RFK	658	658	n/a
Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust	RK5	233	233	n/a

		2003		
		All doctors[1]	of which: HCHS doctors[1]	General Medical Practitioners[2]
of which selected organisations				
Ashfield PCG	4ME54	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bassetlaw PCG	4ED35	n/a	n/a	n/a
Broxtowe and Hucknall PCG	4GM13	n/a	n/a	n/a
Gedling PCG	4QV83	n/a	n/a	n/a
Mansfield District PCG	4NT23	n/a	n/a	n/a
Newark and Sherwood PCG	4GA33	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City Central PCG	4CC42	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City North and West PCG	4EA27	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City South and East PCG	4VW19	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rushcliffe PCG	4XH33	n/a	n/a	n/a
Mansfield District PCT	5AM	75	19	56
Newark and Sherwood PCT	5AP	74	3	71
Gedling PCT	5EC	60	1	59
Nottingham City PCT	5EM	190	16	174
Bassetlaw PCT	5ET	67	8	59
Broxtowe and Hucknall PCT	5EV	94	14	80
Ashfield PCT	5FA	49	3	46
Rushcliffe PCT	5FC	104	32	72
Central Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	RFJ	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	RCS	421	421	n/a
Nottingham Community Health NHS Trust	RCT	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottingham Healthcare NHS Trust	RK6	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	RHA	229	229	n/a
Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham University NHS Trust	RFK	724	724	n/a
Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust	RK5	241	241	n/a

n/a = not applicable

[1] Excludes Hospital Medical Hospital Practitioners and Hospital Medical Clinical Assistants, most of whom are GPs working part time in hospitals.

[2] All Practitioners (excluding retainers) include GMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs and PMS Salaried GPs, Restricted Principals, Assistants, GP Registrars, Salaried Doctors (Para. 52 SFA), PMS Other, Flexible Career Scheme GPs and GP Returners.

Note:

Data as at 30 September every year except GP as at 1 October 1997–99.

Sources:

Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics

Department of Health Medical and Dental Workforce Census

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS) Doctors[1] and General Medical Practitioners (excluding retainers)[2]—as at 30 September

Number (headcount)

		All doctors[1]	of which: HCHS doctors[1]	General Medical Practitioners[2]
1997				
North				
Nottinghamshire HA	QCN	539	352	207
Nottingham HA	QCP	1,471	1,116	335
1998				
North				
Nottinghamshire HA	QCN	578	370	208
Nottingham HA	QCP	1,445	1,088	357
1999				
North				
Nottinghamshire HA	QCN	598	387	211
Nottingham HA	QCP	1,494	1,127	367
2000				
North				
Nottinghamshire HA	QCN	610	395	215
Nottingham HA	QCP	1,437	1,053	384
2001				
North				
Nottinghamshire HA	QCN	681	461	220
Nottingham HA	QCP	1,449	1,064	385

[1] Excludes Hospital Medical Hospital Practitioners and Hospital Medical Clinical Assistants, most of whom are GPs working part time in hospitals.

[2] All Practitioners (excluding retainers) include GMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs and PMS Salaried GPs, Restricted Principals, Assistants, GP Registrars, Salaried Doctors (Para. 52 SFA), PMS Other, Flexible Career Scheme GPs and GP Returners.

Note:

Data as at 30 September every year except GP as at 1 October 1997–99.

Sources:

Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics

Department of Health Medical and Dental Workforce Census

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of NHS patients were able to see a general practitioner within two days within Nottinghamshire health authority areas in each year since 1997. [173527]

Dr. Ladyman: The information is not available in the format requested. The data requested was not collected prior to 2002. The tables show the data from July 2002 until February 2004.

Percentage

PCT code	*PCT name*	*June 2002*	*September 2002*	*December 2002*
5AM	Mansfield District Primary Care Trust	77.8	88.4	81.8
5AP	Newark and Sherwood Primary Care Trust	83.7	81.6	72.9
5EC	Gedling Primary Care Trust	64.2	79.7	100.0
5EM	Nottingham City Primary Care Trust	63.2	85.5	89.9
5ET	Bassetlaw Primary Care Trust	76.4	63.6	87.6
5EV	Broxtowe and Hucknall Primary Care Trust	57.4	100.0	72.2
5FA	Ashfield Primary Care Trust	73.4	73.4	96.0
5FC	Rushcliffe Primary Care Trust	73.1	87.8	82.7

Percentage

PCT code	*PCT name*	*February 2003*	*March 2003*	*April 2003*
5AM	Mansfield District Primary Care Trust	—	—	—
5AP	Newark and Sherwood Primary Care Trust	93.3	78.5	88.4
5EC	Gedling Primary Care Trust	90.7	97.1	100.0
5EM	Nottingham City Primary Care Trust	94.9	93.2	98.9
5ET	Bassetlaw Primary Care Trust	95.1	95.6	92.9
5EV	Broxtowe and Hucknall Primary Care Trust	100.0	92.9	100.0
5FA	Ashfield Primary Care Trust	100.0	91.2	74.1
5FC	Rushcliffe Primary Care Trust	100.0	100.0	100.0

Percentage

PCT code	*PCT name*	*May 2003*	*June 2003*	*July 2003*
5AM	Mansfield District Primary Care Trust	—	—	—
5AP	Newark and Sherwood Primary Care Trust	90.3	90.3	90.3
5EC	Gedling Primary Care Trust	100.0	95.2	100.0
5EM	Nottingham City Primary Care Trust	96.3	91.6	92.7
5ET	Bassetlaw Primary Care Trust	88.7	94.2	100.0
5EV	Broxtowe and Hucknall Primary Care Trust	100.0	100.0	100.0
5FA	Ashfield Primary Care Trust	91.2	91.1	91.1
5FC	Rushcliffe Primary Care Trust	100.0	100.0	100.0

Percentage

PCT code	PCT name	August 2003	September 2003	October 2003
5AM	Mansfield District Primary Care Trust	—	—	—
5AP	Newark and Sherwood Primary Care Trust	98.1	90.4	100.0
5EC	Gedling Primary Care Trust	100.0	100.0	100.0
5EM	Nottingham City Primary Care Trust	90.6	89.1	88.3
5ET	Bassetlaw Primary Care Trust	94.3	94.3	94.3
BEV	Broxtowe and Hucknall Primary Care Trust	91.9	97.7	100.0
5FA	Ashfield Primary Care Trust	82.8	90.5	100.0
5FC	Rushcliffe Primary Care Trust	100.0	94.6	100.0

Percentage

PCT code	PCT name	November 2003	December 2003	January 2004
5AM	Mansfield District Primary Care Trust	—	—	—
5AP	Newark and Sherwood Primary Care Trust	98.1	100.0	100.0
5EC	Gedling Primary Care Trust	100.0	100.0	100.0
5EM	Nottingham City Primary Care Trust	94.5	86.9	92.1
5ET	Bassetlaw Primary Care Trust	94.6	100.0	94.6
5EV	Broxtowe and Hucknall Primary Care Trust	100.0	100.0	100.0
5FA	Ashfield Primary Care Trust	100.0	100.0	100.0
5FC	Rushcliffe Primary Care Trust	90.8	100.0	100.0

Percentage

PCT code	PCT name	February 2004
5AM	Mansfield District Primary Care Trust	—
5AP	Newark and Sherwood Primary Care Trust	100.0
5EC	Gedling Primary Care Trust	95.4
5EM	Nottingham City Primary Care Trust	96.0
5ET	Bassetlaw Primary Care Trust	94.6
5EV	Broxtowe and Hucknall Primary Care Trust	100.0
5FA	Ashfield Primary Care Trust	100.0
5FC	Rushcliffe Primary Care Trust	100.0

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on NHS waiting times for patients needing heart surgery in Taunton. [172015]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The latest available data for March 2004 shows that there were no patients waiting nine months or more in the Dorset and Somerset Strategic Health Authority area, which includes Taunton.

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses there were in Taunton in each of the last three years. [172018]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Requested information on the number of national health service doctors and nurses in Taunton, in each of the last three years is shown in the tables.

All NHS doctors within specified organisations as at 30 September each year

number (headcount)

	2001	2002	2003
All doctors[1]	396	382	392
Taunton Deane PCT	111	89	88
Taunton and Somerset NHS Trust	285	293	304
of which			
General practitioners[2]	111	81	80
Taunton Deane PCT	111	81	80
Medical and dental staff[1]	285	301	312
Taunton Deane PCT	[3]—	8	8
Taunton and Somerset NHS Trust	285	293	304

[1] Excludes medical hospital practitioner and medical clinical assistant most of whom are also GPs that work part time in hospitals.
[2] All practitioners include QMS unrestricted principals, PMS contracted GPs,
PMS salaried GPs, restricted principals, assistants, GP registrars, salaried
doctors (Para 52 SFA), PMS other, GP retainers, flexible career scheme GPs
and GP returners.
[3] Zero.
Sources:
Department of Health medical and dental workforce census.
Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics.

NHS hospital and community health services: qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff and practice nurses in each specified organisation as at 30 September each specified year.

Number (headcount)

	2001	2002	2003
Total Nursing Staff	1,318	1,282	1,304
Taunton Deane PCT	55	193	185
Taunton and Somerset NHS Trust	1,263	1,089	1,119
of which			
Practice Nurses	55	56	49
Taunton Deane PCT	55	56	49
Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff	1,263	1,226	1,255
Taunton Deane PCT	[1]—	137	136
Taunton and Somerset NHS Trust	1,263	1,089	1,119

[1] Zero.
Sources:
Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics.
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes there have been to NHS waiting list times in the last seven years for the residents of Wigan. [169347]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected on a constituency basis. The information relating to the national health service organisation serving the Wigan area has been placed in the Library.

Honours

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much time his Department spent dealing with honours in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by civil service grade. [173040]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department, during the last financial year, had four full time staff (36 hours per week) working on honours. The grades are:

One administrative officer (IP1 upper),

Two executive officers (IP2 upper),

One senior executive officer (IP3 upper).

Data is not kept on time spent by other members of staff in the Department who occasionally deal with honours.

Midland Health Consultancy Network

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if the Department will place in the Library a copy of the report by the Midland Health Consultancy Network, compiled at the time of the Griffiths Review into the research framework in north Staffordshire. [174739]

Dr. Ladyman: The Midland Health Consultancy Network Ltd. (MHCN), acting under contract to the former West Midlands Regional Office of the NHS Executive, provided secretariat support to the panel conducting the review of the research framework in North Staffordshire Hospital National Health Service Trust. MHCN did not produce a separate report.

The full report can be found on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/01/45/42/04014542.pdf.

Midwives/Nurses

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many nurses were employed by the national health service in *(a)* the county of Essex in each year from 1990 to 1997 and *(b)* the county of Essex and the unitary authorities of Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock in each year from 1998 to 2003. [173639]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is shown in the tables. The figures have not been provided for 1990–94 as they are incomparable with later years because of the way data was collected.

National health service hospital and community health services: Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff including practice nurses employed by unrestricted principals and equivalents (UPEs)[1] in each specified health authority as at 30 September[2] each specified year

Headcount

		1995	1996
Total specified health authorities		8,152	7,879
QAX	North Essex HA	4,872	4,625
QAY	South Essex HA	3,280	3,254

[1] UPEs include QMS unrestricted principals, PMS contracted GPs and PMS salaried GPs.
[2] Practice nurse data is estimated at 1 October.
Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff including practice nurses employed by unrestricted principals and equivalents (UPEs)[1] in the Essex Strategic Health Authority area and by each specified organisation as at 30 September each specified year

Headcount

		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Q03	Essex SHA total	8,453	8,017	8,192	8,332	8,867	9,490	9,368
Of which								
Total specified organisations		2,302	2,141	2,317	1,885	2,184	2,622	2,652
4KH89	Southend PCG	—	—	60	80	—	—	—
4RQ27	Thurrock PCG	—	—	54	58	—	—	—
5AK	Southend on Sea PCT	—	—	—	—	292	298	293
5GQ	Thurrock PCT	—	—	—	—	167	184	191
RAJ	Southend Health Care NHS Trust	835	837	871	1,020	949	1,078	1,079
RDD	Basildon and Thurrock General Hospitals NHS Trust	890	749	758	727	776	1,062	1,089
RDK	Southend Community Care Services NHS Trust	577	555	574	—	—	—	—

Mobile Dental Surgeries

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many mobile dental surgeries operate in England, broken down by trust area. [172031]

Ms Rosie Winterton: National health service mobile dental clinics are used in mostly rural areas to improve access to dental services. The mobile clinics operate under the community dental service (CDS) and the personal dental service (PDS).

Information is not collected centrally on CDS mobile dental services. Currently, there are two PDS pilots that operate solely from mobile units and a further 13 which use mobile units as an outreach service. Details of these are shown in the table.

Mobile PDS pilots	*Commissioning primary care trust (PCT)*
County Durham Mobile Clinic	Derwentside PCT
Salford and Trafford Mobile Clinic	Salford PCT
PDS pilots which use mobile outreach clinics	
Bedfordshire Dental Access Centre	Bedfordshire Heartlands PCT
Birmingham Personal Dental Service	Eastern Birmingham PCT
East Lancashire Personal Dental Service	Burnley Pendle and Rossendale PCT

Mobile PDS pilots	Commissioning primary care trust (PCT)
Hull and East Riding Personal Dental Service	Eastern Hull PCT
North and East Devon Personal Dental Service	Mid Devon PCT
Northamptonshire Dental Access Centre	Northamptonshire Heartlands PCT
Plymouth Personal Dental Service	Plymouth PCT
Shropshire Personal Dental Service	Shropshire County PCT
Solihull Personal Dental Service	Solihull PCT
Southampton and South West Hampshire PDS	Southampton City PCT
Swindon and Wiltshire Dental Access Centre	Kennet and North Wiltshire PCT
Vauxhall Personal Dental Service	North Liverpool PCT
Worcestershire Dental Access Centre	South Worcestershire PCT

Nursing and Residential Homes

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost to each local authority in England of nursing and residential home placements was in the latest period for which figures are available. [173937]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the average gross weekly expenditure per person on supporting adults in residential and nursing care by each council responsible for social services in England for 2002–03, the latest financial year for which data are available, has been placed in the Library.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many individuals were placed in nursing and residential homes by each local authority in England in each of the last six years. [173938]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of individuals placed in care homes by each council in England is not available centrally.

Information on the number of admissions to care homes, for adults aged 18 and over, financially supported by councils with social services responsibilities, for the years 1997–98 to 2002–03 has been placed in the Library.

Data on admissions to care homes of adults whose fees are paid fully by income support, private means or any combination of these are not collected centrally.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many individuals are in nursing and residential placements in each local authority in England. [173939]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the number of people in care homes is not centrally available.

Information on the number of residential care home places in England by council with social services responsibilities (CSSR) and nursing home places by health authority for people aged 18 and over as at 31 March 2001 has been placed in the Library.

Figures for later years have been collected by the National Care Standards Commission but comparable details broken down by CSSR and health authority are not available.

Organ Donation

Dr. Naysmith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment his Department has made of how a mandatory choice scheme for organ donation *(a)* would operate in the UK and *(b)* would be enforced; [171653]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of the impact on organ donation rates of a mandatory choice scheme, under which people would be obliged to register their intention whether or not to donate. [171654]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Government's policy on organ donation and transplantation is set out in "Saving Lives, Valuing Donors—A Transplant Framework of England", which was published in July 2003. This draws on the evidence of those factors that are effective in increasing organ donation. There is no evidence to suggest that a mandatory choice system would affect organ donation rates.

Residential Care/Nursing Beds

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the change in numbers of *(a)* residential care beds and *(b)* nursing beds has been in (i) Dorset health authority area and (ii) Bournemouth since 1997. [173622]

Dr. Ladyman: The table shows the number of residential and nursing home places in Dorset and Bournemouth, as at 31 March for the years 1997 to 2001.

Figures for later years have been collected by the National Care Standards Commission but comparable details broken down by council are not available.

Number of residential and nursing places in Dorset and Bournemouth: 1997 to 2001

Rounded numbers

At 31 March	Residential places[1]	Nursing places[2,3]
Dorset		
1997[4]	—	3,660
1998	3,430	3,690
1999	3,140	3,410
2000	3,110	3,130
2001	3,070	3,090
Bournemouth		
1997	—	—
1998	3,340	—
1999	3,040	—
2000	2,660	—
2001	2,520	—

[1] Covers Dorset and Bournemouth councils with Social Services responsibility.
[2] Dorset health authority includes Bournemouth.
[3] Nursing data includes places in general nursing homes, mental nursing homes and private hospitals and clinics.
[4] Comparable data not available. In 1997 Dorset county council included Poole and Bournemouth councils.

Source:
RA and RH(N) form A

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he will reply to the Written Questions tabled by the hon. Member for Altrincham and Sale, West on 5 March. [173579]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I replied to the hon. Member on Tuesday 18 May 2004.

Professional Executive Committees

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what reviews of *(a)* professional executive committees (PECs) and *(b)* the role patients' forum representatives play on PECs has been conducted by the Government. [171349]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There has been no national review of the role of patients' forums and professional executive committees (PECs).

Primary care trusts (PCTs) have developed their PEC membership in many diverse ways to reflect and meet the needs of their local health community.

Forums are encouraged by the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health to work closely with PCTs, their boards and professional executive committees to enable them to carry out their functions.

Radiography Services (Berkshire)

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the average waiting time for radiotherapy treatment is in *(a)* East Berkshire, *(b)* the Royal Berkshire Hospital and *(c)* Wexham Park Hospital; [173731]

(2) how many people were waiting for radiotherapy treatment in east Berkshire in each of the last five years. [173732]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not collect data on waiting times for radiotherapy.

TREASURY

Abortion

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many conceptions resulted in abortions in women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years in each year since 2000, broken down by strategic health authority; and if he will make a statement. [174525]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. David Amess, dated 20 May 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking for the number of conceptions leading to an abortion for women aged between 11 and 19 for each year since 2000. (174525)

The number of conceptions leading to an abortion, at ages under 14 and by single year for ages 14 to 19, are shown in the attached tables. The information is provided for all strategic health authorities in England, for the years 2000 and 2001. This is the most recent year for which figures are available.

In order to protect the confidentiality of individuals, ONS does not publish these figures by single year of age below age 14, given the small number of cases.

Number of conceptions leading to an abortion to women under 20 by age
England and Wales, strategic health authority, 2000

	Age at conception						
	Under 14	*14*	*15*	*16*	*17*	*18*	*19*
England and Wales	236	1,100	3,048	5,854	8,020	9,651	10,517
England	225	1,035	2,894	5,572	7,613	9,146	9,966
County Durham and Tees Valley	6	28	80	109	163	172	180
Northumberland, Tyne & Wear	5	32	110	168	221	293	265
Cheshire & Merseyside	8	44	141	298	427	479	513
Cumbria and Lancashire	3	39	138	214	301	368	320
Greater Manchester	5	54	153	345	419	556	569
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	6	33	90	185	221	285	262
South Yorkshire	4	39	91	172	191	224	246
West Yorkshire	9	40	111	221	300	338	370
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	5	26	82	157	221	254	309
Trent	13	48	137	238	335	377	404
Birmingham and the Black Country	20	62	173	300	448	547	566
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire	7	33	106	180	256	287	327
Shropshire and Staffordshire	3	35	88	161	218	237	235
Bedford and Hertfordshire	4	34	74	165	223	268	270
Essex	5	29	85	165	218	262	245
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	10	27	86	184	250	294	281
North Central London	8	28	76	174	244	350	422
North East London	12	52	140	264	370	464	516
North West London	13	35	98	236	354	442	606
South East London	19	51	116	267	350	464	560
South West London	11	32	86	153	232	288	322
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	4	24	89	168	232	264	303
Kent and Medway	7	27	83	172	232	239	276
Surrey and Sussex	5	47	114	222	339	374	447
Thames Valley	9	42	112	217	260	322	407
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	14	39	106	211	233	301	365
Dorset and Somerset	5	20	57	96	158	170	142
South West Peninsula	5	35	72	130	197	227	238
Wales	11	65	154	282	407	505	551

Number of conceptions leading to an abortion to women under 20 by age
England and Wales, by strategic health authority, 2001 (provisional)

Area	Age at conception						
	Under 14	*14*	*15*	*16*	*17*	*18*	*19*
England and Wales	219	1,154	3,025	5,993	8,323	9,666	10,312
England	211	1,087	2,840	5,638	7,925	9,198	9,838
County Durham and Tees Valley	5	29	56	114	169	181	175
Northumberland, Tyne & Wear	6	37	97	157	219	250	250
Cheshire & Merseyside	7	42	119	311	422	453	454
Cumbria and Lancashire	9	45	115	208	273	306	314
Greater Manchester	10	64	175	312	474	536	525
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	—	39	83	175	243	235	243
South Yorkshire	7	43	94	159	194	219	257
West Yorkshire	10	42	109	217	295	360	362
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	—	33	68	155	212	268	282
Trent	7	55	143	252	322	400	386
Birmingham and the Black Country	18	63	160	330	448	529	518
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire	5	36	117	168	240	271	314
Shropshire and Staffordshire	7	30	83	178	235	195	223
Bedford and Hertfordshire	6	36	78	153	220	265	283
Essex	6	29	71	159	242	275	281
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	6	36	94	186	245	282	321
North Central London	8	37	78	185	261	364	443
North East London	6	48	146	281	399	500	563
North West London	7	33	108	228	335	480	569
South East London	17	47	138	319	421	523	554
South West London	6	23	85	161	253	256	345
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	6	36	107	166	239	278	334
Kent and Medway	9	33	93	165	250	287	279
Surrey and Sussex	9	47	106	224	319	388	398
Thames Valley	6	32	103	212	301	382	393
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	12	41	95	206	319	316	378
Dorset and Somerset	5	18	50	135	156	159	172
South West Peninsula	7	33	69	122	219	240	222
Wales	8	67	185	355	398	468	474

Note:
To protect confidentiality, figures for certain strategic health authorities are not shown

E-Government

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when a decision was made to proceed with the Inland Revenue's e-Government programme; and what consultation took place before the decision to proceed with the programme. [174027]

Dawn Primarolo: The Inland Revenue started to develop 'e' channels in March 1999 in response to the Modernising Government White Paper and the Chancellor's Budget announcement that internet filing of tax returns for individuals was to be developed. The 'e' services Programme was more formally established in April 2001.

Export Subsidies

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what discussions he has had with his French counterpart on EU negotiations with the World Trade Organisation on the removal of export subsidies; and if he will make a statement; [174268]

(2) what discussions he has had with his French counterpart regarding export subsidies in connection with World Trade Organisation trade requirements in the context of the Doha Round. [174801]

Mr. Gordon Brown: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Bristol, North-West (Dr. Naysmith) on 13 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 460–62.

Income Tax

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the cost implication to the Treasury of all pensioners being exempt from income tax for the first £10,000 of their earnings; and how many pensioner households this would affect. [171641]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* The cost of exempting the first £10,000 of income from income tax for all pensioners would be £2.2 billion in 2004–05. This measure would affect approximately 3.0 million pensioner households. This estimate is based on the 2001–02 Family Resources Survey, and excludes any behavioural response to the change. Well over half the cost is accounted for by the top 20 per cent. of pensioner households.

Plastic Bags

Phil Sawford: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to introduce a tax on plastic bags. [174974]

John Healey: The Chancellor continues to keep all taxes under review. The Government currently have no plans for a plastic bag tax.

Prescription Drugs (Import Controls)

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what controls are available to prevent individuals importing drugs that are available in the UK by prescription only. [174472]

John Healey: HM Customs and Excise are responsible for detecting and preventing the illegal import of drugs controlled under section 3(1) of the Misuse of Drugs Act, 1971. There are no import prohibitions on prescription-only medicines unless they contain drugs that are controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act, such as Valium. A Home Office drugs licence must accompany such drugs if they are to be imported legally. When Customs detect such drugs illegally imported, either in the post or at ports or airports, they seize them and prosecute the importers where appropriate.

Sports Facilities

Mr. Reed: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the effects of granting mandatory rate relief to all sports and leisure facilities in line with that granted to community amateur sports clubs. [174051]

Mr. Raynsford: I have been asked to reply. There was never any intention to grant mandatory rate relief to all sports and leisure facilities. The relief is targeted at community based sporting activities. Many premises defined on the rating list as "sports clubs" and "leisure facilities" are commercial profit-making companies. There would be no reason to offer relief to commercial companies to be funded by the general taxpayer.

Teenage Pregnancies

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many conceptions in women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 there were in each year since 2000, broken down by strategic health authority; and if he will make a statement; [174522]

(2) what the rate of conceptions in women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 was in each year since 2000, broken down by strategic health authority; and if he will make a statement. [174523]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. David Amess, dated 20 May 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent questions asking for conception numbers and conception rates for women aged between 11 and 19 for each year since 2000. (174522, 174523)

Numbers of conceptions are estimated from registrations of births and notifications of abortions. Miscarriages before the 24th week of gestation are not included.

Numbers and rates of conceptions at ages under 14, and by single year for ages 14 to 19, are shown in the tables. The information is provided for all strategic health authorities in England, for the years 2000 to, 2002. The figures for 2002 are provisional estimates, since complete abortions data is not yet available. Information on the number of conceptions at age 19 is not available for 2002, and information on conceptions at age 18 is only available at national level for this year.

In order to protect the confidentiality of individuals, ONS does not publish these figures by single year of age below age 14, given the small number of cases.

Conceptions: Numbers and rates[1] for women under 20 by age

England and Wales, strategic health authority — *Number, rate per 1,000 women*

Area	*Age at conception*							
	Under 14		*14*		*15*		*16*	
2000	*Number*	*Rate*	*Number*	*Rate*	*Number*	*Rate*	*Number*	*Rate*
England and Wales	397	12	1,890	5.8	5,827	18.1	13,153	42.4
England	376	12	1,771	5.8	5,472	18.0	12,323	42.1
County Durham and Tees Valley	12	15	58	7.4	163	21.0	349	46.5
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	10	1.1	62	6.8	217	24.0	424	48.6
Cheshire and Merseyside	12	0.8	74	4.6	278	17.4	649	42.4
Cumbria and Lancashire	9	0.7	68	5.4	276	22.4	508	42.5
Greater Manchester	16	1.0	97	5.8	326	19.8	817	51.8
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	8	0.7	56	5.3	182	17.4	441	43.6
South Yorkshire	7	0.9	61	7.8	182	23.3	412	54.6
West Yorkshire	15	1.1	75	5.4	245	18.0	605	46.4
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	10	1.1	52	5.5	178	18.9	373	41.5
Trent	24	1.4	86	5.2	281	17.1	634	40.3
Birmingham and the Black Country	32	2.0	110	7.1	343	22.4	735	50.9
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire	14	1.5	59	6.2	181	19.4	405	44.4
Shropshire and Staffordshire	5	0.5	65	6.6	185	18.7	371	39.4
Bedford and Hertfordshire	10	1.0	57	5.5	129	12.7	338	34.8
Essex	9	0.9	48	5.1	144	15.7	341	37.4
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	11	0.8	48	3.8	157	12.3	434	35.1
North Central London	17	2.5	45	6.9	132	19.7	302	47.0
North East London	14	1.4	74	7.5	232	23.0	459	47.7
North West London	18	19	53	5.7	166	18.1	369	41.0
South East London	24	2.7	80	9.2	199	23.6	488	62.0
South West London	14	2.0	51	7.7	127	19.2	275	43.0
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	7	0.7	46	4.4	161	15.7	365	36.5
Kent and Medway	13	1.3	51	5.1	170	16.9	392	39.5
Surrey and Sussex	11	0.7	74	5.0	182	12.4	420	29.5
Thames Valley	14	1.1	68	5.4	186	14.9	432	36.2
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	24	1.7	75	5.6	202	15.3	458	36.3
Dorset and Somerset	6	0.9	29	4.1	105	14.8	199	29.1
South West Peninsula	10	1.1	49	5.5	143	16.2	328	37.6
Wales	21	1.1	119	6.3	355	18.7	830	46.0

	17		18		19	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
England and Wales	20,081	66.0	26,180	87.3	30,136	94.7
England	18,757	65.5	24,518	86.8	28,263	94.4
County Durham and Tees Valley	537	73.4	689	98.3	736	97.4
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	646	74.3	849	98.2	882	94.9
Cheshire and Merseyside	1,014	69.1	1,212	85.9	1,405	97.0
Cumbria and Lancashire	839	71.7	1,084	94.9	1,100	97.0
Greater Manchester	1,223	79.8	1,659	111.2	1,822	112.6
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	571	59.4	826	86.3	865	87.7
South Yorkshire	593	80.7	738	103.1	862	98.9
West Yorkshire	953	73.2	1,248	95.6	1,394	92.2
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	575	63.2	714	77.8	881	87.2
Trent	985	64.1	1,228	81.7	1,416	87.4
Birmingham and the Black Country	1,243	86.2	1,599	113.2	1,887	122.8
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire	556	62.5	732	81.9	845	93.0
Shropshire and Staffordshire	558	60.0	697	78.4	791	915
Bedford and Hertfordshire	466	49.4	641	68.2	715	816
Essex	502	58.5	644	74.4	702	816
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	637	52.7	873	71.6	1,006	83.6
North Central London	448	70.7	652	106.7	825	103.4
North East London	728	78.7	1,033	113.2	1,350	132.5
North West London	606	69.0	843	99.9	1,132	113.4
South East London	677	86.2	951	122.9	1,131	127.9
South West London	443	69.8	576	93.8	654	91.2
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	543	55.2	675	70.8	909	80.7
Kent and Medway	644	68.0	728	77.1	829	94.7
Surrey and Sussex	691	48.2	831	56.4	976	69.4
Thames Valley	615	50.8	827	68.6	980	78.3
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	643	52.5	881	72.1	993	77.9
Dorset and Somerset	356	53.8	448	68.9	475	78.3
South West Peninsula	465	55.1	640	78.7	700	84.0
Wales	1,324	74.6	1,662	95.6	1,873	99.0

[1] Rates for women aged under 14 are per 1,000 females aged 13 and rates by single year of age are per 1,000 females of the same age

Conceptions: Numbers and rates[1] for women under 20 by age

England and Wales, strategic health authority[2] *Number, rate per 1,000 women*

	Age at conception							
Area	Under 14		14		15		16	
2001	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
England and Wales	398	1.2	1,883	5.7	5,609	17.4	13,099	40.5
England	374	1.2	1,774	5.7	5,247	17.2	12,255	40.2
County Durham and Tees Valley	9	1.2	51	6.7	140	18.3	371	48.4
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	9	1.0	57	6.4	192	21.7	434	48.7
Cheshire and Merseyside	16	1.0	73	4.6	225	14.2	599	37.1
Cumbria and Lancashire	12	0.9	76	6.1	203	16.3	492	40.1
Greater Manchester	17	1.0	117	7.0	328	19.6	811	49.3
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	9	0.8	54	5.2	184	18.0	417	41.2
South Yorkshire	15	1.8	67	8.3	179	23.0	387	50.0
West Yorkshire	17	1.2	78	5.5	258	18.6	600	43.6
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	11	1.1	53	5.3	150	15.2	347	35.3
Trent	15	0.9	97	5.9	283	17.8	648	40.9
Birmingham and the Black Country	28	1.8	108	6.8	332	21.8	776	51.2
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire	10	1.0	54	5.7	172	18.1	357	38.0
Shropshire and Staffordshire	14	1.4	55	5.8	161	17.0	401	42.4
Bedford and Hertfordshire	9	0.8	43	4.2	127	12.6	292	28.6
Essex	10	1.0	49	4.9	135	13.9	299	31.4
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	13	1.0	70	5.3	185	14.4	426	32.7
North Central London	14	2.0	55	8.2	126	19.6	322	46.3
North East London	17	1.7	76	7.9	221	22.6	507	49.3
North West London	13	1.3	56	5.9	169	18.3	370	38.5
South East London	24	2.7	69	7.8	233	27.0	517	61.3
South West London	9	1.3	34	5.0	132	20.2	255	38.8
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	11	1.0	60	5.5	184	17.2	379	35.3
Kent and Medway	13	1.2	57	5.6	169	16.9	398	39.1
Surrey and Sussex	11	0.7	64	4.4	173	11.9	428	29.7
Thames Valley	12	0.9	49	3.8	173	13.3	414	32.0
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	16	1.2	77	5.8	196	15.0	460	35.9
Dorset and Somerset	8	1.1	33	4.6	90	12.5	244	34.3
South West Peninsula	12	1.2	42	4.4	127	13.7	304	33.0
Wales	24	1.2	109	5.8	362	19.5	844	44.6

	17		18		19	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
England and Wales	19,975	63.9	25,735	83.7	29,225	94.7
England	18,786	63.8	24,200	83.6	27,518	94.8
County Durham and Tees Valley	531	72.1	666	92.4	751	104.5
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	596	69.2	779	89.2	868	92.9
Cheshire and Merseyside	1,025	66.7	1,253	85.0	1,355	95.2
Cumbria and Lancashire	749	63.0	953	81.4	1,081	94.8
Greater Manchester	1,273	80.7	1,569	101.7	1,763	112.3
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	626	63.7	771	81.8	840	91.5
South Yorkshire	610	80.8	721	93.9	843	97.6
West Yorkshire	934	71.4	1,284	95.4	1,464	96.7
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	545	57.4	693	72.4	831	81.6
Trent	926	60.5	1,253	84.1	1,319	85.8
Birmingham and the Black Country	1,173	81.4	1,599	108.6	1,760	114.4
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire	549	59.5	687	77.5	111	90.1
Shropshire and Staffordshire	569	62.5	681	76.1	739	88.3
Bedford and Hertfordshire	489	50.7	648	70.4	726	88.2
Essex	526	56.1	648	74.6	715	90.6
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	635	50.6	840	68.3	1,012	84.2
North Central London	456	67.3	673	99.4	824	113.1
North East London	762	78.1	1,063	113.0	1,374	146.9
North West London	580	60.8	860	90.8	1,044	111.1
South East London	754	93.6	1,013	125.5	1,097	131.2
South West London	432	66.8	513	79.0	644	92.7
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	583	56.4	749	71.6	886	80.7
Kent and Medway	581	57.9	763	80.9	828	97.6
Surrey and Sussex	639	45.7	833	60.6	913	69.3
Thames Valley	622	49.1	836	66.7	921	75.9
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	746	60.3	862	70.7	1,002	79.2
Dorset and Somerset	341	49.6	396	61.8	481	83.5
South West Peninsula	534	58.5	594	66.5	660	74.3
Wales	1,189	65.8	1,535	85.7	1,707	93.0

Rates for women aged under 14 are per 1,000 females aged 13 and rates by single year of age are per 1,000 females of the same age
Provisional

Conceptions: Numbers and rates[1] for women under 20 by age

England and Wales, strategic health authority, (provisional estimates[2]) *Number, rate per 1,000 women*

Area	Age at conception							
	Under 14		14		15		16	
2002	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
England and Wales	359	1.1	1,652	4.9	5,111	15.6	12,376	38.2
England	335	1.1	1,562	4.9	4,786	15.5	11,630	38.1
County Durham and Tees Valley	11	1.5	44	5.7	150	19.8	332	43.3
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	11	1.3	47	5.3	162	18.2	403	45.3
Cheshire and Merseyside	11	0.7	63	3.9	235	14.9	603	38.0
Cumbria and Lancashire	15	1.2	81	6.3	190	15.1	493	39.5
Greater Manchester	14	0.8	102	6.0	284	17.0	792	47.3
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	6	0.6	55	5.1	175	16.8	390	38.1
South Yorkshire	11	1.4	57	7.0	189	23.5	410	52.8
West Yorkshire	17	1.2	99	7.0	242	17.1	541	38.8
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	11	1.1	54	5.1	122	12.1	366	36.7
Trent	20	1.2	93	5.5	256	15.4	581	36.5
Birmingham and the Black Country	22	1.4	88	5.6	290	18.4	697	45.8
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire	8	0.8	53	5.4	138	14.6	393	41.1
Shropshire and Staffordshire	10	1.0	49	5.0	160	16.8	363	38.3
Bedford and Hertfordshire	11	1.0	39	3.7	101	9.9	301	29.7
Essex	4	0.4	35	3.4	136	13.4	286	29.5
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	15	1.1	58	4.3	178	13.6	413	32.1
North Central London	14	2.1	41	5.9	117	17.4	332	50.3
North East London	13	1.3	65	6.6	180	18.7	458	46.1
North West London	13	1.4	37	3.8	137	14.4	360	38.1
South East London	22	2.5	66	7.6	229	26.1	502	58.5
South West London	9	1.3	29	4.1	114	16.8	271	41.3
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	17	1.5	39	3.5	154	14.0	355	33.1
Kent and Medway	10	0.9	50	4.7	155	15.1	362	36.0
Surrey and Sussex	16	1.1	47	3.1	157	10.7	398	27.1
Thames Valley	5	0.4	41	3.1	167	13.1	368	28.2
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	6	0.4	65	4.7	159	11.9	403	30.7
Dorset and Somerset	4	0.5	21	2.8	83	11.5	179	25.0
South West Peninsula	9	0.9	44	4.5	126	13.2	278	29.8
Wales	24	1.3	90	4.7	325	17.2	746	40.3

	17		18		19	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
England and Wales	19,117	58.7	24,239	76.9		
England	17,876	58.3	—	—		
County Durham and Tees Valley	561	73.3	—	—	—	
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	663	74.4			—	—
Cheshire and Merseyside	891	55.1	—	—	—	
Cumbria and Lancashire	756	60.9		—		—
Greater Manchester	1,150	70.2	—	—	—	—
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	594	58.8			—	—
South Yorkshire	554	71.6	—	—	—	—
West Yorkshire	887	64.6	—		—	—
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	518	52.0	—	—	—	
Trent	935	58.7		—	—	—
Birmingham and the Black Country	1,151	75.8	—	—	—	
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire	508	53.2		—	—	—
Shropshire and Staffordshire	544	57.5	—	—	—	
Bedford and Hertfordshire	452	44.3	—	—	—	—
Essex	500	52.5	—	—	—	—
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	606	45.9	—	—		—
North Central London	490	68.7	—	—	—	—
North East London	722	69.6				—
North West London	561	56.5	—	—	—	—
South East London	659	78.0	—	—	—	
South West London	393	59.0		—	—	—
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	543	50.2	—		—	
Kent and Medway	527	51.3	—	—	—	—
Surrey and Sussex	606	41.7	—			
Thames Valley	603	45.7	—	—	—	—
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	628	48.8	—		—	
Dorset and Somerset	355	49.7	—	—	—	—
South West Peninsula	519	56.4	—	—		—
Wales	1,241	65.4	—			—

[1] Rates for women aged under 14 are per 1,000 females aged 13 and rates by single year of age are per 1,000 females of the same age
[2] Provisional estimates based on incomplete abortion data.
[3] Processing of abortion data for women aged 18 and over is incomplete and therefore figures are not yet available. An early provisional national estimate has been made of conceptions at age 18, but not at other ages or subnationally.

Unemployment

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the level of unemployment was in Liverpool, West Derby constituency in each year since 1989. — [173672]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Robert Wareing, dated 20 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about unemployment in the Liverpool, West Derby constituency. (173672)

Table 1 gives levels of unemployment in the Liverpool West Derby Parliamentary Constituency covering the twelve months ending February of 1997, 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003. Estimates for the 12 month periods ending in February of all other years since 1989 are unavailable.

Estimates are taken from the Office for National Statistics' Labour Force Survey (LFS). As with any statistical sample survey, estimates for the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (ISA) for local areas including Parliamentary Constituencies. Table 2 gives the annual average number of ISA claimants for the Liverpool, West Derby constituency in each year since 1989.

Table 1
Number of unemployed people in Liverpool West Derby Parliamentary constituency 12 month periods ending in February on 1997, 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003

Year	Number unemployed
1997	8
2000	5
2001	4
2002	[1]
2003	5

[1] Sample size too small for reliable estimate

Source:
ONS—Labour Force Survey

Table 2
Annual average number of claimants of Jobseekers' Allowance Liverpool, West Derby Parliament constituency, 1989—2003

Year	Number of claimants
1989	7,161
1990	6,065
1991	6,162
1992	6,617
1993	6,603
1994	6,232
1995	5,539
1996	6,276
1997	5,277
1998	4,506
1999	4,037

Table 2
Annual average number of claimants of Jobseekers' Allowance Liverpool, West Derby Parliament constituency, 1989—2003

Year	Number of claimants
2000	3,862
2001	3,412
2002	3,183
2003	2,928

Source:
Jobcentre Plus administrative system

NORTHERN IRELAND

Airports

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what public funding supported capital infrastructure improvements were carried out at each of the Northern Ireland airports during the last five years. [174378]

Mr. Spellar: The information requested is set out in the table.

£

	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Belfast International Airport	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Belfast City Airport	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
City of Derry Airport	1.4 million	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
St. Angelo Airport	973,583	26,417	Nil	Nil	Nil

"Capital infrastructure" is interpreted as being infrastructure that is necessary to the operation of an airport business.

Bilingual Policy

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland by whom, by what authority, and when the decision was taken to continue the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety's bilingual policy following the suspension of the Northern Ireland Assembly in October 2002. [170053]

Angela Smith: During devolution Northern Ireland Executive Ministers decided policy on the language to be used by each Department for letterheads and public advertisements, including the use of Irish and Ulster Scots. At an early stage during the current period of suspension, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, decided that the position within each Northern Ireland Department, including the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, should remain unchanged. This remains his current assessment.

Bus Station (Lisburn)

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the Department for Regional Development has received the economic appraisal for a new bus station in Lisburn; and when a decision will be made. [173195]

Mr. Spellar: The Department for Regional Development has not yet received an economic appraisal for a new bus station in Lisburn.

Civil Service

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many staff were employed, by grade, in the Northern Ireland Civil Service in financial years *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; and if he will list the (i) total salary bill, (ii) average salary and (iii) change in average salary for staff within each grade during these two periods. [170032]

Mr. Pearson: The information in the following tables gives the total salary costs and average salary costs for staff in post at March 2003 and March 2004. These figures do not include non-salary payments such as allowances or non-consolidated bonuses. The figures given do not allow for the consequences of staff movements in to or out of grades on promotion during the financial year or other personnel changes within grades such as recruitment, retirement and wastage.

For these reasons the increase in average salary between 2002–03 and 2003–04 is different to the cost of the 2003–04 pay award which was 3.67 per cent.

2003	Full-time equivalent staff numbers[1]	Salary total (£)	Average salary (£)
SCS	215.95	13,970,622.01	64,693.78
Grade 6	215.59	10,276,104.13	47,665.03
Grade 7	910.39	36,061,567.23	39,611.12
Deputy Principal	1,730.25	54,065,540.27	31,247.24
Staff Officer	2,684.37	63,845,361.83	23,784.11
Executive Officer I	3,392.37	69,435,134.15	20,468.03
Executive Officer II	3,529.13	58,057,105.87	16,450.83
Administrative Officer	7,164.03	96,120,522.87	13,417.10
Administrative Assistant	2,618.97	28,905,560.18	11,037.00
Total	22,461.05	430,737,518.54	19,177.09

2004	Full-time equivalent staff numbers[1]	Salary total (£)	Average salary (£)	Increase in average salary between 2003 and 2004 (percentage)
SCS	215.15	14,325,435.64	66,583.48	2.92
Grade 6	220.82	10,593,469.32	47,973.32	0.65
Grade 7	974.17	38,707,644.96	39,733.97	0.31
Deputy Principal	2,011.51	61,897,910.12	30,771.86	-1.52
Staff Officer	2,868.46	68,553,759.99	23,899.15	0.48
Executive Officer I	3,429.82	70,677,467.27	20,606.76	0.68
Executive Officer II	3,888.25	64,285,384.40	16,533.24	0.50

2004	Full-time equivalent staff numbers[1]	Salary total (£)	Average salary (£)	Increase in average salary between 2003 and 2004 (percentage)
Administrative Officer	7,291.42	98,431,257.28	13,499.60	0.61
Administrative Assistant	2,779.99	32,065,042.11	11,534.23	4.51
Total	23,679.59	459,537,371.11	19,406.47	1.20

[1] These figures refer to permanent NICS non-industrial staff-in-post in the 11 Northern Ireland Departments (excluding NIO).

Class Sizes

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what discretion is available to principals and governors in applying the guidance on class sizes in practical subjects in post-primary schools contained in Circular 2004/05; [173202]

(2) whether *(a)* choir and *(b)* orchestra are considered practical subjects for the purposes of restricting class sizes in post-primary schools as outlined in Circular 2004/5; [173208]

(3) whether the limitation on class sizes in music lessons is affected by *(a)* the types of instruments being used and *(b)* the number of pupils using instruments; [173209]

(4) for what reason the decision was taken by the Department of Education, outlined in Point 15 of Circular 2004/5, to supersede the exception previously granted to class sizes in music by Circular 2001/14 and the Department's letter dated 19 December 2001. [173211]

Mr. Gardiner: The Department considers that in general health and safety hazards are such that adequate and safe supervision of pupils is not possible if more than 20 pupils are present in a class and involved in practical activities. This applies to music classes but not choirs or orchestras which are not classified as classes for the purposes of the Department's Circular on Class Sizes in Practical Subjects. This Circular supersedes an earlier Circular which temporarily removed the 20 pupils class size limit. This occurred because of representations which were made at the time that schools required more notice before implementing the policy in relation to class sizes in music.

In meeting the Circular's requirements schools should consider the effective use of timetable strategies to reduce class sizes. Should any other issues arise for specific schools with regard to meeting the maximum class size requirement of 20 pupils for music, schools can seek advice from the Department on an appropriate way forward.

Diabetes

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of health funding was spent on diabetes mellitus in *(a)* the last year for which figures are available, *(b)* 1985, *(c)* 1990, *(d)* 1995 and *(e)* 2000. [173586]

Angela Smith: This information is not available.

Integrated Development Fund

Mr. Hume: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the quality of engagement between Government Departments and local agents in Derry on the marker bid under the Integrated Development Fund. [165343]

Mr. Pearson: On the 12 August 2003,1 formally invited bids from the Integrated Development Fund (IDF) in the context of the completion of integrated development plans for the North West, West Belfast and Greater Shankill and the South Down fishing villages.

The Ilex Urban Regeneration Company was responsible for preparing an interim bid for the North West to the IDF, working in partnership with relevant Government Departments and other public bodies. Ilex submitted the interim bid to the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister, for consideration on 5 April. I have been assured by Ilex that Government Departments and other relevant agencies worked constructively and effectively with them on this matter in providing the necessary information and support, and helping to ensure that plans are consistent with existing Government strategies.

Invest Northern Ireland

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the annual running costs of Invest Northern Ireland were over the last three years; and how much inward investment has been attracted and how many new jobs have been created over this period. [174720]

Mr. Gardiner: Invest NI was established on 1 April 2002. The running costs were £26.61 million for 2002–03 and £27.47 million (provisional) for 2003–04. Over the period, Invest NI has attracted 46 inward investment projects with the promise of £298.02 million of investment and 3,086 jobs.

Official Vehicles

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of official vehicles used by his Department are run on *(a)* petrol, *(b)* diesel, *(c)* liquid petroleum gas and *(d)* compressed natural gas. [172773]

Mr. Pearson: The Northern Ireland Office and Northern Ireland Departments run a total of 248 vehicles. The percentage of each type of fuel used is outlined in the table.

Type of fuel	Percentage
Petrol	12
Diesel	87
Liquid petroleum gas	1
Compressed natural gas	0

In addition to the vehicles summarised above, the Department of the Environment has a fleet of 252 mopeds which are used to train pupils undertaking Road Traffic Studies at school, of which 251 are run on petrol and one on diesel.

Older People

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland for what *(a)* initiatives, *(b)* campaigns and *(c)* advisory bodies relating to older people his Department (i) is responsible and (ii) has provided funding since 2001; and what the cost in each year was for each one. [166242]

Mr. Spellar: The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister is currently developing an older people's strategy entitled Ageing in an Inclusive Society within the context of the Promoting Social Inclusion element of the New Targeting Social Need policy, which is due to be published for public consultation shortly.

Set out as follows is available information on departmental initiatives, campaigns and advisory bodies relating to older people, and corresponding costs for each financial year from 2001–02:

Initiatives, Campaigns and Advisory bodies relating to Older People in NI from 2001

(a) Initiatives

		Costs (£)		
Department	*Initiative*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
DCAL/Fisheries Conservancy Board	Concessionary Permit Fee for fishing Public Angling Estate for over 60 year olds + Concessionary Angling Licence Fee for over 60 year olds	—	—	[1]44,000
DEL	New Deal 50+	1,435,000	1,151,000	854,000
DHSSPS	"Keep Warm, Keep Well"	13,686	No grant made	12,550
DRD	Concessionary Fares Scheme for over 65 year olds	[2]2,918,000	[2]6,682,644	[2]6,853,750
DSD	Warm Homes and Warm Homes Plus	[3]4,300,000	[3]7,952,000	[3]10,650,000
DSD	Locks for the Elderly Scheme	—	—	150,000
DSD	Londonderry Regeneration Initiative:			
	Age Concern	21,600	22,300	23,000
	University for the Third Age	—	8,700	6,200
DSD	Making Belfast Work:			
	Engage with Age	342,000	74,000	117,000
NIO	Be Sure Be Secure	—	60,614	—
NIO	Lock Out Crime Scheme	—	—	152,795
	Drama School	—	—	1,000
	Competition	—	—	705

[1] Estimate.
[2] Includes costs for public bus travel only.
[3] Includes people under 50 years receiving benefits under Warm Homes scheme.

(b) Campaigns

		Costs (£)		
Department	*Campaigns*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
DETI	Age Positive	—	—	Launched January 2004[1]
DRD	Promotion of Free Travel for Older People	120,000	—	—
DSD—Social Security Agency	Pension Credit Advertising Campaign[2]	—	—	Not available[2]
NIO	Stay Safe Secure	—	—	111,540

[1] Costs of Age Positive campaign in financial year 2004–05 expected to be £70,000.
[2] In addition to the Pension Credit Advertising Campaign, from 2001 DSD Social Security Agency has been engaged in a range of initiatives and campaigns to promote awareness of benefits for older people, which has incurred an overall cost of over £1 million.

(c) Advisory Bodies

		Costs (£)		
Department	*Advisory Body*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
DHSSPS	Age Concern (NI)	151,377	155,161	161,305
DHSSPS	Help the Aged (NI)	42,000	43,050	44,755

In addition, there are a number of general initiatives carried out by Departments which will inevitably impact on older people. For example, DARD carry out programmes and initiatives for farmers, 42 per cent. of whom in NI are over 50 years; and DEL's New Deal 25+ programme includes participants aged 25–64 years.

Also, DRD is developing an Accessible Transport Strategy to improve access to the transport system for older people and people with disabilities, which is currently under public consultation.

Psychiatry Services

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on child and adolescent psychiatry services in the Northern Board area, including provision of social workers. [173615]

Angela Smith: Recognising that up to 20 per cent. of young people experience mental health problems at some stage in childhood, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are a key priority in the Northern Health and Social Services Board. The

number of staff in the specialist CAMHS team, which includes three Senior Social Work Practitioners, has increased from 11 to 20 over the last three years. Waiting lists for the specialist CAMHS team have reduced from 18–24 months to 3–9 months. In the last year up to 30 multidisciplinary professional workers working with young people outside of the specialist CAMHS team have received training and support.

Specialist community-based CAMHS teams strive to support young people in the community wherever appropriate rather than have recourse to in-patient services.

Public Sector Housing

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the decision was taken by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive to develop two separate integrated sites for public sector housing; what criteria were used; whether further sites have been identified by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive for integrated communities; and if he will make a statement. [174093]

Mr. Spellar: Applicants for social housing have a choice of where they wish to live and there are a number of people who would prefer to live in an integrated housing environment. With less than 10 per cent. of social housing integrated, the choice of where to live for those people who prefer integration is greatly reduced compared to those living in segregated communities.

The Housing Executive Board, at its meeting in September 2003, agreed that proposals should be brought forward for two integrated housing pilot projects which would enable the Housing Executive, and others, to test the policy and procedural implications of integrated housing.

The proposals are at an early stage and locations for the pilot projects have still to be identified. There are no proposals for further pilots.

The criteria to be used for developing the two pilot projects will facilitate and encourage integrated housing as far as this is practicable, desirable and safe. It will take into consideration local letting policies, sustainability of the schemes, plans to involve stakeholders and strategic and operational structures.

The proposals reflect the Housing Executive's and other public bodies' responsibilities under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 which deal with the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations.

Strategic Investment Board

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what conflict of interest procedures are in place for board members and officials of the Strategic Investment Board. [164942]

Mr. Pearson: Board members of the Strategic Investment Board are required to comply fully with procedures to deal with potential conflicts of interest that follow "Company Law and the Guidance on Codes of Practice for Board Members of Public Bodies", produced by the Cabinet Office, a copy of which is available in the Library.

Officials of the Strategic Investment Board are required to provide conflict of interest declarations in the same format as board members and in line with the relevant public sector guidance.

Under these requirements, the Strategic Investment Board keeps an up-to-date conflict of interests register, details of which will be made publicly available.

Teachers (Sick Leave)

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many teachers took long-term sick leave during each of the last five academic years. [173205]

Mr. Gardiner: It will take some time to collate this information. I will write to the hon. Gentleman with details as soon as possible and place a copy of my response in the Library.

Tourism (Motor Cycling)

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the tourism revenue spent in Northern Ireland as a result of the North West 200 motorcycle races this year. [R][174597]

Mr. Gardiner: The Northern Ireland Events Company (NIEC) provides financial support towards the North West 200. Based on information from the event organisers the NIEC will draw up a post evaluation report. This information will include bed revenue and tourist spend and will be required from the organisers within eight weeks of the date of the event.

Based on figures for previous years provided by Coleraine borough council (CBC) it is estimated that the North West 200 will generate approximately £5.6 million tourism revenue in 2004.

Visitor Centres

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the visitor centres in receipt of grant aid since 1990; what the nature and level were of grant-aid sums paid; what visitor numbers were originally predicted for each centre; and what the most recent visitor numbers recorded at the centres are. [164945]

Mr. Gardiner: A list of visitor centres assisted by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, the Department of Agriculture and Regional Development and Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure since 1990, has been placed in the Library.

Recent actual visitor numbers have been provided where possible. However, it has not been possible to provide originally predicted visitor numbers for each visitor centre as this information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Waiting Lists/Times

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many patients are awaiting *(a)* admission and *(b)* out-patient assessment at each hospital in the province; and how many have been waiting six months or longer. [175172]

Angela Smith: Waiting list statistics are collected for each HSS trust. The most recent waiting list data available show the position at 31 December 2003.

Number of people waiting for in-patient admission to hospital[1]

Provider	*Total number waiting*	*Number waiting six months or longer*
Altnagelvin Hospitals HSS Trust	4,405	1,153
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	6,699	2,811
Causeway HSS Trust	1,477	442
Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust	7,610	3,379
Down and Lisburn HSS Trust	1,145	245
Green Park HSS Trust	5,381	2,772
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust	1,755	278
Newry and Mourne HSS Trust	892	223
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	11,025	4,920
Sperrin Lakeland HSS Trust	1,801	319
Ulster Community and Hospitals HSS Trust	5,369	2,011
United Hospitals Group HSS Trust	5,047	1,715
Northern Ireland total	52,606	20,268

[1] Includes normal in-patient and day cases.

Number of people waiting for a first out-patient appointment[1]

Provider	*Total number waiting*	*Number waiting six months or longer*
Altnagelvin Hospitals HSS Trust	18,498	6,874
Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust	1,649	497
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	10,728	2,284
Causeway HSS Trust	4,643	1,858
Craigavon and Banbridge Community HSS Trust	432	103
Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust	13,122	5,302
Down and Lisburn HSS Trust	5,683	1,931
Foyle HSS Trust	44	6
Green Park HSS Trust	8,640	4,244
Homefirst Community HSS Trust	762	88
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust	4,731	1,238
Newry and Mourne HSS Trust	5,816	1,966
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	27,718	12,011
South and East Belfast HSS Trust	1,037	0
Sperrin Lakeland HSS Trust	4,053	681
Ulster Community and Hospitals HSS Trust	22,412	10,841
United Hospitals Group HSS Trust	16,212	7,028
Northern Ireland total	146,180	56,951

[1] Includes cancellations and referrals.

Written Answers to Questions

Friday 21 May 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Abandoned Vehicles

Sir Sydney Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many abandoned vehicles were removed by local authorities in England in *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2002–03 and *(c)* 2003–04. [173407]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* The number of abandoned vehicles removed by local authorities in England was as follows:

	Number of vehicles recovered by local authorities
2001–02	284,400
2002–03	298,900

Note:
Figures for 2003–2004 will be available in early 2005

Disposable Nappies

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 6 May, *Official Report*, column 1658W, on disposable nappies, whether the Waste Implementation Programme Manager met representatives of the Nappy Alliance at Ashdown House on 23rd March; and if she will make a statement on the outcome of the meeting. [174743]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* I can confirm that the Waste Implementation Programme (WIP) Manager met with representatives of the Nappy Alliance on 23rd March. The meeting was a useful opportunity to discuss the work WIP is already taking forward through the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) to promote re-usable nappies. This work stream forms an essential part of Government's renewed drive to minimise the amount of household waste generated in England.

One of the issues raised in the course of the meeting was the need to ensure that this element of Defra's waste strategy has full support across Government. In particular, this means working closely with the Department of Health to ensure that hospitals are in a position to encourage the supply of re-usable nappies, and that healthcare professionals give new parents the facts they need to make their own informed choice. Following the meeting on 23 March and the subsequent publication of the Women's Environmental Network's report 'Nappies and the NHS: Waste Prevention and a Fair Choice for Parents', I have written to the Under-Secretary at the Department of Health to make the case for a strong lead from hospitals and health trusts on this important initiative.

Farm Income

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the *(a)* crops, *(b)* vegetables, *(c)* fruit and *(d)* plants the growing of which will not qualify for single farm payment. [166026]

Alun Michael: Under the Single Payments Scheme, farmers will be allocated 'entitlements' against which they may make an annual claim for payment. Such claims must be supported by an equivalent number of hectares of agricultural area, except those used for forestry, permanent crops (eg fruit trees) or used for non-agricultural activities.

In addition, the amount of land used in support of a claim on which horticultural crops (those referred to in Article 1(2) of Regulation (EC) No. 2200/96 and Article 1(2) of Regulation (EC) No. 2201/96 and potatoes other than those intended for manufacture of potato starch) are grown will be limited by authorisations allocated to individual growers.

Flooding

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received regarding the recent increased assessment of flood risk in the South East; and if she will make a statement. [170837]

Mr. Morley: The Government welcome the report "Foresight Future Flooding" by Professor Sir David King published through the Office of Science and Technology on 22 April.

Currently nearly two million properties are at risk of flooding in the UK from rivers and the sea and a further 80,000 are at risk from heavy downpours that overwhelm drains in urban areas. Under future scenarios in the report and assuming our approval to flood risk management does not change then annual damages could rise substantially by the 2080s. The areas at greatest risk include the South East Coast. We therefore face major challenges in managing these potential risks and associated costs.

The Government are considering the implications of the report and we intend to address the findings in an initial response through a consultation document for a new flood and coastal defence strategy that I hope to publish in the summer.

Each major stakeholder is committed to delivering a number of actions and my Department will oversee progress.

Greenhouse Gases

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will request the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Subsidiary Bodies to undertake an exploratory study of contraction and convergence as a potential basis for the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. [171229]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* The UK, as part of the EU, sought to open a technical dialogue on possible approaches to long-term action to tackle climate

change at the UN climate change negotiations in Milan last December. The aim was to begin technical discussions on different methodologies, including contraction and convergence, to promote better understanding of the challenge facing the international community.

We achieved recognition of better access to data and analytical tools relevant to implementing commitments under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, plus a scoping phase to develop a shared data interface to help with this, and a process to exchange further views on these issues in July 2004. The UK will continue to press for technical discussions relevant to the assessment of different methodologies.

Negotiations on climate change action beyond the end of the first Kyoto Protocol commitment period in 2012 are due to commence in 2005. In the meantime, we will continue to exchange views informally with other countries on how to promote further action.

Hazardous Waste

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to use BSE and foot and mouth disposal facilities for the handling of hazardous waste. [171287]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* We have no plans to use such facilities for the handling of hazardous waste. Sites for handling hazardous waste would have to have the appropriate authorisations under the Waste Framework Directive and the Landfill Directive. The disposal by burial of animal carcases during the FMD epidemic was subject to control under the Animal Waste Directive which has now been superseded by the EU Animal By-Products Regulation. BSE infected carcases are disposed of by incineration in approved incinerators.

Household Waste

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will impose a statutory obligation on local authorities to ensure weekly collections of household waste. [174088]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* We have no plans to require local authorities to collect household waste on a weekly basis.

Decisions on the frequency of collection are a matter for each local authority, which needs to have in place a collection regime which enables it to meet its statutory duties in a way which is consistent with Best Value and takes full account of local circumstances.

Hunting

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what research the Department is undertaking into the impact of land used for hunting under the single farm payment; [169742]

(2) what discussions she has had with the *(a)* Countryside Alliance and *(b)* Master of Foxhounds on the impact of the single farm payment on hunting; and whether this will qualify as an activity which will derive payments under the new scheme. [169743]

Alun Michael: I am not aware of any research or discussions with any organisations on an inter-relationship between hunting and the new Single Payment Scheme. Hunting is not an activity that would attract payment under the Scheme, but agricultural land on which hunting takes place may be used by a farmer in support of a Single Payment claim if that activity does not lead to a breach any of the Scheme's conditions, including the obligation on the farmer to maintain the land in good agricultural and environmental condition.

Insects

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in what ways she proposes that agri-environment schemes will contribute to maintaining the UK's biodiversity, with particular reference to insects. [165305]

Mr. Morley: We regularly monitor our existing Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) and Countryside Stewardship (CS) schemes to assess their environmental benefits. This has demonstrated substantial benefits for many Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats and species, including mammals, birds, plants and insects.

Recent Defra-sponsored research has shown that simple measures such as planting a seed mix of flowers in field margins to provide pollen and nectar can attract huge numbers of insects (bumble bees, butterflies, and others) relative to the in-field crop. Full details are available at http://www.f-e-c.co.uk/Buzz/index.htm.

Defra has also sponsored specific research on butterflies. This has shown that ESAs and CS schemes are slowing, and in some cases reversing, the long-term decline in numbers of England's rarer butterflies. Further details are available at http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2002/020806a.htm.

Recent Defra-funded reports on 'Managing priority habitats for invertebrates' will help inform targeting and formulating of future agri-environment agreements. 'Environmental Stewardship' (ES) will rationalise and replace ESAs and CS in 2005. ES will be divided into two levels: an Entry Level (ELS) and a Higher Level (HLS). ELS should include measures beneficial for biodiversity, including insects, in the wider countryside. The HLS Scheme will continue the work of ESAs and CS by targeting management on the most valuable and vulnerable farmland habitats. The options available under these new schemes will also have the advantage of having greater generic benefits for insects. Further details of these schemes can be found at http://www.defra.gov.uk/erdp/reviews/agrienv/entrylevel.htm and http://www.defra.gov.uk/erdp/reviews/agrienv/higherlevel.htm.

Methyl Bromide

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the policy of Her Majesty's Government is on the use of methyl bromide in farm and food production. [166574]

Mr. Morley: Methyl bromide is an ozone depleting substance and its production and supply are controlled under the Montreal Protocol. Its production is due to be phased out in developed countries after 31 December 2004, except for quarantine and pre-shipment purposes.

In addition, under the Protocol and the equivalent EC legislation, methyl bromide can be authorised for "critical uses" after 2004, including use in relation to farming and food production.

The Government's view is that methyl bromide is being phased out by the Protocol and should not be phased back in by excessive critical uses. Every effort should be made therefore to identify possible alternatives to methyl bromide use in relation to farm and food production.

Oil Care Campaign

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the progress of the Oil Care Campaign in halving the number of oil pollution incidents in the United Kingdom by 2005. [166052]

Mr. Morley: The Oil Care Campaign is a voluntary initiative which brings together the oil industry, regulators, local authorities and other stakeholders with an interest in reducing the number and severity of oil pollution incidents affecting inland waters in the UK. It does not have any specific target for the reduction in incidents.

In relation to oil pollution incidents in England and Wales, figures for the last three years provided by the Environment Agency were deposited in the House of Commons Library in January 2004.

Radioactive Waste

David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which *(a)* Government Departments and *(b)* external organisations are responsible for the long-term management of high-level radioactive waste. [159026]

Mr. Morley: High-level waste (HLW) is held and managed by British Nuclear Fuels plc (BNFL) at its Sellafield site and by the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) at its Dounreay site. Responsibility for this HLW is due to be taken over by the new Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) when it comes into being in April 2005. Government sponsorship of both the nuclear industry and the NDA is the responsibility of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). Radioactive waste management policy is the joint responsibility of The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), and the devolved Administrations for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The main nuclear site regulators are the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the environment agencies (the Environment Agency (EA) in England and Wales and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) in Scotland) and the Office for Civil Nuclear Security (OCNS).

Refrigerants

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what quantity of *(a)* chlorofluorocarbons, *(b)* hydrochlorofluorocarbons and *(c)* hydrofluorocarbons have been recovered from equipment other than domestic refrigerators in each year since 1995. [169582]

Mr. Morley: The information requested is not available, as the data on the recovery of these substances do not distinguish the equipment from which they were recovered.

Single Farm Payments

Mr. Curry: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on what basis the single farm payment will be established for farmers who were in the dairy sector prior to the foot and mouth disease outbreak whose flocks were slaughtered because of the outbreak of foot and mouth disease and who restocked with *(a)* dairy cows and *(b)* beef and sheep. [169465]

Alun Michael: Dairy farmers whose flocks were slaughtered because of the outbreak of foot and mouth disease, and who restocked with:

(a) dairy cows will be able to claim entitlements whose initial value will be based on the milk quota available on their holding on 31 March 2005.

(b) beef and sheep before 29 September 2003 will be able to claim entitlements from the National Reserve.

Sustainable Development

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what definition of sustainable development has been agreed for application across Government; and what mechanism is in place to ensure that the term is applied and claimed appropriately. [169856]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 30 April 2004]:* The UK Government's current sustainable development strategy "A better quality of life", launched in May 1999, describes sustainable development as 'ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come'. It also refers to a widely used international definition, from the Brundtland Report of the 1987 World Commission on Environment and Development, of

'development which meets the need of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.

Government publications usually refer to the 'better quality of life' description as given in our 1999 Strategy. Examples would include the departmental sustainable development strategies for the Department of Health, the Department for Trade and Industry and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and HM Treasury's 2002 Spending Review Report.

We are currently consulting, in partnership with the Scottish Executive, the Welsh Assembly Government and Northern Ireland, to develop new sustainable strategy for the UK. As part of this we are reviewing our explanation of what sustainable development means.

Two Tree Island

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list *(a)* the works and *(b)* the cost of works on (i) Canvey Island's sea defences and (ii) Two Tree Island which are envisaged; and if she will make a statement. [170826]

Mr. Morley: Decisions on which projects are promoted and their timing rests with the operating authorities.

(i) Canvey Island's Sea Defences

Defra is not aware of any proposals for works to Canvey Island's tidal defences. The tidal flood defences around the Island are regularly monitored by the Environment Agency.

(ii) Two Tree Island

Southend borough council has recently secured planning permission for coast protection works around the south and northeast sides of the Island. The works are estimated to cost around £1 million and are due to be submitted for Defra grant aid consideration under the Coast Protection Act.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the increased risk of flooding to Canvey Island; and what *(a)* research and *(b)* action she plans to take in the light of the increased assessment of flooding risk. [170827]

Mr. Morley: Decisions on which projects are promoted and their timing rests with the operating authorities.

The Environment Agency has been researching the need for capital renewal of the internal flood defences on Canvey Island and a draft Project Appraisal Report is due to be presented to the Agency's National Review Group during this summer.

Works will include the upgrading of all 12 land-drainage pumping stations on the Island. The works programme will take approx. 3 years and cost up to £6 million.

Since the 1980s the Department has provided guidance to operating authorities to make allowance for climate change in the planning and appraisal of new and replacement flood and coastal defence works. This guidance has been regularly reviewed in the light of the latest research findings and supplementary guidance was most recently issued in 2003. The aim is to take a suitably precautionary approach while not diverting funds unnecessarily from the solution of problems that affect people today. The approach and guidance will be further reviewed for the new Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she has assessed the case for closing beaches in the vicinity of Two Tree Island as a result of the pollution from the old waste dump. [170828]

Mr. Morley: The closure of beaches is a matter for local authorities. Local authorities are advised by the Environment Agency on prevailing water quality levels. The nearest designated bathing beach is at Leigh Bell Wharf which met the EU guideline standards in 2003 and is classed as 'excellent' quality.

Warm Zones

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what funding has been allocated in *(a)* 2004–05, *(b)* 2005–06 and *(c)* in total to Warm Zones. [163648]

Mr. Morley: The Government provided £1 million funding for the pilot programme of five Warm Zones to run from 2001–04.

An independent evaluation of the pilots is being carried out by the Energy Saving Trust on behalf of the Department to assess the effectiveness of Warm Zones.

No additional funding has been allocated to Warm Zones by the Government.

World Oceans Day

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action her Department will be taking to mark World Oceans day on 8 June. [168469]

Mr. Morley: Around the time of World Oceans day Defra plans to publish an updated delivery plan setting out the steps that the Government are taking to achieve the conservation and sustainable management of marine and coastal biodiversity and to promote better oceans governance and partnership initiatives, in line with the commitments made at the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

To help progress this delivery plan the UK, together with EU partners, will be calling for the United Nations to take urgent action to protect vulnerable marine biodiversity in areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction at the forthcoming meeting of the United Nations Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea. World Oceans day coincides with this meeting.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Department Branding

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much his Department spent on branding the Department between 1997–98 and 2003–04, broken down by *(a)* consultancy fees, *(b)* design and orders for new stationery, *(c)* website design and *(d)* other material featuring new logos. [154064]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office logo has not been subject to redesign in 2003–04, but in the previous years you refer to, work was undertaken. The logo was redesigned to ensure the Home Office work was clear to the public and stakeholders.

Costs involved were as follows:

(a) and *(b)* research, project management and design and orders for new stationery—£147,505.06.

(c) website design—£18,024.50.

(d) The logo element of 'other material featuring new logos between 1997–98 and 2003–04' would be covered in individual project/publication/media initiatives and were not funded by or attributed to the corporate logo change initiative.

No costs were written off due to lack of use or destruction of materials featuring previous logos, as the low levels of old stock continued to be used.

Departmental Response Times

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average length of time was

for a substantive response by his Department to *(a)* written questions, *(b)* hon. Members' written correspondence and *(c)* public correspondence in 2003–04. [170529]

Mr. Blunkett: The last published performance figures for the Home Office showed that 37 per cent. of all parliamentary questions and 56 per cent. of Members written correspondence were answered within parliamentary deadlines. I have been very clear this is not acceptable and needs to be substantially improved.

As a result, last year the Department introduced a new correspondence tracking system and in the last few months our performance in meeting the targets for answering Members written correspondence to Ministers increased substantially. In relation to parliamentary questions, we are currently in the process of introducing a new system, the electronic Parliamentary Questions System (ePQS) to better monitor and manage the Department's performance.

In relation to public correspondence, we are currently looking at how to improve the tracking and monitoring of performance across the Department. Figures are not currently available except at disproportionate cost.

Immigration Appeals

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the consequences of delays in dealing with cases of appeals against withdrawal of United Kingdom nationality before the Special Immigration Appeals Commission. [169803]

Mr. Browne: To date only one appeal against withdrawal of United Kingdom nationality has been lodged with the Special Immigration Appeals Commission. The administrative process for such appeals is subject to continuous review to ensure compatibility with both the public interest and the independent appeals process.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 10 May to Question reference 169812, what the reasons are for the delay in making progress with appeals over the exercise of his powers concerning removal of nationality and indefinite leave to remain. [174144]

Mr. Lammy: I have been asked to reply.

The Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC) has one appeal before it in relation to Deprivation of Citizenship proceedings. Such cases involve significant and complex evidence and require due consideration of public funding applications. Importantly, as with any appeal, parties need to be available and prepared to proceed. The timetable for the resolution of cases is necessarily a function of all these factors The administrative processes for appeals against Deprivation of Citizenship proceedings are subject to ongoing review to ensure compatibility with both the public interest and the independence of the judicial process.

TRANSPORT

Railways

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the Answer of 22 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 651W, how many of the Department of Transport's PFI projects listed on the Treasury website met the criteria for special purpose vehicles set out in the Strategic Rail Authority's strategic plan. [171521]

Mr. McNulty: None of the Department for Transport projects listed on the Treasury website falls within the remit of the Strategic Rail Authority. The Highways Agency is responsible for the strategic roads, Vehicle and Operator Services Agency for the MOT privatisation, Transport for London for London Underground and the Docklands Light Rail projects and the relevant local authority for the other light rail, local roads and street lighting PFI projects.

The selection criteria used to assess special purpose vehicles tendering for transport projects varies to take account of the nature of the work, the project size and duration.

The legal, economic, financial and technical information required is set out in the contract advert in the Official Journal of the European Union. The information requested complies with Office of Government Commerce advice, departmental procedures and Treasury guidance on Private Finance Initiative practice.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of the Network Rail Volume Incentive; and if he will make a statement. [174075]

Mr. Darling: The 'Volume Incentive' was first introduced by the Rail Regulator in his Access Charges Review 2000. The SRA set out its views on the continuing effectiveness of a Volume Incentive for Network Rail as part of its response to the Initial Consultation Paper of the Access Charge Review 2003. The SRA's view was that for a number of reasons, the Volume Incentive would no longer be cost effective or appropriate given the changes to the industry since it was first introduced. The Rail Regulator considered this view and the supporting reasons, along with the views of other consultees, in the course of the Access Charge Review 2003. His view was that the Volume Incentive would continue to be an effective way of encouraging Network Rail to make efficient use of a constrained network so that additional traffic could be accommodated. He therefore retained the Volume Incentive, with a number of modifications (including only rewarding Network Rail for growth above a certain threshold level) in the Final Conclusions to the Access Charge Review published in December 2003. This decision is entirely for the Rail Regulator, taking into account his statutory duties as set out in the Railways Act .1993.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will place in the Library a copy of the *(a)* Strategic Rail Authority's submission to the rail regulator in December 2002 that the Network Rail Volume Incentive be removed and *(b)* the Rail Regulators' response. [174076]

Mr. Darling: The documents referred to are available from the Office of the Rail Regulator's website at the following address:

(a) http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/upload/pdf/ir2-sra.pdf

(b) http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/upload/pdf/162.pdf

The Final Conclusions from the Access Charge Review 2003 and other related documents are also available from this website.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 12 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 410W, on railways, what operational performance trajectory was set for the train operating companies between December 2003 and November 2004; and what the current performance is against that target. [174239]

Mr. Darling: The performance trajectory, developed by the National Task Force on behalf of the rail industry, consists of Network Rail's performance forecasts and Train Operating Companies (TOC) performance plans. The trajectory is the industry's own internal performance monitoring process and will be reviewed in October 2004.

TOC performance statistics are published quarterly by the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) in "National Rail Trends", the most recent edition of which was published in March 2004. Copies of "National Rail Trends" are placed in the House of Commons Library and published on the SRA's web site.

Lawrie Quinn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what international models of railway safety he has considered in the context of the Rail Review. [174815]

Mr. McNulty: The rail review is considering several international models of railway safety in the course of its work.

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what criteria his Department is using to evaluate options for reorganising the structure of the railways as part of the Rail Review. [173798]

Mr. McNulty: As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport said in his statement to the House on 19 January2004, the principles for the review are that railways must operate in the public interest, maintain commitment to public and private partnership and maintain commitment to independent economic regulation.

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how he will ensure that rail safety continues to improve following changes arising from the Rail Review. [173799]

Mr. McNulty: The European Railway Safety Directive requires that member states ensure that railway safety is generally maintained and, where reasonably practicable, continuously improved.

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will ensure that the recommendations from Lord Cullen's public inquiry following the Ladbroke Grove rail accident are fully delivered following changes arising from the Rail Review. [173800]

Mr. McNulty: Lord Cullen recommended that the Health and Safety Commission (HSC) should review compliance with his public inquiry recommendations and publish the outcome of such reviews. The safety regulator will be expected to continue to review compliance following the rail review.

Blackpool Tram System

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the regeneration effects of *(a)* proceeding and *(b)* not proceeding with the proposed upgrade of the Blackpool tram system. [173914]

Mr. McNulty: The regeneration impacts of proceeding and not proceeding with the tramway upgrade were assessed in an Economic Impact Report provided by the promoters. The Department has not made its own assessment.

Bristol Airport

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on proposals to expand the capacity of Bristol airport. [175098]

Mr. McNulty: The Air Transport White Paper stated that the main potential for growth in the South West would be at Bristol Airport. We support the Airport's development to around 12 million passengers per annum to include a runway extension and new terminal south of the existing runway, when these are required, having due regard to the environmental impacts that would accompany its expansion.

Bus Users (London)

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the socio-economic breakdown of bus users in London. [174715]

Mr. McNulty: The National Travel Survey provides the information for people aged 16 and over living in households in Great Britain for the period 1998–2000, according to their area of residence.

The table shows the percentage of users in each socio-economic group, both inside and outside London. Note that tourists are not included in this breakdown:

	All persons aged 16 and over		*Bus users*[1]	
Socio-economic group (SEG)	*Inside London*	*Outside London*	*Inside London*	*Outside London*
Professional/managerial	18	14	16	8
Intermediate non-manual	12	9	12	8
Junior non-manual	13	12	13	13
Skilled manual	10	12	8	8
Other manual/other SEGs	11	14	12	17
Retired	21	27	23	30
Other economically inactive	15	12	16	15
All persons	100	100	100	100

[1] Use a local bus more than twice a year (in London this is 72 per cent. of all persons aged 16 and over and outside London it is 43 per cent.).

Car-Sharing

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department has undertaken into the *(a)* growth and *(b)* popularity of formal car-sharing through online systems. [173314]

Mr. McNulty: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 13 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 490W.

Channel Tunnel Rail Link

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much clay will be produced as a result of excavations to build the new Channel Tunnel link station at Stratford; and how it is proposed to dispose of it. [175030]

Mr. McNulty: About 270,000 cubic metres of clay have been excavated to form the station box at Stratford. The clay was deposited on the Stratford Lands, where the surface is being raised by about 6 m for the redevelopment of the lands.

Civil Servants

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many civil servants were employed by communication division in his Department on the last date for which figures are available. [174326]

Mr. McNulty: As at 1 May 2004, the number of staff employed in the Department's Communication Directorate was 73.1 (full time equivalents). This figure breaks down as follows:

	Number
Director	1
Press Officers	15
Publications (print, publishing and external websites)	12
Publicity (campaigns)	10.8
Strategic Communications	8.8
Internal Communications	9.5
Business Management (finance, procurement, human resources, IT, business and secretarial support)	16
Total	73.1

Consultants and Advisers

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies spent on external consultants and advisers in each of the last three years. [172434]

Mr. McNulty: Details of spend on external consultants and advisers by the central Department, agencies and non-departmental public bodies is shown in the following table.

£ million

	2001-02	*2002-03*	*2003-04*
Central Department	[1]—	122.2	58.5
Highways Agency	179.8	157.5	169.7
Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency	3.3	4.0	3.4
Driving Standards Agency	1.2	4.2	4.0
Vehicle and Operator Services Agency	2.8	3.3	3.0
Vehicle Certification Agency	0.1	0.1	0.1
Marine and Coastguard Agency	1.5	1.2	0.8
Strategic Rail Authority	32.0	54.1	53.0
Trinity House Lighthouse Service	0.3	0.5	1.0
The Northern Lighthouse Service	0.1	0.1	0.1
Total	221.1	347.2	293.6

[1] The Department was formed in May 2002. Figures for the central Department are not available for 2001-02 or prior years.

Light Rail

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what assessment he has made of the levels of private sector investment in *(a)* commercial and *(b)* housing property along the lines of light rail routes in each year since 1997; [171947]

(2) what assessment he has made of the effect that light rail systems have had on urban regeneration since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [171948]

Mr. McNulty: The Department makes no annual assessment of the levels of private investment along light rail routes. The Department part funded a programme of research on the regeneration impacts of Sheffield Supertram which concluded in 1997. This showed little effect, however the tram only became fully operational in 1995 and any significant changes would be more gradual.

Rolling Stock Companies

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* annual capital lease charge and *(b)* annual heavy maintenance charge made by rolling stock companies to train operators are for (i) a two carriage class 142 Pacer train, (ii) a two carriage class 143 Pacer train, (iii) a two carriage class 156 Sprinter train, (iv) a two carriage class 150 Sprinter train and (v) a four car class 333 train. [173467]

Mr. McNulty: The rate to be paid for a particular type of rolling stock for use on a particular franchise is a commercial matter between the rolling stock owner and the train operator.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Education Funding

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public money was spent on education in Chorley in each year between 1992 and 1997. [164183]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted according to local education authority areas rather than districts within an area. Chorley is a district of Lancashire Local Education Authority. The information for Lancashire LEA is as follows:

£000

	Total net current expenditure
1992–93	649,469
1993–94	594,252
1994–95	596,785
1995–96	583,921
1996–97	590,313
1997–98	600,316

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from Lancashire LEA's RO1 statement submitted to the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions.
2. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.
3. In 1992–93 Net Current Expenditure after recharges was not collected on RO1. In this year Net Recurrent Expenditure is used and consequently figures for this year may not be strictly comparable with those for future years.
4. Figures are for Lancashire LEA prior to the local government reorganisation in 1998–99.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was spent per pupil in Heywood and Middleton in each of the last seven years. [168580]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than districts within an area. Heywood and Middleton is a district of Rochdale local education authority. The information for Rochdale LEA is as follows:

Net current expenditure per pupil

£

	Pre-Primary Education	*Primary Education*	*Pre-Primary and Primary Education*	*Secondary Education*	*Special Schools*
1996–97	n/a	n/a	1,800	2,605	12,959
1997–98	n/a	n/a	1,841	2,658	13,211
1998–99	n/a	n/a	1,952	2,685	13,276
1999–2000	5,105	2,100	2,161	2,804	13,438
2000–01	12,322	2,315	2,509	3,070	15,180
2001–02	21,017	2,551	2,747	3,381	16,007
2002–03	—	—	2,793	—	3,690

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from Rochdale LEA's Section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. Expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of the Section 52 outturn statement in 1999–2000. 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance.
2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA. Figures are rounded to the nearest £10.
3. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.
4. The NCE per pupil figures for pre-primary and primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the pre-primary sector and maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained nursery and primary schools sector.
5. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.
6. The NCE per pupil figures for special schools relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained special schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained special schools sector.
7. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was spent per pupil in Stalybridge and Hyde in each of the last seven years. [168759]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than districts within an area. Stalybridge and Hyde is a district of Tameside local education authority. The information for Tameside LEA is as follows:

Net current expenditure per pupil

£

	Pre-Primary Education	*Primary Education*	*Pre-Primary and Primary Education*	*Secondary Education*	*Special Schools*
1996–97	n/a	n/a	1,743	2,304	12,097
1997–98	n/a	n/a	1,779	2,449	12,876
1998–99	n/a	n/a	1,929	2,528	13,371
1999–2000	11,672	2,065	2,116	2,579	22,081
2000–01	21,005	2,237	2,334	2,860	24,175
2001–02	25,103	2,690	2,794	3,221	21,455
2002–03	—	2,786	—	3,260	—

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from Tameside LEA's Section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's R01 statement previously. Expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of the Section 52 outturn statement in 1999–2000. 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance.
2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA. Figures are adjusted to 2002–03 prices using the March 2004 GDP deflators.
3. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEAs.
4. The NCE per pupil figures for pre-primary and primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the pre-primary sector and maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained nursery and primary schools sector.
5. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.
6. The NCE per pupil figures for special schools relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained special schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained special schools sector.
7. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Mr. McLoughlin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public money was spent on education in the constituency of West Derbyshire between *(a)* 1992 and 1997, *(b)* 1997 and 2001 and *(c)* 2001 and 2004. [163736]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than districts within an area West Derbyshire is a district of Derbyshire Local Education Authority. The latest information for Derbyshire LEA is contained in the following table. Information on the current year 2004–05 will not be available until the end of 2005.

Net Current Expenditure

	£
1992–93 to 1996–97	1,740,789
1997–98 to 2000–01	1,104,187
2001–02 to 2002–03	728,225

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from Derbyshire LEA's Section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–00 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. Figures up to and including 1996–97 are for Derbyshire LEA prior to local government reorganisation. From 1997–98 onwards Derbyshire LEA was split into Derbyshire and Derby LEAs. 1999–00 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance.
2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA. Figures are rounded to the nearest £10.
3. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.
4. In 1992–93 Net Current Expenditure after recharges was not collected on RO1. In this year Net Recurrent Expenditure is used and consequently figures for this year may not be strictly comparable with those for future years.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was spent per pupil in Birkenhead in each of the last seven years. [166300]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than districts within an area. Birkenhead is a district of Wirral local education authority. The information for Wirral LEA is as follows:

Net current expenditure per pupil

	Pre-primary education	*Primary education*	*Pre-primary and primary education*	*Secondary education*	*Special schools*
1996–97	n/a	n/a	1,830	2,570	12,350
1997–98	n/a	n/a	1,780	2,570	13,350
1998–99	n/a	n/a	2,020	2,690	13,450
1999–2000	20,060	2,120	2,220	2,850	15,100
2000–01	28,700	2,360	2,510	3,060	16,180
2001–02	34,050	2,680	2,850	3,420	18,400
2002–03	—	2,980	—	3,760	—

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from Wirral LEA's section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. Expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of the section 52 outturn statement in 1999–2000. 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance.
2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers. 2002–03 data are subject to change by the LEA. All figures are rounded to the nearest £10.
3. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEAs.
4. The NCE per pupil figures for pre-primary and primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the pre-primary sector and maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained nursery and primary schools sector.
5. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.
6. The NCE per pupil figures for special schools relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained special schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained special schools sector.
7. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was spent per pupil in Wirral, South in each of the last seven years. [166624]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than districts within an area. Wirral, South is a district of Wirral local education authority. The information for Wirral LEA is as follows:

Net current expenditure per pupil

	Pre-primary education	*Primary education*	*Pre-primary and primary education*	*Secondary education*	*Special schools*
1996–97	n/a	n/a	1,830	2,570	12,350
1997–98	n/a	n/a	1,780	2,570	13,350
1998–99	n/a	n/a	2,020	2,690	13,450
1999–2000	20,060	2,120	2,220	2,850	15,100
2000–01	28,700	2,360	2,510	3,060	16,180
2001–02	34,050	2,680	2,850	3,420	18,400
2002–03	—	2,980	—	3,760	—

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from Wirral LEA's section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. Expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of the section 52 outturn statement in 1999–2000. 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance.
2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers. 2002–03 data are subject to change by the LEA. All figures are rounded to the nearest £10.
3. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEAs.
4. The NCE per pupil figures for pre-primary and primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the pre-primary sector and maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained nursery and primary schools sector.
5. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.
6. The NCE per pupil figures for special schools relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained special schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained special schools sector.
7. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public money was spent on education in the constituency of Sittingbourne and Sheppey between *(a)* 1992 and 1997, *(b)* 1997 and 2001 and *(c)* 2001 and 2004. [159487]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than districts within an area. Sittingbourne and Sheppey is a district of Kent local education authority. The latest information available for Kent LEA is as follows.

Net current expenditure

	£000
1992–93 to 1996–97	2,514,790
1997–98 to 2000–01	2,138,194
2001–02 to 2002–03	1,411,520

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from Kent LEA's Section 52 Outturn Statements submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's R01 statement prior to then. 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance. Figures up to and including 1997–98 are for Kent LEA prior to local government re-organisation. From 1998–99 onwards parts of Kent LEA became Rochester and Gillingham LEA.

2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

3. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.

4. In 1992–93 NCE after recharges was not collected on R01. In this year Net Recurrent Expenditure is used and consequently figures for this year may not be strictly comparable with those for future years.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was spent per pupil in Burnley in each of the last seven years. [167917]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than districts within an area. Burnley is a district of Lancashire local education authority. The information for Lancashire LEA is as follows:

Net current expenditure per pupil

£

	Pre-Primary Education	*Primary Education*	*Pre-Primary and Primary Education*	*Secondary Education*	*Special Schools*
1996–97	n/a	n/a	1,805	2,594	15,988
1997–98	n/a	n/a	1,824	2,631	17,315
1998–99	n/a	n/a	2,002	2,701	17,768
1999–00	7,130	2,108	2,173	2,763	18,487
2000–01	11,033	2,326	2,437	2,914	18,768
2001–02	16,391	2,629	2,797	3,230	20,597
2002–03	—	2,898	—	3,399	—

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from Lancashire LEA's Section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. Expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of the Section 52 outturn statement in 1999–2000. 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance. Up to 1997–98 figures are for Lancashire LEA prior to local government reorganisation. From 1998–99 onwards parts of Lancashire LEA became Blackpool and Blackburn LEAs.

2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers. 2002–03 data are subject to change by the LEA. Figures are rounded to the nearest £10.

3. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEAs.

4. The NCE per pupil figures for pre-primary and primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the pre-primary sector and maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained nursery and primary schools sector.

5. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.

6. The NCE per pupil figures for special schools relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained special schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained special schools sector.

7. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was spent per pupil in the Lancashire Local Education Authority in each year since 1997. [165541]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is contained in the following table:

Net Current Expenditure per pupil

	Pre-primary Education	*Primary Education*	*Pre-Primary and Primary Education*	*Secondary Education*	*Special Schools*
1997–98	[1]—	[1]—	1,824	2,631	17,315
1998–99	[1]—	[1]—	2,002	2,701	17,768
1999–2000	7,130	2,108	2,173	2,763	18,487
2000–01	11,030	2,326	2,437	2,914	18,768
2001–02	16,391	2,629	2,797	3,230	20,597
2002–03	—	3,399	—	—	—

[1] Non Applicable

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from Lancashire LEA's section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–00 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. Expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of the Section 52 outturn statement in 1999–00. 1999–00 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance. Up to 1997–98 figures are for Lancashire LEA prior to local government reorganisation. From 1998–99 onwards parts of Lancashire LEA became Blackpool and Blackburn LEAs.

2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of

LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.
3. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEAs.
4. The NCE per pupil figures for pre-primary and primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the pre-primary sector and maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained nursery and primary schools sector.
5. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.
6. The NCE per pupil figures for special schools relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained special schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained special schools sector.

Education Services (Essex)

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teachers were employed in state schools in *(a)* the County of Essex in each year from 1980 to 1997 and *(b)* the County of Essex and the unitary authorities of Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock in each year from 1998 to 2003. [173323]

Mr. Miliband: The information is shown in the following tables. The first table shows the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) regular teachers in maintained schools in Essex LEA in each January between 1980 and 1998[1]. Data for 1987 are not available. The second table shows the number of FTE regular teachers in Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock LEAs after local government re-organisation in April 1998, in each January between 1999 and 2003.

Essex	
1980	13,080
1981	13,040
1982	12,820
1983	12,640
1984	12,440
1985	12,620
1986	12,000
1987	—
1988	12,390
1989	12,190
1990	12,360
1991[2]	12,320
1992	12,390
1993	12,050
1994	11,980
1995	12,040
1996	12,370
1997	12,580
1998	12,560

[1] Sixth form colleges are included up to 1992
[2] Estimated

	Essex	*Southend-on-Sea*	*Thurrock*	*Total*
1999	10,580	1,270	1,060	12,910
2000	10,400	1,380	1,110	12,890
2001	10,520	1,410	1,180	13,100
2002	10,920	1,520	1,210	13,650
2003	10,890	1,560	1,230	13,670

Source:
Annual survey of teachers in service and teacher vacancies.

Essex Schools

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much it cost to educate a pupil in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in Essex in 2003–04. [172462]

Mr. Miliband: The latest date for which this information is available is 2002–03 and is given in the table. The information requested for 2003–04 will not be collected by the Department until October 2004 but I will write to the hon. Member when it is available.

Net Current Expenditure per pupil

	Primary Education	*Secondary Education*
2002–03	2,950	3,600

Notes:
1. The financial data are taken from Essex LEA's Section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers.
3. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.
4. The NCE per pupil figures for primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained primary schools sector.
5. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.
6. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Further Education

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what his projection is of funding for adult learning and skills provision by colleges of further education in rural areas; [175372]

(2) what funding provision is made for further education colleges in rural areas; and if he will make a statement. [175373]

Alan Johnson: The Department allocates funds to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for the provision of education and training in the post-16 learning and skills sector. The Department does not provide a specific budget to the LSC for further education colleges in rural areas. The LSC decides on allocations at individual college and regional levels from the funds allocated to it for learning participation. Information about these allocations is not collected by the Department. This is a matter for the LSC. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to the Honourable Gentleman on this matter. A copy of his reply will be placed in the House Library. The Government have set out its investment plans for 2003–04 to 2005–06 which should enable the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to increase funding for further education significantly.

Pre-schools

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to his answer of 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 705W, on pre-schools, what plans he has to make a degree qualification essential for teaching under-8s; and if he will make a statement. [175173]

Mr. Miliband: All qualified teachers in maintained primary schools or non-maintained special schools will hold a first degree or equivalent qualification. Adults who are not qualified teachers and who do not necessarily have a degree qualification may also teach in such schools in specific circumstances set out in the Education (Specified Work and Registration) (England) Regulations 2003.

School Funding

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much capital money has been allocated to schools in Warrington, North in each year since 1997. [174659]

Mr. Miliband: Since 2001 the majority of capital support has been allocated to schools and local education authorities by formula, and they decide how to invest it in line with their asset management plans. The Department does not, therefore, have complete information about capital investment at constituency level. This should be held at local authority level. Table A sets out the capital support made by the Department to Warrington local education authority (LEA) and its schools since 1998–99, in total and by programme.

Table A: Capital allocations: Warrington local education authority.

All figures in £000

	1998–99	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Assistance with AMPs		27			
Basic L C Vap				49	276
Basic Need	1,189	829	2,389	3,434	2,453
Class Size initiative	347	1,261	282	640	176
Condition				1,040	1,517
Devolved Formula			1,438	1,172	1,786
Energy	62				
Modernisation (Primary)					
Modernisation LEA					
Modernisation LEA					611
Modernisation VA					148
NDS 2	1,083				
NDS 3		1,500			
NDS 4			2,660		
Outside Toilets	56				
School Labs			149	149	
School Security	66	67	67	47	40
Schools Access Initiative	69	100	140	229	298
Secondary Learning Support Units			43	47	58
Seed Challenge			152	167	274
Specialist Schools			100		100
Staff Workspace					60
Supplementary Credit Approvals	193			503	219
Supplementary NDS for VA Schools			116		
Voluntary Aided School Grant	207	438	505	584	630
Total	3,272	4,222	8,041	8,061	8,646

So far Warrington LEA has also been allocated £10.2 million over the two years 2004–05 and 2005–06.

School/College Funding

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to equalise funding between schools and colleges for 16 to 19-year-olds in the Worthing area. [175448]

Alan Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to my hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton, South-West (Rob Marris) on 14 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 623W.

Specialist Schools

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the schools in England that have a specialist status in primary musical education. [175428]

Mr. Miliband: Specialist school status is available for secondary (but not primary) maintained schools in England. Of the 259 secondary schools designated as specialist Arts Colleges, 181 are Performing Arts Colleges, providing an enhanced curriculum in music, dance and drama. Following the launch of the new Music specialism last year, the first two specialist Music Colleges (one of which is a combined Music and Mathematics and Computing College) will become operational in September 2004.

Specialist schools must spend at least a third of their specialist school funding on delivering community development plans. These plans require schools to work in close partnership and to share enhanced facilities and curriculum expertise with a minimum of five other local schools—including feeder primary schools.

In a separate initiative, in 2002, 42 primary schools were included in pilots, with subsequent evaluation by Ofsted, of models to widen opportunities for primary pupils to learn musical instruments. Earlier this year, I announced an extra £1.5 million for music services to help all authorities to develop their own models in this area.

Targeted Capital Fund

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the 23 voluntary-aided projects which were successful in their bids to the 2004–05 Targeted Capital Fund. [174735]

Mr. Miliband: The details are as follows:

£

School Name	LEA	Amount of BID (net cost)	Purpose of Bid
The Nottingham Bluecoat School	Nottingham	1,728,100	New Accommodation
Holy Trinity CE VA Primary School	Calderdale	937,067	Replacement School
Akiva School	Barnet	6,758,100	New VA School
Our Lady of the Visitation RC Primary School	Ealing	1,012,712	Replacement Accommodation
The Avenue School	Brent	3,420,000	New VA School
Hemingfield Ellis CE Primary School	Barnsley	1,602,400	Replacement School
Richard Challoner School	Kingston upon Thames	4,306,781	Remodelling of School
Holy Trinity School	West Sussex	3,000,000	Expansion of School
Montesorri School	Brighton and Hove	3,736,000	New VA School
St. Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School	Cheshire	1,828,444	Replacement School
Four schools—reorganisation	Devon	13,236,880	Reorganisation of four Schools
St. Andrew CE Primary School	Devon	1,812,000	Replacement School
Larmenier and Sacred Heart RC Primary School	Hammersmith and Fulham	5,285,345	Replacement School
St. Gregory's Catholic Primary School	Stoke-on-Trent	1,551,518	Extension to School
Alderman Cogan's School	Kingston upon Hull	1,015,120	Alterations to Existing School
St. Bede's RC School	North Lincolnshire	700,019	Independent Learning Centre
Bethany Junior School	Bournemouth	1,261,171	Remodelling and Improvements
Notre Dame High School	Norfolk	3,984,632	14–19 Excellence Centre
St. George's School	Hertfordshire	4,124,876	Growth in Pupil Numbers
Sacred Heart RC Primary School	Hillingdon	4,993,469	Growth in Pupil Numbers
Ashlands Ecumenical Primary School	North Somerset	2,072,171	Growth in Pupil Numbers
St. George's Primary School	North Somerset	2,072,171	Growth in Pupil Numbers
Holy Trinity Catholic School	Cornwall	2,790,000	Growth in Pupil Numbers

Teacher Training

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what support his Department gives to UK citizens living abroad who would like to return to the UK in order to undertake teacher training. [174992]

Mr. Miliband: Eligibility for support from public funds in respect of Bachelor of Education and Postgraduate Certificate in Education courses in England normally depends on whether or not a person is ordinarily resident in this country or the wider European Economic Area (EEA). Employment-based teacher training schemes, the largest of which is the Graduate Teacher Programme, offer an alternative route to Qualified Teacher Status which allows candidates to be employed in schools as unqualified teachers and paid accordingly while they train. Candidates who are not ordinarily resident in EEA country can take part in these programmes on exactly the same basis as those who are.

Teachers

Mr. Watts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate the Government has made of the likely increase in salary costs of requiring all teachers to work up to the age of 60 years. [174846]

Mr. Miliband: There is no existing or proposed requirement on teachers to work to the age of 60.

Vocational Training

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of the cohort of *(a)* 16, *(b)* 17, *(c)* 18, *(d)* 19, *(e)* 20 and *(f)* 21-year-olds (i) commenced and (ii) completed (A) NVQ level 3 courses and (B) modern apprenticeships in each year since 1992. [172625]

Alan Johnson: The proportions of 16 to 21-year-olds to have commenced either a NVQ level 3 in Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funded further education, an advanced apprenticeship or an apprenticeship in 2001/02 and 2002/03 are shown in the following table.

Commencement rates of 16 to 21-year-olds on NVQ level 3 courses in LSC funded further education and on apprenticeships by programme and age—England: 2001/02 and 2002/03

Percentage

Programme/Age at 31 August	2001/02	2002/03
NVQ 3 in LSC funded FE		
16	0.2	0.1
17	0.6	0.6
18	0.7	0.8
19	0.4	0.5
20	0.3	0.4
21	0.3	0.4
All 16 to 21-year-olds	0.4	0.5
Advanced apprenticeships[1]		
16	1.6	1.4
17	1.3	1.2
18	1.5	1.3
19	1.2	1.1
20	1.0	0.8
21	0.8	0.7
All 16 to 21-year-olds	1.2	1.1

Commencement rates of 16 to 21-year-olds on NVQ level 3 courses in LSC funded further education and on apprenticeships by programme and age—England: 2001/02 and 2002/03

Percentage

Programme/Age at 31 August	*2001/02*	*2002/03*
Apprenticeships[2]		
16	5.3	5.2
17	3.4	3.7
18	2.6	2.8
19	1.8	2.1
20	1.3	1.5
21	1.0	1.1
All 16 to 21-year-olds	2.6	2.8
All apprenticeships		
16	6.9	6.6
17	4.7	4.9
18	4.1	4.1
19	2.9	3.2
20	2.2	2.3
21	1.8	1.9
All 16 to 21-year-olds	3.8	3.8

Sources:
LSC Individualised Learner Record
LSC Individualised Student Record
Office for National Statistics

The proportions of 16 to 21-year-olds to have achieved either an NVQ level 3 qualification in LSC funded further education, or the NVQ component of an apprenticeship are shown in the following table.

Achievements by 16 to 21-year-olds of NVQ level 3 courses in LSC funded further education and of NVQ components of apprenticeships as a proportion of the relevant age cohort by programme and age—England: 2001/02 and 2002/03

Percentage

Programme/Age at 31 August	*2001/02*	*2002/03*[3]
NVQ 3 in LSC funded FE		
16	—	n/a
17	0.3	n/a
18	0.3	n/a
19	0.2	n/a
20	0.1	n/a
21	0.1	n/a
All 16 to 21-year-olds	0.2	n/a
NVQ 3 component of an advanced apprenticeship[1]		
16	—	—
17	0.1	0.1
18	0.5	0.4
19	1.0	1.0
20	0.9	1.0
21	0.6	0.7
All 16 to 21-year-olds	0.5	0.5
NVQ 2 component of an apprenticeship[2]		
16	0.1	0.1
17	1.3	1.3
18	1.4	1.5
19	0.9	1.1
20	0.5	0.7
21	0.4	0.5
All 16 to 21-year-olds	0.7	0.9
NVQ component of all apprenticeships		
16	0.1	0.1
17	1.3	1.4
18	1.8	1.9
19	1.8	2.1
20	1.4	1.6
21	1.0	1.2
All 16 to 21-year-olds	1.2	1.4

'—' = less than 0.05 per cent.
Notes to tables:
[1] Advanced apprenticeships were until recently known as advanced modern apprenticeships.
[2] Apprenticeships were until recently known as foundation modern apprenticeships.
[3] 2002/03 outcomes data for LSC funded further education are not yet available. 2002/03 outcomes data for apprenticeships are provisional.
Sources:
LSC Individualised Learner Record
LSC Individualised Student Record
Office for National Statistics

Please note that direct comparisons should not be made between the proportions in the two tables as individual learners will have their programmes of learning delivered over different years. For example, some of the 17-year-olds to have commenced an NVQ 3 course in 2001/02 will finish as 17-year-olds in 2001/02, others will finish in 2002/03 as 18-year-olds, while others will finish the year after as 19-year-olds.

The percentages in both these tables are produced using post-census population estimates. However we are currently unable to provide a historical series on a comparable population basis. Further information can be found in the Department's Statistical First Release, "Participation in Education, Training and Employment by 16–18 Year Olds in England: 2001 and 2002" available online at: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000426/index.shtml.

Watford Grammar School for Boys

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of students at Watford Grammar School for Boys are selected by aptitude or ability. [175426]

Mr. Miliband: This information is not collected centrally by the Department.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Iraq

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer of 9 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 422W, on Iraq, whether the complete review of missing drugs and supplies has finished; what the findings were; whether new drug supply systems are now fully operational; whether supply accounting and reporting systems are in place; what the new national drug formulary comprises; whether shortages of medicine in Iraq are continuing; when he expects full medical supplies will get through to the Iraqi people; and if he will make a statement. [173385]

Hilary Benn: The World Health Organisation (WHO) recently presented a report to the Iraqi Ministry of Health (IMOH) assessing the national drug and supply system, which is currently being considered. In parallel, the IMOH have also been provided with essential drug policy and quality guidance and support to the assessment of the national drug regulations and registration systems. Plans for strengthening the IMOH National Drug Regulatory Authority have been agreed and guidelines for good storage practices are being prepared. Additional strategies for upgrading the Drug

Information Centre have been finalised and procurement of equipment is under way. A new National Formulary, comprising over 1,000 medicines has been produced and is available from the IMOH.

New procurement and distribution management teams have been set up by the IMOH, replacing the previous system under the corrupt, state-owned Kimadia Company. Procurement of essential medical supplies has been initiated and a delivery is expected in the next few days. Further shipments, including critical medical supplies for the Governorates, are on order.

Significant progress has been made to improve national drugs supplies and systems: The WHO report that stocks of 23 drugs for chronic diseases out of the 32 commonly used, are in sufficient supply to meet patient demand. The IMOH, WHO and the CPA continue to work to further improve both drug supplies and systems in Iraq.

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what aid and assistance his Department is giving to the Iraqi people. [173932]

Hilary Benn: DFID has committed over £278 million for humanitarian and reconstruction assistance to Iraq since March 2003, of which £70 million has been channelled through the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI). DFID has also provided a number of staff, filling a range of posts, to the Iraqi ministries and the Coalition Provincial Authority (CPA).

On 19 February, I published DFID's plans to contribute to the reconstruction of Iraq over the next two years in our interim Country Assistance Plan. It has been placed in the House of Commons Library and can be found on the DFID website: www.dfid.gov.uk

Liberia

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance his Department has *(a)* pledged and *(b)* delivered to assist Liberian refugees to (i) return to and (ii) re-integrate into society in Liberia; and if he will make a statement. [175475]

Hilary Benn: DFID's relief and reconstruction strategy for Liberia, in 2003 and 2004, has concentrated on helping to relieve the humanitarian crisis, provide security, and restore basic services so that both refugees and internally displaced persons can return to their places of origin. Over this period, DFID has committed a total of £10.6 million for these purposes and has so far disbursed £3.6 million for humanitarian programmes, £0.4 million in support of the UN security coordination agency and interim care centres for children, and £2.7 million for rehabilitation of basic services. For 2004, DFID is discussing with various agencies proposals totalling £1.7 million for humanitarian support, and £2.2 million for reactivation of health care, water supplies, and agricultural livelihoods.

In addition, DFID has pledged a total of £6 million to support Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration programmes over 2003–05, of which we have so far disbursed £1 million. These funds are intended to assist the re-integration into their communities of ex-combatants and others affected by war.

Staff with Disabilities

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development for what reasons the Service Delivery Agreement target to have 3.3 per cent. of senior Civil Service posts filled with staff with disabilities has not been met. [174140]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID is an equal opportunities employer. We value diversity. DFID's policy on recruitment is to stimulate and encourage applications from all sections of the community specifically including candidates with disabilities. We word our advertisements accordingly. Final selection, however, is on merit, and the composition of the Senior Civil Service group is a reflection of appointments made on this basis, through open competition or internal promotion.

There are currently 79 members of the Senior Civil Service in DFID, so performance against the target is very sensitive to small changes in the actual number of staff with disabilities in post.

In general, DFID is aware that there are more disabled people in the Department than declare their impairment and is actively pursuing a number of measures to develop a more open culture on disability. However, it will remain the individual's choice to define themselves as disabled or not.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Child Maintenance

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many British citizens avoid paying child maintenance because they have left the country; and how many of these reside in the EU. [166728]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Barry Sheerman, dated 21 May 2004:

In replying to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many British citizens avoid paying child maintenance because they have left the country; and how many of these reside in the EU.

I do not have the information you seek. I can however say at 30 November 2003 there were around 300 cases where further action was suspended because the non-resident parent was living abroad. I am unable to determine how many of those cases reside in the EU.

Child Support

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when the new Child Support Agency formula will be applied to all absent parents, irrespective of the date of claim; and if he will make a statement. [170823]

Mr. Pond: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave him on 18 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 1092W.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his Written Statement of 21 April, *Official Report*, columns 19–21WS on child support, for what reasons some new cases were unable to be progressed on the new system. [171098]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Steve Webb, dated 21 May 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to his Written Statement of 21st April, Official Report, columns 19–21WS on child support, for what reasons some new cases were unable to be progressed on the new system.

Some cases were unable to be progressed on the new system because of problems within the computer service provided to the Child Support Agency by EDS. The Agency is working closely with EDS to remedy those problems and as it does so it will become possible to progress those cases.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his Written Statement of 21 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 19–21WS on the child support scheme, when he estimates that reliable figures on *(a)* compliance and *(b)* throughput will be available. [171099]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Steve Webb, dated 21 May 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to his Written Statement of 21st April, Official Report, columns 19–21WS on the child support scheme, when he estimates that reliable figures on *(a)* compliance and *(b)* throughput will be available.

Whilst EDS have made significant progress in relation to correcting defects within their computer service we are still working through with them how these can be applied retrospectively to provide the type of information you seek. We do not yet have detailed plans for this work and I am therefore unable to provide the estimate requested.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his written statement of 21 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 19–21WS, for what reasons his Department has increased the amount retained from the monthly payments to EDS from 15 per cent. to 15 to 20 per cent. [171288]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Steve Webb, dated 21 May 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to his Written Statement of 21st April, Official Report, columns 19–21WS, for what reasons his Department has increased the amount retained from the monthly payments to EDS from 15 per cent, to 15 to 20 per cent.

In the last quarter the Department has retained between 15% and 20% of the monies that would otherwise be due to EDS. The amount of the retention actually made each month reflects the service levels achieved by EDS in the provision of their contracted service to the Agency.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his Oral Statement of 11 February 2004 to the Work and Pensions Select Committee on the Child Support Agency reforms, when the IT recovery programme *(a)* began and *(b)* will be completed; and if he will make a statement. [169399]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Steve Webb, dated 21 May 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to his Oral Statement of 11th February, to the Work and Pensions Select Committee on the Child Support Agency reforms, when the IT recovery programme *(a)* began and *(b)* will be completed; and if he will make a statement.

Since November 2003 we have been involved with EDS to agree the scope, design and development schedule for their programme to remedy issues associated with their provision of a computer service to support the Child Support Reform programme. This has led to enhancements to the main system in January and March and to the work management and telephony system (again in January and March). They have currently planned a further major software release in June. We are still discussing the final content and delivery timetable of subsequent enhancements.

CABINET OFFICE

Obesity Initiative

Jeff Ennis: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office for what reason the Government discounts to private health club membership for firemen, nurses, police and ambulance workers as part of its initiative to cut obesity have not been extended to all categories of Civil Servants. [173321]

Mr. Alexander: The Government are committed to looking after the occupational health of Civil Servants. Having pro-active occupational health policies not only benefits employees but can also assist the organisation by helping to reduce levels of sickness absence.

As part of programmes to raise awareness of health issues, Government Departments and agencies are free to negotiate membership discounts on behalf of their staff with private health club providers, or provide their own fitness facilities.

DEFENCE

Aircraft Carrier Programme

Mr. Sarwar: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the progress of the new aircraft carrier programme. [173703]

Mr. Ingram: The Future Carrier (CVF) programme remains in the Assessment Phase. Ministers are currently considering proposals on the overall CVF programme, the alliance strategy and on when to proceed to the Demonstration and Manufacture phases. We expect to make an announcement when these deliberations are complete.

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects to make an announcement concerning the Future Carrier Programme, the Alliance Strategy and the timetable for the demonstration and manufacture phases; and if he will make a statement. [173704]

Mr. Ingram: Ministers are currently considering proposals on the overall CVF programme, the alliance strategy and on when to proceed to the Demonstration and Manufacture phases. We expect to make an announcement when these deliberations are complete.

AWE Aldermaston

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department's policy in respect of the proposal to build a high-powered laser facility at AWE Aldermaston has changed since 5 July 1999. [173861]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence is currently considering a new proposal for a laser facility at AWE to replace the existing HELEN laser. In 2001, because of time and cost overruns on the United States National Ignition Facility, it was decided not to continue with plans, announced on 5 July 1999, *Official Report*, column 341W, to build a United Kingdom target chamber attached to that facility.

Eurofighter

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will promote the benefit of Eurofighter to the Singapore Government. [173771]

Mr. Ingram: This Government are actively involved in promoting Eurofighter Typhoon to the Government of Singapore through the work of the Defence Export Services Organisation. The aircraft has been included on the shortlist to be evaluated for the Singaporean next Fighter Replacement Programme, and a decision is expected early in 2005.

International Committee of the Red Cross

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether, when the administration of Camp Bucca was handed back to the British Armed Forces, they began to investigate the allegations of ill-treatment detailed to the International Committee of the Red Cross by detainees. [173455]

Mr. Hoon: No. The United Kingdom took over the running of Camp Bucca from the United States on 25 September 2003, and continued to run the facility until the opening of the Divisional Temporary Detention Facility at Shaibah on 15 December 2003.

The two incidents concerning prisoners at Camp Bucca, detailed in the ICRC's report on the Treatment by the Coalition Forces of Prisoners of War and other Protected Persons by the Geneva Conventions in Iraq during Arrest, internment and Interrogations, both allegedly occurred while the facility was run by the US. These are matters for the US.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the death mentioned at paragraph 44 of the International Committee of the Red Cross Report on the Treatment by the Coalition Forces of Prisoners of War and other protected persons in Iraq said to have occurred on 22 September 2003 was the result of actions by British armed forces. [173020]

Mr. Hoon *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* The United Kingdom took over the running of Camp Bucca from the United States on 25 September 2003. The incident referred to in Paragraph 45 of the ICRC Report on the Treatment by the Coalition Forces of Prisoners of War and other Protected Persons by the Geneva Conventions in Iraq during Arrest, Internment and Interrogations, occurred before the UK took over the facility, therefore was not the result of action by British Armed Forces.

Investigation Techniques

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assistance has been provided by the British Special Air Services to the United States military forces in investigation techniques of military personnel since 1984. [175139]

Mr. Ingram: I am withholding details under Exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

IT Outsourcing

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what the schedule is for the plan to outsource IT support and provision across his Department; [168293]

(2) what the projected budget is for the *(a)* outsourced support and provision of IT services for his Department and *(b)* cost of terminating existing contracts; [168291]

(3) what weighting will be given to the previous track records in other areas of the civil and public sector of the consortia that are bidding for the support and provision of IT services in his Department; [168290]

(4) what his contingency plan is for the possibility that an outside contractor wins the contract for the support and provision of IT in his Department and then fails during the term of that contract. [168289]

Mr. Ingram: These questions have been answered with respect to the Defence Information Infrastructure (DII) programme. The Ministry of Defence is in negotiations with two potential commercial Delivery

Partners (DP) for the provision of Information Systems services. The DII programme is currently in the Assessment Phase of the Smart Procurement cycle.

In terms of cost, the MOD currently spends over £450 million per annum on its information infrastructure. It is anticipated that the DII Public/ Private Partnership contract will cost in the region of £4 billion over 10 years.

Track record is one of a number of factors included in the evaluation of bids. The Department's Supplier Relations Group has conducted research of bidding consortium members' performance both in Defence and across Government. In addition, the project has taken up references, by telephone and through visits, from existing customers of the key companies in the bidding consortia. Further reference visits will be conducted during the final phase of the procurement, targeting customers in receipt of a similar volume and range of services.

10 major legacy contracts for IT infrastructure have been identified and these will be subsumed within, or superseded by, the DII contract. The majority of these contracts are due to expire naturally over the next 18 months. An options appraisal has been conducted for each contract and an appropriate scenario agreed for each during subsequent mitigation planning. Where the risks, liabilities or known termination charges are unacceptably high, the preferred option is to allow a contract to run to expiry and then assimilate the activity within DII. Any contracts that currently lie beyond the next three years, which in the main are PFI contracts, will be subsumed on expiry. Residual liabilities will be assessed more fully following negotiations with bidders in the later stages of procurement but generally we would expect to be in no worse a position than now and would seek to be in a better position through negotiation.

Support to deployed operations will continue to be supplied by Service personnel. For all other elements of IT infrastructure provision and support the MOD will mitigate the risk of supplier failure by contracting with a consortium which will provide the services through a range of service providers. This will ensure that in the event that one member of the consortium fails, there is capacity available for another consortium member to pick up the service provision. In addition, the MOD will retain rights to step in and use its own staff or other third party contractors to remedy major service failures. Ultimately, the MOD will have rights to terminate the contract for material breaches in performance, with options to take services back in-house or contract with another commercial provider for their delivery.

King's Regiment

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the postings were of the 1st Battalion, The King's Regiment for the last two years; and what postings are planned in the next year. [174740]

Mr. Ingram: 1st Battalion, The King's Regiment has been based at Catterick since March 2001. The Regiment deployed to Iraq from June to October 2003. One Company has since deployed to Kosovo, where they remain. During the period the unit has exercised in Canada (in the summer of 2002) and was involved in Operation Fresco (towards the end of 2002 and the start of 2003).

It is currently planned that a Company from the unit will deploy to the Falkland Islands later this year. The remainder of the unit is scheduled to undertake a number of routine tasks in support of the training of other units.

Missiles

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what armaments are to be fitted to the Future Surface Combatant. [171862]

Mr. Ingram: The Future Surface Combatant is currently in its concept stage. As such, no decisions have yet been taken on specific armaments. However, it is envisaged that its roles will include Anti-Surface Warfare, Anti-Submarine Warfare, Anti-Air Warfare and Land Attack, and the ships will be equipped accordingly.

Overseas Bribery

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many allegations of overseas bribery involving UK companies his Department has received from the US Administration since February 1999; on what dates these allegations were received; and what action his Department took on each allegation. [151401]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my right hon. Friend the Minister for Europe on 3 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 844W.

Procurement

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library a copy of the long-term costings for the equipment programme. [172741]

Mr. Ingram: The detailed financial data and planning assumptions about the proposed content and timing of the future equipment programme form part of internal advice to Ministers on the overall affordability of the defence programme and of individual projects at the time they come forward for approval. This information therefore anticipates decisions still to be taken by Ministers. In parts it also contains information which is commercially sensitive. I am therefore withholding such information under Exemptions 2 and 13 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Information is, however, routinely made available on a range of major equipment projects, which together form the substantial part of the Department's forward equipment programme, for example in support of the PAC's annual Major Projects Report and the HCDC's annual inquiry into defence procurement. This detail is set in broader context by the publication every two years of the Department's overarching Defence Investment Strategy.

Refuelling Tanker Aircraft

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the Government plan to work jointly with the French Government in the CVF programme; and if he will make a statement. [170352]

Mr. Ingram: We are continuing to explore opportunities with the French for potential Carrier co-operation. We believe there could be potential political, military and economic benefits to be gained through such co-operation, but we must ensure that the United Kingdom's CVF programme is not disrupted.

Type 45 Destroyer

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on progress on the Type 45 destroyer programme. [174251]

Mr. Ingram: The Type 45 will be the biggest and most capable class of air defence destroyers ever built for the Royal Navy, and will be equipped to carry out a range of tasks. Six ships are on order with the prime contractor BAE Systems, providing stability for the shipbuilding work force on the Clyde, and at the new VT facility at Portsmouth, for the remainder of the decade. The programme is in full production against a mature design, a first for a UK warship project at this stage of its development.

UN Operations

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library transcripts of the media interviews he gave on 10 May 2004 on the situation in Iraq and investigations into alleged abuse of detainees in British custody in Iraq. [173344]

Mr. Hoon: The Ministry of Defence does not routinely hold full transcripts of interviews given by Ministers on radio or television programmes.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many vehicles have been transported to Iraq for use by British armed forces, broken down by type. [173860]

Mr. Ingram: This information would require extensive manual retrieval and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what length of deployment UK military personnel are required to serve in Iraq. [174353]

Mr. Ingram: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave on 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 11W, to the hon. Member for Romford (Mr. Rosindell).

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many of each of the *(a)* Blu-97B, *(b)* 20 mm Phalanx Sea-to-Air, *(c)* 25 mm M791, *(d)* 30 mm PGU-14/B, *(e)* 120 mm MV Charm, *(f)* Tow 2 A/B A/tank, *(g)* AGM-65 G Maverick, *(h)* Hellfire II/Brimstone, *(i)* AGM-84 SLAM-ER, *(j)* AGM-154C JSOW, *(k)* AGM-158 JASSM, *(l)* BGM-109 Tactical Tomahawk, *(m)* Storm Shadow/Scalper, *(n)* GBU-15, *(o)* GBU-24, *(p)* GBU-27, *(q)* GBU-28B/B, *(r)* GBU-31JDAM, *(s)* GBU-37 B/B, *(t)* GBU-118/B and *(u)* SSB weapon types were used in Iraq; and which were used against targets in urban areas. [174375]

Mr. Ingram: The numbers of each weapon type used by British forces during Op. Telic are as follows:

Weapon type	*Total used*
20 mm Phalanx	0
120 mm CHARM	850
TOW (I and FI variants)	83
AGM-65 G Maverick	38
Storm Shadow	27
GBU-27	9

In respect to the numbers of *(l)* BGM-109 Tactical Tomahawk, and; in relation to the breakdown of numbers used against urban targets, I am withholding this information in accordance with Exemption 1a of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information which relates to defence, security and international relations.

With the exception of the Tactical Tomahawk, those weapon types included in the question but not listed in the table above are not in UK service.

Vaccination

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) when the practice of informed consent for the administering of vaccines became standard practice; [174191]

(2) pursuant to the letter from the Under-Secretary of State of 1 December 2003, under what guidelines vaccines were administered that did not have a product licence at that time. [174197]

Mr. Caplin: We are currently assembling the information but it is taking time. I will therefore write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

HEALTH

Chronic Disease

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what expenditure has been allocated by his Department to projects to improve chronic disease management over the next three years. [171233]

Mr. Hutton: The management of chronic conditions and the provision of treatment and support to people with such conditions consume substantial national health service resources within primary care trusts' existing allocations. Our recently announced initiative, improving chronic disease management, is intended to make better use of those resources and offer better care to people with chronic conditions. The Department of Health has, however, allocated a total of £5 million in funding to nine primary care trusts participating in the Evercare pilot scheme to test potential ways in which these improvements might be achieved.

Clinical Advisers (IT Forum)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the reasons are for the disbandment of the NHS IT forum for clinicians; and if he will make a statement. [173093]

Mr. Hutton: The national health service's national programme for information technology is currently considering options to strengthen the arrangements for providing advice from clinicians and patients' representatives to inform its work. Members of the National Clinical Advisory Board are fully involved in discussions about its future role. The National Clinical Advisory Board has not been disbanded.

Dental Treatment

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists working within the London borough of Wandsworth provide national health service dental treatment within their practice; and if he will make a statement. [173077]

Mr. Hutton: Data for number of dentists are not collected by London borough area. The number of national health service dentists in Wandsworth Primary Care Trust (PCT) at 30 September 2003 is shown in the table.

National health service: Number of dentists in Wandsworth PCT area—30 September 2003

Primary care trust	*Wandsworth PCT*
General dental service (GDS)	121
Community dental service (CDS)	27
Salaried	4
Total	152

Dentists can work in more than one PCT area. GDS dentists numbers are for those whose main dental work is in the Wandsworth PCT area. Therefore, dentists who do some work in this area but more in another PCT have not been included.

Dentists in the GDS include principals, assistants and vocational dental practitioners. These figures are on a headcount basis rather than whole-time equivalent basis and therefore take no account of part-time working.

Dentists

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of adults in *(a)* Bolton, *(b)* Greater Manchester and *(c)* England were registered with an NHS dentist in each of the last seven years. [172598]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information available is for general dental service (GDS) dentist registration rates for adults in the Wigan and Bolton Health Authority at 30 September 1997 to 2001, and for Bolton Primary Care Trust (PCT), which is part of the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority (SHA) for 30 September 2002 and 30 September 2003. Figures for the Greater Manchester SHA area are also shown.

Registrations cover patients who have been to a general dental service dentist within the past 15 months. These will exclude patients who choose to attend occasionally who have not been to a dentist during that period. Registrations are included in the area of the dentist. Patients may choose to have their dental services in a different PCT area from the one in which they live. The registration period was changed for new registrations and registrations extending from September 1996. Previously the period for adults was 24 months while children's registration lapsed at the end of the following calendar year. This caused registration numbers to fall between November 1997 and August 1998.

National health service dental services are also provided by the community dental service, personal dental service, the salaried service of the GDS and hospital dental service. These services do not require the patient to be registered with a dentist before treatment.

Adult dental registrations as a percentage of the population at 30 September for each year

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Wigan and Bolton HA	[1]59.6	54.0	52.0	51.4	51.0	n/a	n/a
Bolton PCT	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	45.6	45.7
Greater Manchester SHA area	[1]60.3	53.9	52.2	52.3	51.9	50.6	49.7
England	51.0	43.8	43.3	43.4	43.4	44.2	44.0

n/a = not available.
[1] Registration figures are not on the same basis as those for later years because of the change in registration period.

Patients wishing to register with a NHS dentist can obtain details of dentists accepting new patients in their area by accessing www.nhs.uk, contacting NHS Direct or contacting their local PCT. Currently 93 per cent. of callers to NHS Direct are being directed to sources of NHS dental treatment within locally agreed distance standards.

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists in *(a)* Bolton, *(b)* Greater Manchester and *(c)* England treated NHS patients in the past seven years; and how many treated only private patients in each year. [172621]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table shows the number of dentists in the general, personal, community, and hospital dental services.

The figures given are for 30 September for each year. Before 2002 Bolton was part of the Wigan and Bolton Health Authority. In 2002 health authorities (HAs) were replaced by primary care trusts (PCTs).

Figures for the number of dentists who treat private patients only are not available. Few dentists are purely private. The Office of Fair Trading report "The private dentistry market" in the UK stated that only 210 practices are totally private in the United Kingdom out of 11,000 practices in total.

Figures are also given for England.

Number of dentists at 30 September of each year

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Wigan and Bolton HA	205	210	211	219	207	n/a	n/a
Bolton PCT	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	85	84
Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority area	1,115	1,127	1,162	1,155	1,150	1,161	1,203
England	20,483	21,041	21,556	21,902	22,438	23,051	23,490

n/a = not available

Dialysis

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the *(a)* average and *(b)* maximum waiting time for vascular access surgery for dialysis patients for (i) England, (ii) each region and (iii) each strategic health authority in each year since 1996. [159780]

Mr. Hutton: Information on waiting times for vascular access surgery is not centrally available. Waiting times for consultant led in-patient elective admissions and consultant led first out-patient appointments following general practitioner referral are collected on the consultant's main specialty not by procedure.

Diets

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what evaluation he has made of studies into long-term calorific restriction diets and their effectiveness in reducing the risk of *(a)* cancer, *(b)* coronary heart disease, *(c)* diabetes and *(d)* strokes. [169236]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department has not specifically evaluated the long-term effects of calorie restricted diets, but animal research has consistently shown that calorie restriction can increase lifespan by about 30 per cent. and protect against cancer. The long-term effect of calorie restriction in humans has yet to be established.

Obesity increases the risk of developing coronary heart disease, diabetes, some cancers and hypertension. Evidence indicates that maintaining a healthy weight is a key element in the prevention of these conditions.

Food Standards Agency

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* Parliamentary Questions, *(b)* adjournment debates and *(c)* urgent Questions on the work of the Food Standards Agency (FSA) the Department has answered since it was established; and if he will make a statement on the accountability of the FSA to Parliament. [171860]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* Ministers have answered 1,281 Parliamentary Questions, two adjournment debates and no urgent questions on the work of the Food Standards Agency (FSA) since it was established. There has been one Opposition Day debate, eight European Scrutiny Debates in European Standing Committee C, one debate on a prayer against a Statutory Instrument in the House of Commons and one in the House of Lords, seven Select Committees where both oral and written evidence was provided and six Select Committees where written memoranda only were provided. FSA policy areas have not been debated in Westminster Hall. Health Ministers have not taken Primary Legislation through Parliament on behalf of FSA.

The FSA is a United Kingdom non-Ministerial department established by the Food Standards Act 1999. It is accountable to the Westminster Parliament through the Secretary of State for Health and to the administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland through the relevant Health Ministers. Under the 1999 Act, the FSA's expenditure is paid out of money provided by Parliament and the administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Its Annual Report and Accounts is laid before the Westminster Parliament, the Scottish Parliament, the National Assembly for Wales and the Northern Ireland Assembly. Its Chief Executive is the FSA Principal Accounting Officer.

Correspondence to Health Ministers from hon. and right hon. Members about issues for which the FSA is responsible normally receives a reply from the relevant Minister. The Chairman and Chief Executive of FSA reply to correspondence addressed directly to them.

The Meat Hygiene Service (MHS) is an executive agency of the FSA. It is responsible for enforcement of meat hygiene and BSE-related legislation in licensed meat plants in Great Britain. It also carries out certain functions on behalf of the Environment and Rural Affairs Departments.

Health Service

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of women in Bootle with suspected breast cancer saw a specialist within two weeks in each of the last five years. [171481]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected on a constituency basis. The information in the table relates to national health service organisations serving the Bootle constituency.

Waiting times for patients referred urgently by their GP with suspected breast cancer to 1st outpatient appointment: NHS Trusts in Crosby

	Quarter	NHS Trust	Percentage of patients seen in two weeks	Total patients seen	Patients seen in two weeks
1999–2000	1	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	76.2	101	77
		Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	80.4	97	78
1999–2000	2	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	88.2	102	90
		Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	166	166
1999–2000	3	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	95.0	120	114
		Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	99.5	210	209
1999–2000	4	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	118	118
		Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	99.5	209	208
2000–01	1	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	98.0	102	100
		Royal Liverpool Children's NHS Trust	92.6	190	176
2000–01	2	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	155	155
		Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	295	295
2000–01	3	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	155	155
		Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	270	270
2000–01	4	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	143	143
		Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	96.8	250	242
2001–02	1	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	99.4	157	156
		Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	98.2	276	271
2001–02	2	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	175	175
		Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	92.2	258	238
2001–02	3	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	225	225
		Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	84.7	320	271
2001–02	4	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	198	198
		Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	98.4	319	314
2002–03	1	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	234	234
		Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	99.0	307	304
2002–03	2	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	99.1	223	221
		Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	99.6	272	271
2002–03	3	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	99.6	255	254
		Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	96.7	391	378
2002–03	4	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	229	229
		Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	98.9	285	282
2003–04	1	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	221	221
		Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	99.4	320	318

Waiting times for patients referred urgently by their GP with suspected breast cancer to 1st outpatient appointment: NHS Trusts in Crosby

	Quarter	NHS Trust	Percentage of patients seen in two weeks	Total patients seen	Patients seen in two weeks
2003–04	2	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	265	265
		Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	99.7	373	372
2003–04	3	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	271	271
		Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	374	374

Source:
DH form QMCW.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the levels of elective admission to the NHS in South Ribble in the past five years. [171269]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Count of in-year elective (waiting time, booked, planned) admissions—PCT of responsibility5F5 Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust—NHS Hospitals, England 1998–99 to 2002–03. Excluding regular attenders.

PCT of responsibility	5F2 Chorley and South Ribble
1998–99	30,440
1999–2000	32,827
2000–01	34,386
2001–02	24,687
2002–03	32,671

Notes:

1. An in-year admission is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one health care provider, excluding admissions beginning before 1 April at the start of the data year. Periods of care on-going at the end of the data year (unfinished admission episodes) are included. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

2. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).

3. PCT and strategic health authority (SHA) data was added to historic data-years in the HES database using 2002–03 boundaries, as a one-off exercise in 2004. The quality of the data on PCT of Treatment and SHA of Treatment is poor in 1996–97, 1997–98 and 1998–99, with over a third of all finished episodes having missing values in these years. Data quality of PCT of general practitioner practice and SHA of GP practice in 1997–98 and 1998–99 is also poor, with a high proportion missing values where practices changed or ceased to exist. There is less change in completeness of the residence-based fields over time, where the majority of unknown values are due to missing postcodes on birth episodes. Users of time series analysis including these years need to be aware of these issues in their interpretation of the data.

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many rapid access chest pain clinics there are in Workington constituency. [170713]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There are no rapid access chest pain clinics based in Workington. However, there is a clinic in Whitehaven.

Health Tourism

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment his Department has made of the scale of health tourism; and if he will make a statement. [160665]

Mr. Hutton: The national health service has never been required to provide statistics on the number of overseas visitors treated under the provisions of the National Health Service (Charges to Overseas Visitors) Regulations 1989. It is therefore not possible to give a definitive assessment of the scale of this matter. Nevertheless, NHS staff operating the charging regime have told us that there are significant issues in some areas, which we are taking action to deal with. We are taking forward a study of 12 NHS trusts across England, the results of which will, over time, help to give us a better understanding of the level of inappropriate use of the NHS by overseas visitors.

In addition, on 14 May I launched a public consultation on proposals to exclude overseas visitors from eligibility for free NHS primary medical services. We are also commissioning a study of the use of these services by overseas visitors which will inform our consideration of the responses to the consultation.

Heart Bypass Operations

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many heart bypass operations there were per million population in *(a)* England and *(b)* each strategic health authority in each year since 1997. [172700]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Heart bypass operations have increased in number over the past six years. However, angioplasty is increasingly being used to treat patients who would have undergone bypass surgery in the past and the procedures performed in national health service hospitals in England have increased from 17,291 in 1997–98 to 34,986 in 2002–03.

All operations (ICD-10 K40-K46) Coronary Artery Bypass Grafts (CABGs). Count of Finished Consultant Episodes by Strategic Health Authority (SHA) of Residence. NHS Hospitals, England 1997–98 to 2002–03

SHA of Residence		1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Q01	Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire HA	976	1,148	1,111	1,015	1,040	1,134
Q02	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire HA	928	728	624	721	849	728
Q03	Essex HA	475	600	552	752	580	638
Q04	North West London HA	940	921	852	929	824	852
Q05	North Central London HA	397	415	410	357	417	405
Q06	North East London HA	496	575	528	698	616	591
Q07	South East London HA	586	620	506	460	500	517
Q08	South West London HA	447	446	476	501	593	566
Q09	Northumberland, Tyne and Wear HA	844	867	825	837	912	772
Q10	County Durham and Tees Valley HA	842	875	732	751	650	772
Q11	North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire HA	417	874	868	878	844	1,070
Q12	West Yorkshire HA	975	1,108	916	977	1,097	998
Q13	Cumbria and Lancashire HA	1,137	1,158	1,045	1,179	1,232	1,437
Q14	Greater Manchester HA	1,050	1,160	1,185	1,301	1,395	1,515
Q15	Cheshire and Merseyside HA	996	1,018	1,084	1,104	1,137	1,421
Q16	Thames Valley HA	641	801	819	793	916	931
Q17	Hampshire and Isle of Wight HA	623	752	749	947	852	769
Q18	Kent and Medway HA	702	738	702	674	739	707
Q19	Surrey and Sussex HA	1,057	974	1,211	1,194	1,191	1,141
Q20	Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire HA	829	1,012	1,117	1,048	1,073	940
Q21	South West Peninsula HA	660	795	941	987	1,061	918
Q22	Dorset and Somerset HA	586	656	592	568	502	494
Q23	South Yorkshire HA	518	523	630	632	639	769
Q24	Trent HA	652	1,044	1,039	1,088	1,025	1,124
Q25	Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland HA	626	690	625	560	615	588
Q26	Shropshire and Staffordshire HA	585	633	645	801	736	825
Q27	Birmingham and The Black Country HA	1,153	1,095	1,030	1,132	983	1,226
Q28	Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire HA	669	717	682	716	643	686
U	England Not Otherwise Specified	—	2	—	4	2	6
	England	20,807	22,945	22,496	23,604	23,663	24,540

Notes:
1. A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
2. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (ie the data are ungrossed).
3. All operations count of episodes—these figures represent a count of all FCE's where the procedure was mentioned in any of the 12 (four prior to 2002–03) operation fields in a HES record. A record is only included once in each count, even if an operation is mentioned in more than one operation field of the record. Population figures are not available so only operation counts can be provided.
4. Strategic Health Authority (SHA) Data Quality—SHA data were added to historic data-years in the HES database using 2002–03 boundaries, as a one-off exercise in 2004. The quality of the data on SHA of treatment is poor in 1998–99, with over a third of all finished episodes having missing values in these years. Users of time series analysis including 1998–99 need to be aware of these issues in their interpretation of the data.

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Hepatitis C

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects to finalise compensation arrangements for those who contracted hepatitis C from blood transfusions. [173232]

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a further statement on the payment of compensation to patients who were infected with hepatitis C as a result of NHS treatment. [173377]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Work is progressing to finalise the arrangements, to begin making ex-gratia payments. The company that will disburse payments, the Skipton Fund, was incorporated on 25 March. The four United Kingdom health departments expect the Skipton Fund to be operational shortly.

Medical Negligence

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what code of practice is in place to prevent conflicts of interest concerning solicitors whose practices undertake medical negligence cases who are a *(a)* board member and *(b)* chairman of a health trust. [173308]

Mr. Hutton: The codes of conduct and code accountability for national health service boards require that all board members should declare any conflict of interest that arises in the course of conducting NHS business. The codes also requires that board members should declare any business interests in the field of health and social care which should be formally recorded in the minutes of the board and entered into a register which is available to the public. When a conflict of interest is established, the board member involved is also required to withdraw from any related board discussion and not play any part in the relevant discussion or decision. All NHS board members are required on appointment to sign an undertaking that they will comply with the provisions of the codes. A copy of the codes is available in the Library.

NHS Information Technology

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* clinical and *(b)* non-clinical NHS staff had access to e-mail and web browsing by (i) March 2003 and (ii) March 2004. [R] [171825]

Mr. Hutton: Numbers of national health service staff with email and web browsing access are shown in the table.

	March 2003	*March 2004*
Clinical staff	715,888	874,813
Total NHS staff	1,022,488	1,048,485

NHS Staff (Wirral, South)

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the levels of elective admissions to the NHS in Wirral South in the past five years. [172690]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer my hon. Friend to the response I gave on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 162–63W.

Nurse Training

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many whole-time equivalent *(a)* health visitors, *(b)* school nurses, *(c)* district nurses and *(d)* community psychiatric nurses were in training in each region in September of each year since 1997, broken down by (i) gender and (ii) ethnic origin. [172707]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of whole-time equivalent health visitors, school nurses, district nurses and community psychiatric nurses in training in each national health service region as constituted until 31 March 1998 is shown in Table 1, for each national health service region as constituted between 1 April 1998 and 31 March 2001 is shown in Table 2, and for each Government office region between 1 April 2001 and 31 March 2002 is shown in Table 3.

Information on the gender and ethnic origin of health visitors, school nurses, district nurses and community psychiatric nurses, in training is not available.

Table 1: Student populations by regional office area, 1997–98

Whole-time equivalents

	School nurses	*District nurses*	*Health visitors*	*Community psychiatric nurses*
England	128	603	623	333
Northern and Yorkshire	35	120	115	51
Trent	—	42	52	—
Anglia and Oxford	8	75	73	71
North Thames	16	76	84	65
South Thames	34	119	117	73
South and West	—	57	61	—
West Midlands	35	62	53	43
North West	—	53	69	31

Source:

Finance and Workforce Information Returns.

Table 2: Student populations by regional office area

Whole-time equivalents

	School nurses	*District nurses*	*Health visitors*	*Community psychiatric nurses*
1998–99				
England	119	542	580	250
Northern and Yorkshire	31	103	129	13
Trent	7	50	55	3
West Midlands	19	62	52	40
North West	14	64	76	37
Eastern	5	38	38	26
London	24	93	101	55
South East	19	96	89	64
South West	1	36	42	13
1999–2000				
England	137	572	598	252
Northern and Yorkshire	27	127	142	38
Trent	9	43	53	3
West Midlands	18	67	52	34
North West	23	71	84	30
Eastern	10	46	53	38
London	24	101	99	43
South East	20	89	81	51
South West	7	28	34	16
2000–01				
England	162	560	710	207
Northern and Yorkshire	18	80	190	6
Trent	14	49	59	—
West Midlands	20	67	60	34
North West	23	71	84	30
Eastern	18	53	68	29
London	28	103	105	67
South East	21	96	101	34
South West	20	42	44	7

Source:

Finance and Workforce Information Returns.

Table 3: Student populations by Government regional office area, 2001–02

Whole-time equivalents

	School nurses	*District nurses*	*Health visitors*	*Community psychiatric nurses*
England	147	520	622	160
North East	10	61	69	6
North West	31	84	96	21
Yorkshire and the Humber	25	102	99	—
East Midlands	6	—	61	—
West Midlands	24	68	64	41
East of England	4	14	18	12
London	28	100	113	57
South East	20	92	104	24
South West	—	—	—	—

Source:

Finance and Workforce Information Returns.

Statins (Warrington, North)

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in Warrington North are being treated with statins. [172846]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected on a constituency basis and neither is the number of people currently being prescribed statins. However, the number of statins prescribed for Warrington Primary Care Trust is shown in the table.

Total number of statins prescribed by general practitioner practices in the community, in England, for the year beginning January 2003.

Region/type of region	Prescription items	Prescription items per 1,000 population
Warrington (PCT)	99,462	522
Cheshire and Merseyside (SHA)	1,363,439	582
England Total[1]	21,606,624	441

[1] The England total includes a small number of prescription items, prescribed by GPs, that the PPA have been unable to allocate to a PCT or SHA.

Notes:

1. The information, by PCT and strategic health authority (SHA), was obtained from the Prescribing Analysis and Cost (PACT) system, which covers prescriptions prescribed by general practitioner practices and dispensed in the community. Prescriptions written within a GP practice but dispensed outside the PCT or SHA will be included in the PCT or SHA in which, respectively, the GP practice is based. Prescriptions written in England but dispensed outside England are included. Prescriptions written in Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man but dispensed in England are excluded.
2. Prescriptions are written on a prescription form. Each single item written on the form is counted as a prescription item.
3. The figures for Statins represent data on the following chemical entities: atorvastatin; cerivastatin; fluvastatin sodium; lovastatin; pravastatin sodium; rosuvastatin calcium; simvastatin.

Waiting Lists/Times

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes there have been to NHS waiting list times in the last seven years for the residents of Burnley. [167953]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information on national health service waiting list times is not gathered on a constituency basis. The tables show information based on NHS organisations serving the Burnley area.

In-patient waiting list by provider for the Burnley area (1996–2004)

			Months waiting to be seen				
	Unit name	*Total*	*0–2*	*3–5*	*6–8*	*9–11*	*12–14*	*15–17*
1997–98	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	6,157	3,061	1,470	968	625	33	0
1997–98	Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	6,569	3,224	1,844	1,087	412	2	0
1998–99	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	4,895	2,908	1,092	546	288	61	0
1998–99	Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	5,357	3,231	1,103	691	318	14	0
1999–2000	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	4,803	2,458	1,190	639	377	120	19
1999–2000	Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	5,084	2,977	1,202	606	251	48	0
2000–01	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	4,554	2,335	1,207	686	326	0	0
2000–01	Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	5,032	2,924	1,283	593	232	0	0
2001–02	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	4,749	2,266	1,165	778	405	135	0
2001–02	Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	4,883	2,532	1,303	692	356	0	0
2002–03	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	4,595	2,219	1,223	761	392	0	0
2002–03	Blackburn Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	3,968	2,375	1,078	432	83	0	0
2003–04	East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust	8,100	5,045	2,200	855	0	0	0

Out-patient waiting list by Provider for the Burnley area (1996–2004)

Weeks waiting to be seen from a GP referral to consultant appointment

	Unit name	*Not seen 13 to 25*	*Not seen 26 plus*
1997–98	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	1,266	69
1997–98	Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	66	0
1998–99	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	2,371	895
1998–99	Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	815	258
1999–2000	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	2,158	1,455
1999–2000	Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	516	147
2000–01	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	1,548	521
2000–01	Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	283	24
2001–02	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	1,094	0
2001–02	Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Healthcare NHS Trust	246	0

Weeks waiting to be seen from a GP referral to consultant appointment

	Unit name	*Not seen 13–17*	*Not seen 17–21*	*Not seen 21–26*	*Not seen 26 plus*
2002–03	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	603	273	0	0
2002–03	Blackburn Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	164	55	0	0
2003–04	East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust	291	0	0	0

Source:
Department of Health QM08

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what medical treatment there is the longest waiting time for *(a)* consultation and *(b)* treatment at NHS hospitals within the Greater London area. [173078]

Mr. Hutton: The treatment area with the longest wait to receive a first out-patient appointment with a consultant within the five London strategic health authorities (SHAs) is clinical immunology and allergy.

Of a selection of common, elective, surgical operations, the one with the longest average wait to receive admitted treatment within the five London SHAs is knee replacement.

PRIME MINISTER

Iraq

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Prime Minister if he will estimate how many Iraqi *(a)* women, *(b)* children and *(c)* civilians have been (i) killed and (ii) injured in the recent siege of Fallujah. [171976]

The Prime Minister: The Coalition always take great care to minimise the risks to civilians in all areas of Iraq. It is not always possible to confirm whether casualties have occurred, as Coalition forces are not always able to enter the areas from which they are being fired on. There are further difficulties in estimating numbers of deaths when those deaths have been caused by terrorist attacks.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Prime Minister (1) pursuant to his answer of 12 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 385W, on Iraq, whether the three UK military personnel were working in the military intelligence section of Abu Ghraib prison; [174330]

(2) whether the three UK military personnel who worked in Abu Ghraib prison between January and April were under the command of *(a)* British and *(b)* US authorities during that time; and to which authority they reported. [174328]

The Prime Minister: Yes. The three military personnel were under British Command at all times, reporting to the Senior British Military Representative in Baghdad. They assisted in gathering information important to the Coalition's aim of establishing stability in Iraq through interviewing detainees.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Chapelcross

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer on Chapelcross, of 13 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 489, whether a breach of the air exclusion zone around Chapelcross took place in 2003; and if she will make a statement. [175147]

Mr. Timms: No breach of the air exclusion zone at the Chapelcross nuclear power station took place in 2003.

Mail Services (Northern Ireland)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the number of mail items which were not delivered in Northern Ireland in the last 12 months. [173591]

Mr. Timms: Delivery services are the operational concern of Royal Mail Group and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Research Assessment Exercise

John Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will take steps to bridge the funding gap for research projects consequent on implementation of the 2001 Research Assessment Exercise. [174183]

Ms Hewitt: The 2002 Spending Review announced the largest sustained growth in science for a decade, providing an additional £1.25 billion a year by 2005 06, including:

a dedicated stream of capital for Higher Education Institutions to develop their science research infrastructure;

substantial new resources to Research Councils to enable them to make a higher contribution to the full costs of the research they sponsor;

increased funding for the Higher Education Funding Council for England for the research component of HEI block grants, to underpin project funding.

Alongside this, changes are being implemented, following consultation, to make explicit the responsibility of HEIs for ensuring the long-term sustainability of their research enterprises and to enable them to cost and price research projects more effectively, whether publicly or privately funded. Taken together these measures will, over time, make a substantial impact on the quality and sustainability of the research base.

The Government will set out its future priorities for science and innovation in a 10-year Investment Framework for Science and Innovation, to be published in the summer.

Advantage West Midlands

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the cost was of *(a)* developing and *(b)* maintaining (i) the Advantage West Midlands website and (ii) each regional development agency's website in each financial year since 1999. [172372]

Mr. John Smith *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* The information requested is set out in the following table.

£

East of England Development Agency			
1999–2000	Not available	Not available	Not available
2000–01	Not available	Not available	Not available
2001–02	Not available	Not available	7,000
2002–03	Not available	Not available	8,900
2003–04	Not available	Not available	5,675
East Midlands Development Agency			
1999–2000	26,000	20	46
2000–01	26	20	46
2001–02	26	20	46
2002–03	26	20	46
2003–04	26	20	46

			£
London Development Agency			
1999–2000	0	0	0
2000–01	0	0	0
2001–02	0	0	0
2002–03	36,515	18,000	54,515
2003–04	36,515	21,000	57,515
Northwest Development Agency			
1999–2000	Not available	Not available	Not available
2000–01	Not available	Not available	Not available
2001–02	Not available	Not available	5,000
2002–03	Not available	Not available	51,214
2003–04	Not available	Not available	37,964
ONE North East			
1999–2000	20,735	0	20,735
2000–01	45,127	11,388	56,515
2001–02	71,204	17,520	88,724
2002–03	12,050	17,520	29,570
2003–04	50,275	17,520	67,795
South East England Development Agency			
1999–2000	Not available	Not available	7,954
2000–01	Not available	Not available	20,160
2001–02	Not available	Not available	39,234
2002–03	Not available	Not available	48,242
2003–04	10,457	27,213	37,671
South West of England Regional Development Agency			
1999–2000	8,400	2,000	104,700
2000–01	14,465	32,735	47,200
2001–02	0	30,000	30,000
2002–03	145,200	15,000	160,200
2003–04	27,000	30,000	57,000
Yorkshire Forward			
1999–2000	Not available	Not available	0
2000–01	Not available	Not available	23,275
2001–02	Not available	Not available	14,306
2002–03	Not available	Not available	58,000
2003–04	Not available	Not available	36,647

Note:
A breakdown is not available as the services were contracted out.

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the salary bill was of *(a)* Advantage West Midlands and *(b)* each regional development agency for staff employed in a press office or public relations capacity in each financial year since 1999; and what the average salary was for staff employed in a press office or public relations capacity in each case in each year. [172373]

Ms Hewitt: *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* The information requested is set out in the following table:

RDA	*Total salary of relevant RDA staff*	*Average salary of relevant RDA staff*
Advantage West Midlands	1999–2000: N/a	N/a
	2000–01: N/a	N/a
	2001–02: 24,136	24,136
	2002–03: 80,519	26,839
	2003–04: 96,692	32,230
East of England Development Agency	1999–2000: 77,000	31,000
	2000–01: 100,000	33,000
	2001–02: 99,000	30,000
	2002–03: 104,000	32,000
	2003–04: 112,000	32,000
East Midlands Development	1999–2000: N/a	N/a
	2000–01: Outsourced	N/a
	2001–02: Outsourced	N/a
	2002–03: 52,000	26,000
	2003–04: 52,000	26,000
London Development Agency	1999–2000: Nil	Nil
	2000–01: Nil	Nil
	2000–02: Nil	Nil
	2002–03: 195,000	39,000
	2003–04: 193,000	39,000
Northwest Development Agency	1999–2000: Nil	Nil
	2000–01: Nil	Nil
	2001–02: 71,123	17,780
	2002–03: 88,582	17,716
	2003–04: 109,078	15,582
ONE North East	1999–2000: 106,305	17,717
	2000–01: 111,900	18,650
	2001–02:117,790	19,361
	2002–03: 135,103	22,517
	2003–04: 175,242	25,034
South East England Development Agency	1999–2000:75,130	35,956
	2000–01: 87,530	37,510
	2001–02: 87,122	29,408
	2002–03: 151,423	33,694
	2003–04: 187,737	30,288
South West of England Regional Development Agency	1999–2000: 24,754	19,877
	2000–01: 68,989	28,830
	2001–02:110,965	27,741
	2002–03: 184,280	31,782
	2003–04: 263,465	29,583
Yorkshire Forward	1999–2000:41,666	20,833
	2000–01: 82,623	20,655
	2001–02: 83,549	23,871
	2002–03: 70,561	20,160
	2003–04: 82,992	23,712

Disconnections

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) if she will make a statement on actions being taken by *(a)* Ofgem and *(b)* industry to minimise disconnections made in error; [174361]

(2) what assessment she has made of the impact of energy disconnections for debt; [174362]

(3) how many household *(a)* gas and *(b)* electricity disconnections were made in each year from 2000; and how many were made in error in each case in each year. [174363]

Mr. Timms: Disconnection remains an appropriate action of last resort where a customer has repeatedly failed to respond to efforts to secure payment or to make specific repayment arrangements. However, this power must be subject to appropriate safeguards. I welcome the arrangements proposed by Ofgem and energy suppliers in April to improve those safeguards to protect vulnerable customers. The total number of disconnections for debt between 2000 and 2003 was:

	Gas	*Electricity*	*Total*
2000	16,500	300	16,800
2001	26,088	375	26,463
2002	21,780	995	22,775
2003	15,973	1,361	17,334

Ofgem does not collect data about disconnections made in error. Such disconnections are plainly unacceptable. If the hon. Member or other have information about such cases, they should provide the evidence to Energywatch, which is responsible for

investigating complaints against gas and electricity suppliers. Energywatch may provide evidence to, and recommend regulatory action by, Ofgem.

European Research Council

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how close to the market the research is in which the European Research Council will be involved. [174130]

Ms Hewitt: The possible establishment of a European Research Council is still at an early stage, and no proposal has yet been made by the European Commission, but it should not detract from the more directly industry-oriented research, historically funded by the Framework Programme. The Government are currently consulting about the matter as part of its overall consultation on Framework Programme 7, a copy has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Fireworks Ban

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on her proposals to ban category 4 fireworks from consumer sale. [174382]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 19 May 2004]:* The supply of category 4 fireworks to the general public was banned in 1997 with the coming into force of the Fireworks (Safety) Regulations. Only fireworks professionals may purchase this type of firework.

Additionally, under these Regulations only fireworks that comply with the British Standard—BS 7114—are to be supplied to ordinary consumers.

Insolvency

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many cases have been handled by the Insolvency Service Protracted Realisations Unit in each year since 1998; what the *(a)* gross and *(b)* net flow of cases was in each year; and what the average professional fee charged by an insolvency practitioner handling a protracted realisations unit case during that time was. [173277]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Protracted Realisations Unit was created in October 1999, the figures in the table list how many cases had been handled in each year by the Unit from October 1999 to 31 March 2004.

Year to 31 March	*B/fwd*	*Input*	*Sent to IPs*	*Closings*	*C/fwd*
1999	None	—	—	—	—
September 1999 to 31 March 2000	33,027	1,355	519	1,724	32,139
2001	32,139	4,727	1,382	3,205	32,279
2002	32,279	3,816	1,926	3,303	30,866
2003	30,866	3,816	2,762	5,078	26,842
2004	26,842	1,566	3,876	3,200	21,332
Total	—	15,280	10,465	16,510	—

The Insolvency Service does not hold details of the average Insolvency Practitioner fee for handling a protracted realisations unit case. The fees are charged by the Insolvency Practitioner which may vary on a case-by-case basis.

International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on *(a)* the siting and *(b)* cost sharing of the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor. [174579]

Mr. Timms: The international partners are trying to reach a compromise on the two proposed locations for ITER that will be acceptable to the whole ITER partnership. Currently the €4.5 billion budget for the construction of the ITER facility is to be shared as follows:

	Percentage	€
Europe or Japan as host	48	2.2 billion
Europe or Japan as non-host	12	540 million
US	10	450 million
China	10	450 million
Russia	10	450 million
South Korea	10	450 million

This is likely to change if more countries join the ITER partnership.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what level of fusion research funding she will make available after the decision on the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor has been taken; and if she will make a statement. [174580]

Mr. Timms: Funding for the UK's national fusion programme is determined by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, which took over this function in April 2003. It is currently in the region of £16 million per year. Europe's participation in ITER will be funded through the Framework Programme.

Mail Services

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions her Department has had with *(a)* Royal Mail and *(b)* Postwatch on the disappearance of mail. [174530]

Mr. Timms: DTI Ministers and officials meet representatives from the Royal Mail and Postwatch on a regular basis to discuss a wide range of issues, including quality of service and lost mail.

Nuclear Installations

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the operation to date of the Sellafield MOX plant. [173347]

Mr. Timms: The Sellafield Mox Plant (SMP) is currently undergoing plutonium commissioning prior to meeting its first overseas orders. I understand from BNFL that various technical challenges, which are not unduly surprising in such a sophisticated plant, are being addressed by the company.

Post Office

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she last discussed the question of deprived wards with reference to the application of the

urban reinvention programme by Post Office Ltd.; and what interpretation the Post Office uses of the term deprived ward; and if she will make a statement. [173919]

Mr. Timms: In accordance with the recommendations of the Performance and Innovation Unit's year 2000 report 'Counter Revolution—Modernising the Post Office Network', the Government have provided support for post offices in deprived urban areas of England in the form of the Deprived Urban Post Office Fund administered by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Similar schemes are administered by the devolved Administrations of Scotland and Wales while the merits of such a scheme are being considered in Northern Ireland. I announced on 5 February details of changes agreed by Post Office Ltd. and Postwatch to the current programme to restructure the post office network in urban areas which includes clarification of criteria to define exceptional circumstances under which Post Office Ltd. might propose to close a post office branch in a deprived urban area without an alternative within a half a mile. I understand that the Post Office uses the Indices of Deprivation 2000 to define its interpretation of an urban deprive ward.

Sellafield

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what timescale is being applied to the decommissioning of the B30 ponds at Sellafield. [173462]

Mr. Timms: HSE's Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (NII) has issued a number of Specifications for remediation activities at Sellafield.

A Specification issued by NII in 2000, requires BNFL to retrieve at least 90 per cent. of the potentially mobile intermediate level radioactive waste sludge from the B30 ponds and bays by 2010.

BNFL is continuing work to develop detailed plans necessary to meet that deadline.

Winkleigh Biomass Project

Mr. Burnett: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much direct or indirect expenditure by *(a)* central Government and *(b)* regional development agencies (i) has been incurred and (ii) is planned in connection with the proposed Winkleigh Biomass Project; and on what the expenditure was or will be incurred. [169461]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 29 April 2004]:* In relation to payments by the Department and the South West of England Regional Development Agency (SWRDA), the information requested was set out in the answer provided by my hon. Friend the Minister for State for Energy, E-Commerce and Postal Services on 11 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1674W.

The grant undertaking awarded under the Bioenergy Capital Grants Scheme will provide £11.05 million conditional on successful construction and commissioning of the plant.

The funding approved by the South West of England Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) is to support the costs of feasibility studies (an Environmental Impact Assessment, a Biomass Study and an Economic Impact Assessment) and associated technical studies. These do not commit the Agency to any further expenditure. In addition SWRDA has bought land which, if the project were to go ahead, could be resold to the project at open market value.

I am not aware that any other Regional Development Agency or Department has made any payments to this project or has any plans to do so.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Council Tax

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost to *(a)* the Valuation Office Agency, *(b)* the Valuation Tribunals and *(c)* central Government of administering (i) council tax and (ii) council tax benefit was in financial year 2001–02. [174359]

Mr. Raynsford: The information is as follows:

(a) (i) The Valuation Office Agency (VGA) budget for council tax costs in 2001–02 was £13.3 million,

(ii) The VGA does not deal with council tax benefit cases.

(b) The cost of Valuation Tribunals administering council tax is not separately identified. The overall expenditure of the valuation tribunal in 2001–02 was £9.31 million.

(c) The Government are responsible for the policy and legislation rather than the administration of council tax and council tax benefit.

Council Tax Revaluation

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the estimated cost to *(a)* his Department, *(b)* the Valuation Office Agency and *(c)* other Government agencies and bodies was of council tax revaluation for financial years (i) 2003–04, (ii) 2005–06 and (iii) 2006–07. [174358]

Mr. Raynsford: The information is as follows:

(a) The cost of council tax revaluation for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is not separately identified.

(b) The Valuation Office Agency estimated council tax revaluation costs are:

(i) 2003–04 is £7.6 million;

(ii) 2005–06 is £50.2 million, and

(iii) 2006–07 is £50.5 million.

(c) The cost of council tax revaluation for the Valuation Tribunal Service is not significant for these years. Some preparation work will be required in 2005–06 and 2006–07 but this is not separately identified.

Departmental Officials

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which former officials of the Department have asked for permission to join *(a)* PricewaterhouseCoopers, *(b)* Deloitte & Touche, *(c)* Ernst & Young and *(d)* KPMG. [156901]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was created on 29 May 2002. Since that date there have been no requests from former officials seeking permission to join PricewaterhouseCoopers, Deloitte & Touche, Ernst & Young and KPMG.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what secondments *(a)* PricewaterhouseCoopers, *(b)* Deloitte & Touche, *(c)* Ernst & Young and *(d)* KPMG has made to his Department since 2001; for what (i) periods and (ii) tasks the secondments were made; whether secondments of staff from his Department have been made to those firms; and for what (A) periods and (B) tasks. [156930]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was created on 29 May 2002. Since that date there has been one inward secondment from PricewaterhouseCoopers, and none from the other organisations specified. The inward secondee, working in Local Government Efficiency Unit, started work in September 2001 and their secondment ended on 31 March 2004.

No staff from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have been seconded to any of the organisations specified.

Secondments are part of the Interchange Initiative which promotes the exchange of people and good practice between the civil service and other organisations. Before an Interchange can occur all parties must be satisfied that no conflict of interests arises.

Employment Agencies

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the employment agencies which his Department and its predecessors have used to supply temporary staff in each financial year since 1996–97 to the most recent date for which figures are available. [163807]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was created on 29 May 2002. The Office has contracts for the supply of temporary staff with three recruitment agencies: Adecco, Brook Street and Reed. These contracts were awarded as a result of an invitation to tender by the Office.

Fire Service

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans the Government have for inter-brigade co-operation in the Fire Service in the event of a serious emergency. [174674]

Mr. Raynsford: The Government are keen to ensure a co-ordinated response from the fire and rescue service in the event of a major emergency. That is why all fire and rescue authorities have been invited to sign a Mutual Aid Agreement, which will enable individual fire and rescue authorities to ask for assistance from another authority in the event of a serious emergency.

The development of the Mutual Aid Agreement forms part of the Government's commitment to improving resilience and the fire and rescue service's response to a major incident. The Fire and Rescue Services Bill, currently progressing through Parliament, should make such an agreement easier to establish in future as it will extend authorities' ability to enter into mutual reinforcement schemes to include new duties such as responding to the increased terrorist threat.

The Government have also established the New Dimension programme, which will help to ensure a co-ordinated response to any terrorist incidents on a national scale by providing suitable equipment and training to deal with such incidents. A national co-ordination centre is being established in order to provide central command and control when the New Dimension equipment is utilised. This will remain in place until such time as the regional control rooms are operational, when they will direct resources on a regional basis.

Housing

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether his Community Housing Task Force has yet been integrated within the Government office network; how many of its staff are *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* consultants; and what services they provide to local authorities whose tenants have voted to reject the Government's three options for council house privatisation. [174661]

Keith Hill: From 1 June, the Task Force advisers will be allocated to their respective Government office regions and will fall under the line management of their respective Government office housing directors. The practical arrangements are being agreed and formalised.

There are 13 civil servants on fixed term contracts and three on secondments arrangements from local authorities and the National Housing Federation. There are no consultants working in the task force.

Where tenants have rejected the options to deliver the decent homes target, the Community Housing Task Force will continue to support local authorities and its tenants to investigate other options within the decent home policy framework to achieve decent homes by 2010.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) for what reasons North East Lincolnshire was not granted the full sum for gap funding for its housing transfer for which it had applied; what assessment he has made of the effect this has on the business plans for the new housing association; and what plans he has to make supplementary gap funding available to North East Lincolnshire under the new arrangements for gap funding for areas of negative equity; [174500]

(2) whether the supplementary gap funding he announced in the week beginning 10 May for housing transfers in areas with negative equity will be made available to North East Lincolnshire. [174663]

Keith Hill: North East Lincolnshire sought £6 million, £2 million annually for three years, from the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Housing Board transitional commissioning as gap funding to cover the negative valuation of its stock to enable its Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT) proposal to proceed. The Board has agreed in principle to such a level of funding, with years two and three subject to the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review. It has invited the Council to submit a final proposal by 4 June 2004 with

a view to the Board making its final decision on 14 July 2004. Discussions will take place with the Board as to whether there is merit for their commitment to be absorbed within the central gap funding arrangements.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what councils, how many houses and how much land have been admitted to the Stock Transfer programme for each year since 2002–03; how many applied for inclusion; and what assessment he has made of what this means for future financing of councils which submit proposals by his deadline of July 2005. [174655]

Keith Hill: The following lists and tables show those councils which have applied for and/or been granted places on the Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT) programmes since 2002 and also the number of dwellings involved.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not hold information on how much land has been involved in stock transfer.

Local authorities transferring their housing stock under the LSVT programmes will have no impact on the future financing of social housing in other local authorities.

Names of local authorities granted places on LSVT programmes since 2002:

2002 programme

Amber Valley
Bromsgrove
Cannock Chase
Cherwell
Forest of Dean
London Borough of Ealing
London Borough of Hackney
London Borough of Islington
London Borough of Southwark
Liverpool County Council
Maidstone Borough Council
Manchester City Council
Middlesbrough Council
North Hertfordshire
Nuneaton and Bedworth
Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
Rushcliffe Borough Council
Scarborough Borough Council
Sheffield City Council
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
South Norfolk Council
Stockport
Teignbridge
Worcester.

2003 programme

Copeland
Forest Heath District Council
Hartlepool Borough Council
London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
London Borough of Hackney
London Borough of Islington
London Borough of Lambeth
London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Manchester City Council
Middlesbrough
North East Lincolnshire
Peterborough County Council
Purbeck District Council
Royal Borough of Kingston
South Norfolk
Stroud District Council
Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council
Wakefield Metropolitan District Council
Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council.

2004 programme

Broxbourne Borough Council
Ellesmere Port and Neston
Halton Borough Council
Hyndburn
Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council
Lambeth
London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Macclesfield
Mid Devon
North Somerset
Sedgefield
Sheffield
Stafford Borough Council
West Lancashire District Council.

Number of dwellings granted places on LSVT programmes since 2002

Programme	*Number*
2002	180,794
2003	123,543
2004	76,052

Names of local authorities applying for places on LSVT programmes since 2002:

2002 programme

Amber Valley Borough Council
Bromsgrove District Council
Cannock Chase
Cherwell District Council
Copeland Borough Council
Forest of Dean District Council
London Borough of Hackney
London Borough of Islington
London Borough of Southwark
Liverpool County Council
Maidstone
Manchester Council
Middlesbrough Council
North Hertfordshire
Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
Rushcliffe Borough Council
Scarborough Borough Council
Sheffield County Council
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

South Norfolk Council
Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council
Teignbridge District Council
Worcester.

2003 programme

Forest Heath District Council
Hartlepool Borough Council
London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
London Borough of Hackney
London Borough of Islington
London Borough of Lambeth
London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Manchester City Council
Middlesbrough
North East Lincolnshire
Peterborough County Council
Purbeck District Council
Royal Borough of Kingston
Stroud District Council
Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council
Wakefield Metropolitan District Council
Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council.

2004 programme

Broxbourne Borough Council
Copeland
Ellesmere Port and Neston
Halton Borough Council
Hyndburn
Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council
Lambeth
London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Macclesfield
Manchester City Council
Mid Devon
North Norfolk
North Somerset
Preston
Sedgefield
Sheffield
Stafford Borough Council
Teesdale
West Lancashire District Council

Number of dwellings applying for places on LSVT programmes since 2002

Programme	*Number*
2002	180,794
2003	125,806
2004	115,063

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what *(a)* support, *(b)* advice and *(c)* guidance his officials have provided to North East Lincolnshire in connection with its campaign for the large-scale voluntary transfer of its housing stock; what estimate he has made of the cost of (i) staff time, (ii) travel and (iii) other expenditure in connection with such support, advice and guidance; and how much of that cost is payable by North East Lincolnshire. [174549]

Keith Hill: As with any local authority on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Disposals Programme, North East Lincolnshire council have discussed their stock transfer proposals with officials of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister at each stage of the process, including seeking advice and guidance on all public consultation material. We make no specific estimate of the cost of staff time, travel or other expenditure in connection with the giving of support, advice or guidance to any particular local authority. No payment has been made by the council for any advice or support.

Land Developers

Mr. Watson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what advice is given to local authorities on how best to assess whether developers have sought brownfield site alternatives before proposing back land development. [174462]

Keith Hill: Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: "Housing" (PPG3) says that the country's housing needs should be met in the most sustainable way possible, giving priority to re-using suitable brownfield land in preference to the development of greenfield sites. PPG3 advises local planning authorities, in preparing their local plans, to adopt a systematic approach to assessing the development potential of sites and the redevelopment of existing buildings, deciding which are most suitable for housing development and the sequence in which development should take place. It is for local planning authorities to consider whether proposals for back land development are in principle consistent with the local plan (or where this is not up-to-date, the relevant criteria set out in PPG3) and are well-designed.

Local Authorities Complaints Fees

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) if he will restrict the maximum fee which a local authority can charge persons who make a complaint against a nuisance hedge grower to £100; [174581]

(2) when he will report on his consultation on the maximum fee which a local authority can charge persons who wish to make a complaint against a nuisance hedge grower. [174582]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will not be deciding the maximum fee which local authorities will be able to charge people making a complaint about a nuisance high hedge until we have analysed the responses to the current public consultation on implementing Part 8 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. The consultation period runs until 30 June. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects to report the results of the consultation and to bring the legislation into operation towards the end of 2004.

Local Authority Leisure Services

Mr. Reed: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the saving to local authorities of contracting out leisure services to the private sector. [174052]

Phil Hope: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Press Officers

Mr. Laws: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many press officers were employed in his Department in each year from 1990–91 to 2003–04; what the total cost was in each year; and if he will make a statement. [162851]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was created on 29 May 2002.

On 1 April 2003, ODPM*(c)* employed 21.8 full-time equivalent press officers. Salary costs for the period 1 June 2002 to 31 March 2003 were £0.86 million.

On 1 March 2004, 23 full-time equivalent press officers were employed. Salary costs for the period 1 April 2003 to 29 February 2004 were £0.96 million.

Regional Government

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total cost to his Department was of the event on elected regional assemblies held in Barrow on 5 May 2004; how many staff from his Department were involved; how many staff from Government Office North West were involved; and if he will place in the Library a copy of the speech delivered by the Minister for Local and Regional Government. [172756]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister estimates that the Barrow hearing cost £3,900. This includes costs associated with venue hire and catering. Four members of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and three members of the Government office for the north-west were involved.

As on previous occasions, I spoke extempore, rather than from a prepared text.

Register of Interests

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the requirements are on officials in his Department to declare current interests; and what register of interests is kept for his departmental officials. [164707]

Yvette Cooper: The Civil Service Management Code sets out the general principles and rules governing the conduct of civil servants declaring any conflict of interest. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Staff Handbook states that staff are required to seek permission from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister before undertaking any activity that might result in a conflict of interest and all applications are kept on file.

Timber Purchases

Mr. Gardiner: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how *(a)* the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, *(b)* its regional offices, *(c)* the Fire Service College, *(d)* the Ordnance Survey, *(e)* the Planning Inspectorate, *(f)* the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre and *(g)* the Rent Service monitor and audit purchases of timber and timber products to ensure that they meet the Department's stated commitment to being obtained from legal and sustainable sources. [164676]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, its regional offices and its agencies are committed to the Government Policy on the purchase of Legal and Sustainable forested wood and this is fully supported in our Greening Operations Policy Statement.

Contracts where the use of timber and timber based products is anticipated, contain clauses that require the supplier to actively seek legally sourced and sustainable timber and to supply physical evidence that supports this. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has the use of framework contracts for the purchase of furniture, which are subject to supply chain audit by officials.

Timber and timber based products have been adopted within the certificated and independently audited Environmental Management Systems which the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has developed to manage our response to the "Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate".

It is expected that Government targets associated with Timber Procurement will be published in the coming months and officials in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will be incorporating this into our procurement processes.

Although the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has overall responsibility for the buildings occupied by Government Offices, they carry out functions on behalf of 10 Departments.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 24 May 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Ancient Trees

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action her Department *(a)* has taken and *(b)* proposes to take to allow the EU's Natura 2000 designation to be extended to include sites with ancient trees. [173956]

Mr. Bradshaw: Ancient trees can and do occur in candidate Special Areas of Conservation, which together with Special Protection Areas for birds form the Natura 2000 network. However, they are not included specifically either as a habitat type in Annex I, or a species in Annex II, of the Habitats Directive for which sites can be selected.

The purpose of Natura 2000 designation is to conserve areas containing habitats and species of Community interest of high ecological and bio-diversity value, rather than their cultural or historical value. Where ancient trees are included within sites, their cultural value as well as their contribution to the biodiversity of the area is provided for.

Apiculture

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) if she will make a statement on the grounds for the ban on the import of queen bees from Hawaii; [174128]

(2) what evaluation her Department has made of the *(a)* health, *(b)* disease and *(c)* animal welfare grounds for restricting the import of queen bees from (i) Hawaii and (ii) Australia; and if she will make a statement. [174129]

Alun Michael: New European Community legislation strengthening the animal health controls and certification requirements for the importation of bees from third countries came into effect across the Community on 27 December 2003. Its aim, in particular, is to protect the EU bee population from exotic pests and diseases.

The new import controls include the requirement that consignments of queen honey bees will only be allowed into the Community from those third countries that have demonstrated the veterinary competence to certify bees for export, and provided that the notifiable diseases of bees in the EU—American foul brood, the small hive beetle and tropilaelaps mite—are also confirmed as notifiable throughout the exporting country. The specified third countries are listed in Part 1 to the Annex of Council Decision 79/542 and include the USA and Australia.

To date, only Australia, New Zealand and Argentina have demonstrated to us that they are able to comply with the conditions provided in the legislation, and imports of queens from these countries are permitted. However, in the case of Hawaii, while it is our opinion that it does have a high bee health status, and, indeed, we have until recently permitted imports of queen bees from there, it is nevertheless a territory of the USA. The EU legislation is clear in its intention, and it is our understanding that the three notifiable diseases mentioned above are not yet notifiable throughout the USA as a whole. The Commission has stated that it is not prepared to treat Hawaii as separate from the rest of the USA for this purpose. We are therefore not free to authorise the importation of queens bees from Hawaii until the USA has demonstrated equivalence with the EU.

Batteries Directive

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what representations her Department has made to the European Commission regarding the impact on users of hearing aids of the proposed Batteries Directive; [171353]

(2) what representations she has received from *(a)* organisations representing the hard of hearing and *(b)* manufacturers of batteries regarding the impact on hearing aid users of the proposed Batteries Directive. [171354]

Mr. Morley: The UK Government have made no representation to the European Commission about the impact of the proposed batteries Directive on batteries used in hearing aids. This is because proposals issued by the Commission for a new batteries Directive do not contain any requirement prohibiting the sale of batteries used in hearing aids.

However, Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) voted during their first reading of the proposal on 20 April in favour of an amendment, setting limit values for prohibiting the sale of all batteries that contain more than 5ppm of mercury by weight. The Government understand that because hearing aid batteries may contain more than 5ppm of mercury and 40ppm of lead, by weight, in a zinc air hearing aid battery, there is now concern as to a possible ban. However, the Government have not, as yet, heard from any organisations or manufacturers that may be affected, nor have they heard the reaction of the European Commission to the amendment

It should also be noted that the European Parliament also voted on an amendment to exclude from the controls of the new Directive, batteries and accumulators placed in medical devices; namely, those designed to maintain vital functions, where uninterrupted functioning is essential and the batteries and accumulators can be removed only by qualified personnel. If this amendment were accepted, it would not be clear whether those hearing aid batteries containing more than 5ppm of mercury and 40ppm of lead would be excluded.

HMG believes that the inconsistency between these two amendments is likely to be addressed by the European Parliament in its second reading. If the threshold limits proposed remained in the Directive and

led to the prohibition of batteries contained in hearing aids, or indeed batteries contained in other medical devices, this would be opposed by the UK and, we believe, by other member states also.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received from manufacturers of batteries regarding the proposed European Batteries Directive. [171356]

Mr. Morley: We have received representation from the British Battery Manufacturers Association (BBMA) and the European Portable Batteries Association (EPBA) who represent all major manufacturers of portable batteries. Also, we have held discussions with Collect Nicad who represent the manufacturers of nickel cadmium batteries.

We expect to have further meetings with battery companies and other stakeholders now that the batteries consultation paper has been issued.

Beak Trimming

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if the Government will extend the 2010 deadline for the ban on beak trimming if no solution to the problem of cannabalism is found. [174200]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government are committed to banning the practice of beak trimming by the end of 2010. A beak trimming action group has been set up to carry forward an action plan to enable Defra to introduce this ban without compromising bird welfare. However, some form of review process prior to the 2010 ban is not unreasonable.

Chicken Incinerators

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the regulations governing incinerators used for on-farm disposal of chickens, with particular reference to *(a)* how often they will be inspected and *(b)* the cost to farmers of carrying out inspections. [174203]

Mr. Bradshaw: On-farm incinerators which only burn animal carcases such as chickens, must comply with the relevant requirements of Regulation (EC) No. 1774/2002 and must also be approved in accordance with this Regulation.

This regulation is enforced in England by the Animal By-Products Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/1482) (the ABPR).

Under the ABPR, the State Veterinary Service is responsible for inspecting and approving incinerator plants in accordance with Regulation 1774/2002. Visits to non-SRM incinerators (such as those incinerating only poultry) will, in general, be carried out on a quarterly basis. However, additional inspections may be carried out should they be necessary.

At present there is no cost for either the inspection or the approval of such plants.

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received from small-scale producers of chickens requesting their exemption from the ban on on-farm disposal; and if she will make a statement. [174204]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department has received a number of such representations. However, the only exceptions from the ban on the routine on-farm burial or burning of animal by-products, in the UK, would be for remote areas (parts of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, the Scilly Isles and Lundy Island) and during outbreaks of notifiable disease if there were a lack of capacity at rendering plants and incinerators, or if transport of the carcases would spread disease.

Dairy Industry

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to ensure that the difference in systems being adopted for single farm payments in England, Scotland and Wales does not lead to excessive trading in milk quotas and a reduction in dairy output in England; and if she will make a statement. [174136]

Alun Michael: We are aware that some milk quota is moving out of England, since it will generate larger payments under the Single Payment Scheme in other regions of the UK but we are monitoring the situation. On the basis of current evidence, the scale of the movement does not seem to be great enough to justify any action.

Energy Efficiency

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in Bootle have benefited from the Warm Front and Home Energy Efficiency Schemes. [171484]

Mr. Morley: The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme is now marketed as Warm Front. Between the launch of the scheme in June 2000 and the end of March 2004, approximately 4,700 households in Bootle received assistance from the Scheme.

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in West Lancashire have benefited from the Warm Front and Home Energy Efficiency Schemes. [171496]

Mr. Morley: The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme is now marketed as Warm Front. Between the launch of the scheme in June 2000 and the end of March 2004, approximately 2,400 households in West Lancashire received assistance from the Scheme.

Farming

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what *(a)* assessment and *(b)* economic analyses have been conducted of the economic impact on English farmers of differing farm payment schemes under common agricultural policy reform in England, Wales and Scotland; and if she will make a statement. [174080]

Alun Michael: Defra will publish shortly an analysis of the economic impact on the English farming industry of the single farm payment and the way in which the scheme will be operated in England.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many people were employed, in full time equivalents, in the United Kingdom farming industry in each of the last three years; and what contribution was made by the farming industry to the United Kingdom economy as a percentage of GDP in that period. [174192]

Alun Michael: The information requested is given in the table.

Calendar years	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*[1]
Annual work unit (thousands)[2]	333	320	306
Agriculture's Gross Value Added (GVA) as a percentage of national GVA (current prices)	0.8	0.8	0.8

[1] Provisional.
[2] An annual work unit represents the equivalent of an average full-time person engaged in agriculture. Includes farmers, partners, directors and hired workers.

Flood and Coastal Defences

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action she has taken as a result of the Foresight Programme on Flood and Coastal Defences. [167001]

Mr. Morley: The Foresight Programme on Flood and Coastal Defence was initiated by the Office of Science and Technology to provide a shared understanding of the challenges faced by a wide range of stakeholders and to assist in the development of a long-term policy response. Stakeholders have contributed to an action plan in response to the Foresight Report which seeks to build upon this shared understanding and provide a channel through which actions across and outside Government can be co-ordinated. I have agreed that the group of key stakeholders which I chair will meet in one year to monitor progress and consider the need for other actions.

In order for this action plan to be effective, it must be responsive to change in circumstances and will require regular review. The initial plan focuses on immediate actions, the findings of which will influence longer-term activities. A key mechanism for responding to the challenges within the report will be Defra's new strategy for flood and coastal erosion risk management, which is expected to be finalised early next year.

Landfill Sites

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what constitutes a moderate risk of release of leachate from a landfill site into a surrounding sea or land area. [171526]

Mr. Morley: The Landfill Directive requires that a landfill must be situated and designed so as to meet the necessary conditions for preventing pollution of the soil, groundwater or surface water and ensuring efficient collection of leachate as and when required. In addition, the Groundwater Directive requires Member States to prevent the introduction of certain substances and to limit the introduction of certain other substances into groundwater so as to avoid pollution.

The legislation in England that implements both these Directives is regulated by the Environment Agency and it is the Agency that would determine whether a likely release of leachate constituted an unacceptable risk, given the planned location of the landfill, using risk assessment techniques.

For closed landfills that are controlled by a waste management licence, a risk based approach is also adopted by the Environment Agency. Monitoring of leachate, ground and surface waters is required to provide, amongst other things, that leachate controls are preventing pollution of the environment and, where unacceptable risks are identified, the need for measures to prevent, reduce or remove potential leachate pollution are assessed.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what fines have been issued by courts following successful prosecutions for release of pollution from landfill sites in each of the last five years. [171533]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency has provided the following details of total levels of fines issued by the courts following successful prosecutions for release of pollution from landfill sites.

Data are available for the calendar years 2000–03 as these are the years for which complete data is present on the database. As the database is not specifically searchable for offences at landfill sites, these figures have been generated by selecting records where the word "landfill" appears in the address of the site of an event.

	£
2000	183,000
2001	91,500
2002	127,750
2003	51,000

[1] Total fines for year

Packaging

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action she is taking to promote the minimising of packaging and the prevention of waste creation by *(a)* producers, *(b)* distributors and retailers and *(c)* consumers; and if she will make a statement. [174232]

Mr. Morley: There are currently two sets of Regulations that cover packaging in the UK, both of which encourage producers (including retailers) to minimise packaging. The Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 1997 (as amended) are intended to increase the recovery and recycling of packaging waste. The amount of packaging waste producers have to recover and recycle is determined, in part, by the amount of packaging they handle. Therefore, businesses can save money if they reduce the amount of packaging they handle. The Packaging (Essential Requirements) Regulations 2003 place a number of requirements on all packaging placed on the market in the UK, including a requirement

that packaging should be manufactured so that the packaging volume and weight are limited to the minimum adequate amount to maintain the necessary level of safety, hygiene and acceptance for the packed product and for the consumer.

Both Regulations have actually led to decreases in packaging used around products. For example, less material is used now to make a plastic container than was used a few years ago. However, more still needs to be done to reduce the amount of packaging that is actually produced in the first place. I have asked the Advisory Committee on Packaging to work with industry to find solutions to this problem and to let me have recommendations for ways of encouraging businesses to further reduce the amount of packaging they use.

Although legislation is a way of reducing packaging and increasing recycling, we would also encourage consumers to play a part. For example, if consumers made a point of choosing goods that are not heavily packaged, or bought 'loose' food rather than pre-packaged, or used their own shopping bags or boxes, manufacturers would be more inclined to reduce the quantity of packaging on their products.

Pollution Licensing Regime

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department has taken to ensure that the Environment Agency does not use the integrated pollution prevention and control licensing regime as a revenue stream. [174089]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency has powers under Section 41 of the Environment Act 1995 to charge for environmental licences, including pollution prevention and control permits. Charging schemes must be approved by the Secretary of State with the consent of the Treasury. Charging schemes have to be limited to the recovery of the amounts needed, taking one year with another, to recover the Environment Agency's costs of carrying out its regulatory functions.

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to ensure that charges for integrated pollution prevention and control licences are set at a reasonable level; and if she will make a statement. [174095]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency's Environmental Protection Operator and Pollution Risk Appraisal (EP OPRA) charging scheme is a risk based assessment system, which closely links regulatory effort to environmental risk. EP OPRA was approved by the Government after consultation with industry and is based on four elements: emissions, location, complexity and operator performance. The scheme allows the Agency to recover the costs of carrying out its statutory responsibilities under the Pollution Prevention and Control regime. In line with the "polluter pays principle", well run companies with low potential risk to the environment are charged less than poorly run ones with a high potential to pollute. The Agency must adhere to the Treasury's Fees and Charges Guide, which describes how charges for statutory services should be calculated. The Agency is due to publish a 'transparency document' shortly, which will provide more detail on the Agency's costs; this document will be subject to the approval of the Environment Protection Charges Review Group, which includes industry representatives.

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received about the proposed integrated pollution prevention and control licences governing ammonia levels and odour; and if she will make a statement. [174096]

Mr. Morley: Permits issued under the integrated pollution prevention and control (IPPC) system each relate to a specified industrial installation and must contain emission limits and other permit conditions in respect of any pollutant likely to be emitted in significant quantities from that installation. Both Defra and the Environment Agency are in regular contact with all the industry sectors covered by IPPC and with other stakeholders.

One industry sector in which ammonia and odour emissions will be significant is the intensive rearing of pigs and poultry. IPPC permits for that sector may incorporate "Standard Farming Installation Rules", based on the application of Best Available Techniques which are described in a reference document published by the European Commission and in national guidance.

The Environment Agency began a public consultation on an updated version of the Standard Farming Installation Rules on 12 May 2004. The responses to the consultation are due by 16 August 2004. The consultation document is available on the Environment Agency's website at: http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/yourenv/consultations/775300/7versi

Recycling

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what waste recycling levels were achieved by each European Union country in the last year for which records exist for each country. [174231]

Mr. Morley: Estimates for municipal recycling and composting rates for each available European Union country are listed in the table.

Municipal waste 2001

	Percentage recycled or composted
Austria	32.5
Belgium	57.7
Denmark	31.7
Finland	25.0
France	24.6
Germany	53.0
Greece	8.6
Ireland	12.9
Italy	24.4
Luxembourg	35.8
Netherlands	59.4
Portugal	4.2
Spain	28.4
Sweden	39.4
United Kingdom	12.7

These results are published on the Department's website. The full results can be found at: www.defra.gov.uk/environment/statistics/waste/wrkf08.htm

There may be some differences in definitions between countries.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which local authorities *(a)* met and *(b)* failed to meet the local authority recycling target. [174233]

Mr. Morley: Individual local authorities are required to meet Statutory Performance Standards for the recycling and composting of household waste in 2003–04 and 2005–06 only. The most recent data available, for 2002–03, show that 83 local authorities have already met or exceeded their 2003–04 target and six have met or exceeded their 2005–06 target.

The names of these local authorities have been placed in the Library of the House. We will not know whether the remaining local authorities have succeeded or failed against their 2003–04 targets until later this year.

Local authorities which met or exceeded their Statutory Performance Standards for 2003–04 or 2005–06 in 2002–03

Local authorities which met or exceeded their 2005–06 targets in 2002–03

East Hampshire District Council
Daventry District Council
Lichfield District Council
Oswestry Borough Council
Wealden District Council
Wyre Borough Council

Local authorities which have met or exceeded their 2003–04 targets in 2002–03

Bedfordshire County Council
Birmingham City Council
Blaby District Council
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Blackpool Borough Council
Blyth Valley Borough Council
Braintree District Council
Bromley LB
Broxtowe Borough Council
Calderdale MBC
Caradon District Council
Carrick District Council
Castle Point Borough Council
Chelmsford Borough Council
Chester City Council
Chorley Borough Council
Congleton Borough Council
Cornwall County Council
Dacorum Borough Council
Darlington Borough Council
Daventry District Council
Derbyshire County Council
Dudley MBC
Durham City Council
Durham County Council
Easington District Council
East Hampshire District Council
East Hertfordshire District Council
East Sussex County Council
Essex County Council
Fenland District Council
Gedling Borough Council
Guildford Borough Council
Halton Borough Council
Hartlepool Borough Council
Herefordshire Council
Hillingdon LB
Huntingdonshire District Council
Ipswich Borough Council
Isle of Wight Council
Kennet District Council
Kerrier District Council
King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council
Lancashire County Council
Leicestershire County Council
Lichfield District Council
London Corporation
Luton Borough Council
Maidstone Borough Council
Malvern Hills District Council
North East Lincolnshire Council
North Kesteven District Council
North Lincolnshire Council
Northumberland County Council
Oswestry Borough Council
Oxford City Council
Pendle Borough Council
Preston Borough Council
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Rochford District Council
Rushcliffe Borough Council
Salisbury District Council
Selby District Council
Shropshire County Council
South Cambridgeshire District Council
South Northamptonshire District Council
South Ribble Borough Council
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
Telford and Wrekin Council
Thurrock Council
Torbay Council
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Uttlesford District Council
Vale of White Horse District Council
Vale Royal Borough Council
Wakefield City MDC
Wansbeck District Council
Wealden District Council
Wellingborough Borough Council
West Oxfordshire District Council
Wokingham Council
Wyre Borough Council
York City Council

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action *(a)* has been taken and *(b)* is being considered against local authorities that fail to reach the waste recycling targets. [174234]

Mr. Morley: The Government have always said that they will take seriously any failures by local authorities to achieve their Statutory Performance Standards for recycling and composting for 2003–04 and 2005–06.

However our primary aim is to support local authorities in achieving the targets, and we have set up the Waste Implementation Programme in Defra to do exactly that.

We will not know whether local authorities have succeeded or failed against their 2003–04 targets until later this year. Once that information is available, and where an authority has missed its target and demonstrates no commitment to improving its performance, the Government will consider using their formal intervention powers to drive improvement.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 29 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 7205w, for further information on what action might be taken under my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State's formal powers of intervention.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which local authorities bid for funds under the waste management recycling challenge in each round; and which have been successful. [174235]

Mr. Morley: The lists of local authorities that bid for funds under the National Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund in rounds 1 and 2, which cover in 2002–03 and 2003–04 respectively, have been placed in the Library of the House. The lists for round 3, covering 2004–05, will be placed in the Library of the House shortly.

Successful bids in all three rounds are also published on the Defra website and can be accessed via the following links:

Successful bids in round 1: http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2002/020625a.htm

Successful bids in round 2: http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2002/021204a.htm

Successful bids in round 3: http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/localauth/funding/wastefund/index.htm

Sluice Gates (Queenborough)

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs who owns the sluice gates that lead into the tidal pond at the bottom of Borough Road, Queenborough, Isle of Sheppey. [171383]

Mr. Morley: I understand that Swale borough council are currently in the process of establishing the ownership of the land on which the sluice gates are located. These investigations will enable the council to establish, among other things, who is responsible for their maintenance. The council expect to conclude their investigations within a few weeks and I have asked them to inform my hon. Friend of the outcome.

Supermarkets

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her policy is on the regulation of prices paid to farmers by supermarkets. [174208]

Alun Michael: The price that supermarkets pay for their supplies, including those purchased direct from farmers, is a commercial matter. We have no plans to regulate this.

Two Tree Island

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received from English Nature regarding *(a)* contaminated materials on Two Tree Island and *(b)* the management of the site. [171534]

Mr. Morley: No representation have been made by English Nature to the Secretary of State in respect of Two Tree Island landfill site. Since 2001, English Nature, as a statutory consultee on planning applications, has attended meetings about proposed developments to repair sea wall defences at two locations (NE corner & south) within the perimeter of Two Tree Island. English Nature has made formal representations to a planning application by Southend-On-Sea Borough Council in respect of the NE corner in 2004. No formal planning application has yet been received for the areas within Castle Point Borough Council.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on how many occasions the Water Resources Act 1991 has been breached by release of contaminated material from Two Tree Island. [171535]

Mr. Morley: Since 1991, The Environment Agency and its predecessor body (The National Rivers Authority) have only had one report (12 October 1993 Councillor Peter Wexham, Borough of Southend-On-Sea) of a suspected breakout of landfill leachate in the area of Two Tree Island. The investigating officer at the time of the incident indicates in the file note, that he was unable to substantiate the report, as he could not pin point the exact location of the suspected leachate breakout.

The Agency does not routinely monitor Two Tree Island, but would investigate reports and concerns from external bodies including members of the public, as it normally does.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on what basis she relies for refusing to answer questions relating to the responsibilities of the Environment Agency in respect to *(a)* public safety and *(b)* contamination from reaching the closed Two Tree Island landfill site into the Thames estuary; and if she will make a statement. [174127]

Mr. Morley: The licence for the disposal of waste on Two Tree Island was held by Essex county council until 1994 when the licence was rescinded. The land was owned by, and continues to be owned by, Southend-on-Sea borough council, who is also responsible for monitoring emissions from the site.

As land-owner, the council has public safety responsibilities and must ensure that contamination does not leave the site.

The Environment Agency is not responsible for monitoring the site, but would wish to liaise with the land-owner if pollution was identified.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what *(a)* short-term and *(b)* long-term solutions she plans to protect the (i) public and (ii) environment from leachate from the closed Two Tree Island landfill site. [174228]

Mr. Morley: As noted in the response I gave on 12 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 344W, Southend-on-Sea borough council and Castle Point district council are responsible for the Two Tree Island landfill site. I understand, however, that the local authorities are planning to implement the recommendations contained in the report prepared by Halcrow Fox.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will publish the results of the Environment Agency investigations into leachate from the closed Two Tree Island landfill site. [174229]

Mr. Morley: Detailed results of the Environment Agency's investigations into leachate from the closed Two Tree Island landfill site are already publicly available on the Agency's public register that is held at Swift House, Frimley Business Park, Camberley, Surrey, GU16 5SQ.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the landfill site on Two Tree Island was closed. [174236]

Mr. Morley: The Two Tree Island waste disposal site was used for landfill operations, reportedly from the 1930s until the 1980s. The licence for the activity was rescinded in 1994.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Statutory Instruments

Norman Baker: To ask the Leader of the House if he will propose a change to the standing orders of the House to make provision for statutory instruments to be amended; and if he will make a statement. [175551]

Mr. Hain: A change to the standing orders of the House would not be sufficient to allow amendment of statutory instruments: an amendment of each enabling power would be needed.

In its 1996 report on Delegated Legislation, the Procedure Committee considered whether statutory instruments should be made amendable and recommended against, on the grounds that it would involve excessive complication, run directly counter to the past intentions of Parliament, and would frustrate the very purpose for which delegated powers were given.

Very little legislation currently in force allows for secondary legislation to be amended. An exception is proposed to be made in respect of emergency regulations under the current Civil Contingencies Bill. This reflects the exceptionally broad scope of the delegated powers conferred by the Bill and the circumstances in which those powers are likely to be exercised. A similar exception is made in the Emergency Powers Act 1920, which the Bill supersedes.

TRANSPORT

Speed Cameras

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much money raised in fines from speed cameras during the last year for which records are available was spent in *(a)* West Sussex and *(b)* the East Worthing and Shoreham constituency. [175039]

Mr. Jamieson: The Sussex Safety Camera partnership joined the cost recovery scheme in October 2002. Details of partnership operations for 2002–2003 will be published shortly.

Blackpool Light Rail

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the impact of *(a)* Blackpool borough council's previous relations with light rail contractors and *(b)* the lack of need to divert utilities as part of the proposed Blackpool light rail upgrade on the overall risk assessment of the Blackpool light rail bid in the light of the conclusions of the National Audit Office report, "Improving public transport in England through light rail", on cases of cost overruns in light rail schemes. [175504]

Mr. McNulty: The Department will be taking both of these factors into account in its assessment of the level of 'optimism bias' to apply to the estimated capital costs of the project, to reflect possible cost overruns.

Capital and Revenue Expenditure

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department has undertaken to assess the relative costs and benefits of capital expenditure and revenue expenditure on transport. [173313]

Mr. McNulty: The Secretary of State assesses each scheme on its merits, capital or revenue, against a range of appraisal criteria under the New Approach to Appraisal before taking individual investment decisions. Decisions must be consistent with the Government's overall spending allocations determined as part of the budgetary process. The Government meet their golden fiscal rule, so over the economic cycle, we only borrow to invest.

Car Clubs

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what financial support his Department gives to promote car clubs. [174867]

Mr. McNulty: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 12 May 2004 *Official Report*, column 399W.

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department has undertaken into the reduction in car journeys attributable to car clubs. [174869]

Mr. McNulty: Last year the Department commissioned research into the influence of soft factors on travel demand. The final report, which will include a chapter on car clubs, is expected to be completed shortly.

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the local authorities which support car clubs. [174870]

Mr. McNulty: The Department does not collect this information centrally.

Departmental Officials

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many officials in his Department and associated agencies have withheld details of their salaries and performance related pay in each year since 1997. [172086]

Mr. McNulty: Since the Department was formed in May 2002, there have been seven officials, out of a possible total of 42, who have withheld details of salaries.

Highway Code

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he intends to review the stopping distances of cars shown in The Highway Code. [175079]

Mr. Jamieson: The stopping distances shown in The Highway Code will be reviewed as part of the major revision of the code which will start later this year, including full consultation with all stakeholders with an interest in The Highway Code and road safety matters.

Journey Times

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the impact of increasing time taken by commuter rail journeys into London on modal shift. [174074]

Mr. Darling: Minor timetable changes are regularly made to ensure timetables are robust and provide more reliable journey times for passengers. Where major timetable changes are proposed—for instance to address capacity problems—they invariably involve consultation with local or regional stakeholders.

Motoring Costs

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the cost of motoring has been in each year since 1997, expressed at today's prices. [175075]

Mr. Jamieson: The following table shows how the cost of motoring[1], as measured by the Retail Prices Index, has changed in real terms each year since 1997. The cost of motoring,decreased by 4.8 per cent. between 1997 and 2003.

[1] "All motoring" includes the cost of purchase, maintenance, fuel, tax and insurance.

	Index (2003 = 100)
1997	105.0
1998	104.7
1999	105.6
2000	106.6
2001	104.1
2002	101.6
2003	100.0

Source:
Consumer Prices and Inflation Division, Office for National Statistics

MOTs

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total expenditure of the MOT computerisation project from its start was, broken down by *(a)* staff salaries, *(b)* office accommodation, *(c)* travel and subsistence and detached duty expenses and *(d)* fees to consultants. [173889]

Mr. Jamieson: The total costs incurred by the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) on the MOT Computerisation project from its start are £13,362,000. Of this staff salaries account for £3,816,000; office accommodation £2,950,000; travel and subsistence and detached duty expenses £817,000; fees to consultants £3,615,000; and other costs £2,164,000.

Railways

Lawrie Quinn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the effect upon costs in the rail industry of regulations prepared by the Health and Safety Commission concerning rail safety. [174813]

Mr. Darling: In accordance with Cabinet Office guidance first issued in 1999, all the railway safety regulations prepared by the Health and Safety Commission since then have been accompanied by Regulatory Impact Assessments (RIAs). Copies of all the RIAs were laid in the Houses of Parliament Libraries with the regulations.

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the Freight on Track campaign. [174999]

Mr. McNulty: The Government are committed to developing a competitive and efficient freight distribution system that supports economic growth while protecting the environment and recognise the economic importance and environmental benefits of rail freight to the UK.

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many containers and what tonnage of freight was carried by freight trains in each year since 1997. [175002]

Mr. McNulty: The tonnage for freight carried by freight trains on a yearly basis is contained in the Strategic Rail Authority's publication National Rail Trends, which has been placed in the Library of the House. The number of containers moved is not reported in the publication as that information is commercially sensitive.

Roads (Derby)

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment has been made of the means of completing the road linking the A50 at the A514 junction at Chellaston with Wilmore Road in Derby. [174826]

Mr. Jamieson: The proposed link-road in question is a local road and as such is the responsibility of Derby city council. I understand that the scheme is to be appraised by the city council as part of a major transport study, currently under way, for the Derby Joint Local Transport Plan Area.

School Buses

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what percentage of school buses in each local authority are fitted with seat belts. [175099]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department does not collect this information.

Sea ports (Transport Links)

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his policy is on providing rail and road links to ports. [175093]

Mr. Darling: We recognise the importance of good road and rail connections to ports and further improving access to them is an important objective of our 10-Year Transport Plan as well as being a significant issue for the regional planning process. Access to ports featured in several of the recent multi-modal studies and a number of the transport projects now being taken forward as a result of these studies will benefit ports related as well as domestic traffic.

Ship and Port Security

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what level of training is required for a ship security officer to be compliant with the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code. [174608]

Mr. Jamieson: The International Ship and Port Facility Security Code requires the ship security officer to have received training in accordance with the guidance given in Part B of the Code. The guidance lists 25 training topics.

Ship security officers on UK registered ships are required to attend a training course that the Maritime and Coastguard Agency has approved as meeting the Merchant Navy Training Board specification. 35 training providers have been approved to run ship security officer courses.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 26 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 782W, on shipping, how control measures for ships that do not provide evidence of having an International Security Ship Plan will be enforced. [171293]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department for Transport's Transport Security Directorate (TRANSEC), in conjunction with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), are developing appropriate response procedures to deal with ships that fail to provide evidence of an International Ship Security Certificate when seeking entry into a UK port. Consultation is on-going with a number of Departments and agencies including the MOD, Police, and Customs.

Tachographs

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects digital tachographs to be introduced. [175402]

Mr. Jamieson: We do not expect the first digital tachograph to be type-approved until the end of this month at the earliest. Therefore, the first vehicles fitted with digital tachographs are unlikely to be on sale before the end of the year. This means that the current date of 5 August 2004 for mandatory fitting to all relevant new vehicles cannot be met. On 8 March, I announced that we would not enforce the August 2004 deadline in the UK. Since that announcement, the European Commission has proposed an EU-wide moratorium in the enforcement of mandatory fitting by member states until August 2005. We will continue to monitor developments and will make further announcements as and when appropriate.

Traffic Accidents (Bootle)

Mr. Joe Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the percentage change has been in the number of *(a)* deaths and *(b)* serious injuries on the roads of Bootle since 1997. [175490]

Mr. Jamieson: The available information relates to local authority areas. In the Sefton local authority area there were 10 deaths in road accidents in 1997 and 10 deaths in 2002, the latest year for which information is available. The number of serious injuries fell by 12 percent from 100 in 1997 to 88 in 2002. Estimates on the basis of parliamentary constituencies will become available in the summer, where I shall write to my hon Friend with figures for Bootle and place a copy of my letter in the Libraries of the House.

Traffic Congestion

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the level of congestion on the M54 was in each year since 1997. [175076]

Mr. Jamieson: The Highways Agency does not currently take regular measurements of congestion levels on the M54. Once the agency's National Traffic Control Centre is fully operational by March 2005, information on journey times and speeds will become widely available.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Colombia

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) how much *(a)* money and *(b)* aid in kind the UK has (i) pledged and (ii) delivered to date to (A) UNICEF and (B) the UN Industrial Development Organisation within the

framework of the UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Colombia (HAP) 2003; and if he will make a statement; [174638]

(2) how much *(a)* money and *(b)* aid in kind the United Kingdom (i) pledged and (ii) delivered to date to (A) the United Nations Population Fund and (B) the UN High Commission for Refugees within the framework of the UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Colombia 2003; and if he will make a statement. [175182]

Hilary Benn: The UK did not contribute funds or provide aid in kind to the United Nations Children Fund, UN Industrial Development Organisation, UN Population Fund, or UN High Commission for Refugees within the framework of the UN's 2003 Appeal for Colombia. I refer the hon. Member for Moray to the reply I gave him on the 18 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 867–68W, for details of the nature of DFID's response to this appeal.

Departmental Projects

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the Department's medium-risk bilateral projects referred to on page 190 of the 2004 Departmental Report which have been evaluated as successful. [174116]

Hilary Benn: The medium risk projects, referred to on page 190 of DFID's Departmental Report, are listed on a table I have deposited in the Library called "DFID Medium Risk Projects: Written Question 174116". Each project is given a score ranging from one to five based on the likelihood of achieving their intended objectives. These scores are a forecast of success for projects of £1 million or more that have been in operation for at least two years. It records work in progress and is a twelve-month snapshot view on a particular date reflecting those projects that meet the above criteria. The table lists those projects that have a score of one or two.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the Department's low-risk bilateral projects referred to on page 190 of the 2004 Departmental Report that have not been evaluated as successful. [174117]

Hilary Benn: The low risk projects, referred to on page 190 of DFID's Departmental Report, are listed on the table below. Each project is given a score ranging from one to five based on the likelihood of achieving their intended objectives. These scores are a forecast of success for projects of £1 million or more that have been in operation for at least two years. It records work in progress and is a twelve-month snapshot view on a particular date reflecting those projects that meet the above criteria. The table lists those projects receiving a score in the range of three to five which means they will achieve only some of their objectives.

All low risk projects with a commitment value of £1 million or over only partly achieving their output purpose during 2003

Region	*Title*	*Commitment*
African Division		
DFID Ghana		
Ghana	Civil Service Performance Improvement Project Phase Two	5,602,000
DFID Kenya		
Kenya	Approtech LTMIP	1,700,000
	Business Partnerships Programme Kenya (BPP)	2,000,000
DFID Malawi		
Malawi	Support to National Democratic Institute	3,000,000
DFID Mozambique		
Mozambique	National Health Plan—TC	1,433,000
	Demining in Mozambique: HALO Trust	3,908,048
DFID Southern Africa		
Botswana	ACORD Ngamiland	1,681,000
South Africa, Republic of	SAUVA HIV AIDs	1,000,000
	Free State community policing.	1,920,000
DFID Tanzania		
Tanzania	Parastatal Sector Reform Programme III	5,400,000
DFID Uganda		
Uganda	Uganda Fish Farming	2,197,000
DFID Zimbabwe		
Zimbabwe	Empowerment of Farm Worker Communities	1,614,778
DFID Ethiopia		
Ethiopia	SCF Emergency Drought Relief Fik Zone	1,425,318
	Oxfam: Emergency Nutrition. Boloso Sorie	1,443,803
	Farm Africa: Farmer Research	2,654,235
Asia Division		
DFID Bangladesh		
Bangladesh	Research and Extn. In Farm Power Issues (REFPI)	1,623,000
	Rural Bridges Project	4,500,000
	Bridge Replacement Project	7,600,000
	GIDP—SCADA/MSIP—Gas Infrastructure Development	23,609,000
DFID India		
India	Urban Public Health Engineers (MDSUPHO)	1,464,000
	West Bengal Reproductive Child Health Project	2,990,000
	West Bengal Sexual Health Project	4,780,000
	Reproductive Health Project Orissa	4,997,780
	Pub. Admin. Training Prog.	4,650,000

All low risk projects with a commitment value of £1 million or over only partly achieving their output purpose during 2003

Region	*Title*	*Commitment*
DFID Nepal		
Nepal	Right-based response to HIV/AIDS	1,750,000
DFID Russia		
Russian Federation	SPS for Health and Social Care	2,525,000
	REAREF project	2,689,000
	Support to BAS—Samara	2,000,000
Europe, Middle East and Europe and Central Asia		
Albania	Albania Tax Reform	1,287,615
Kyrgyzstan, Republic of	Kyrgyz Tariff project	1,249,542
Latin America Department		
Bolivia	Mink'a Agricultural Development Project Phase IV	2,827,000
Brazil	Participatory Management of Natural Resources	3,000,000
Central America	PAHO Disease Control	2,771,150
Middle East and North Africa		
Egypt, Arab Republic	Environment (SEAM 2)	6,316,000
Overseas Territories		
Anguilla	Secondary School Development Project	3,088,000
St Helena	Cargo Handling Equipment	1,031,000
	Link Committee	1,589,680
Policy Division		
Non Specific Country	WHO HQ Roll Back Malaria	48,000,000
	Commonwealth Local Govt. Forum	2,000,000
	Joint UNDP UMP Phase III	2,562,000
	CLS: Homeworker Mapping	1,213,380

Liberia

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of the *(a)* number and *(b)* location of Liberian refugees; and if he will make a statement. [175476]

Hilary Benn: In February 2004 the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated a total of 324,000 Liberian refugees in neighbouring countries; 147,000 in Guinea, 68,000 in Sierra Leone, 67,000 in Ivory Coast, and 42,000 in Ghana. It has since been estimated that up to 17,000 refugees have returned spontaneously to Liberia from these countries. With improved conditions, services and stability inside Liberia, UNHCR expects up to 100,000 of the remaining refugees to return by the end of 2004, and the remainder in 2005. DFID has assisted with the provision of services and support to refugees and internally displaced persons by providing £10.6m in humanitarian support in 2003 and 2004. DFID has committed a further £6m for Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration, as an additional contribution to post-conflict recovery and the creation of conditions for a return to peace and stability.

Occupied Palestinian Territories

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) how much expenditure is planned by his Department in the next three years for projects to work with young people in the Occupied Palestinian Territories; [174555]

(2) if he will make a statement on the projects his Department is supporting in the Occupied Palestinian Territories specifically aimed at giving young people an alternative to violence and extremism; and at what cost in 2003–04. [174554]

Hilary Benn: The best way of giving young people an alternative to violence and extremism is to ensure they have a full and effective education with good prospects of future employment. DFID's support to the United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA) for which planned expenditure over the next three years is about £15 million per calendar year, provides substantial support to education and emergency employment creation. Over two thirds of UNRWA's annual budget is allocated for the education needs of Palestinian children in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan. DFID provides project funding for UNRWA to help improve the school management by involving the local community. Planned funding is about £500,000 per year for the next two years.

DFID recently agreed a £7 million contribution to the World Bank's Public Financial Management Reform Trust Fund to support the Palestinian Authority. This will have an indirect impact on supporting young people, as the money will help maintain public services including education and keep PA employees at work by paying salaries.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what research he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the level of disruption to the schooling and vocational education of young people in the Occupied Palestinian Territories over the last five years. [174556]

Hilary Benn: DFID has not commissioned any such research but monitors the level of disruption to education through regular contact with our Palestinian and international partners including the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Education, United Nations Relief Works Agency and Non Governmental Organisations. Many pupils and teachers now face difficulty in getting to school, which in effect reduces the number of full school days. There is also a reduction in the financial resources

available for education as a result of the severe downturn of the Palestinian economy. The high priority given to education by Palestinian communities means that there has been no increase in the very low dropout rate, and only a small reduction in the high rate of enrolment of pupils in schools. The disruptions and violence nevertheless have a high psychological impact on students and on student achievement.

South Africa

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of the statement released by South Africa's Deputy President Jacob Zuma's office on 11 May 2004; what his Department's assessment is of the scale of the problem highlighted by Mr. Zuma; and if he will make a statement. [174640]

Hilary Benn: The statement by South Africa's Deputy President Zuma's office, highlighted the extent of food insecurity and vulnerability in the Southern African region. At the 15 May Southern African Development Community Summit on Agriculture and Food Security in Dar es Salaam the South African government announced a contribution of R 100 million (approximately £8 million) to help meet these needs. DFID welcomes this and believe that South Africa has an important role to play in improving food security in the region, including as a major food producer and grain market.

Food security is a continuing challenge in Southern Africa. At the peak of the recent humanitarian crisis, the United Nations assessed that 15.2 million people (26 per cent. of the population) were in need of food aid. DFID spent over £88 million in 2002–03 in response to the Southern African food crisis (in Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Swaziland and Lesotho). Acute needs appear to be lessening now as a result of improved harvests in many but not all countries, However, chronic poverty appears to have increased and more communities are now likely to become destitute as a result of variable rainfall or other shocks such as illness or loss of work.

The impact of HIV/AIDS has placed a major burden on households and increased their vulnerability. Increasing food production is necessary but not sufficient, since many people do not grow their own food, and lack resources to buy food even if it is available. Increasing employment, land reform, better infrastructure and access to markets, and more private sector investment are also required.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether the Department had observers at the 2004 Southern African Development Community Heads of State and Government Summit on Agriculture and Food Security held on 15 May 2004 in Dar es Salaam; what reports of the *(a)* proceedings and *(b)* conditions of this summit he has received; and if he will make a statement. [174639]

Hilary Benn: The British High Commissioner in Tanzania attended the opening ceremony of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Summit on 15 May. The Summit launched an action plan to address the food security problems in the region. It emphasised the extent and depth of vulnerability in the region and the need for concerted international action on a wide range of issues. Member states re-endorsed their commitment to increase their financing to agriculture to 10 per cent. of national budgets within five years.

The official communiqué sets out the agreed action and priority areas for short and longer-term support. DFID, in collaboration with partners, is supporting a number of programmes to address the issues discussed at the Summit. DFID's collaboration emphasises access to food, as well as increasing production; monitoring vulnerability and targeting vulnerable groups; and the important role of the private sector and regional trade. DFID welcomes SADC's renewed commitment to food security as a development priority.

Sudan

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what assistance his Department is providing with demobilisation disarmament and the reintegration of combatants in Sudan; [174774]

(2) what is the nature of the support being provided by his Department to assist reintegration in the Sudan. [174773]

Hilary Benn: Full demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) of combatants will only take place in Sudan after a peace agreement has been signed between the Government of Sudan and Sudan People's Liberation Movement. However, as part of the international effort to promote successful DDR, DFID is currently supporting both the preparation and planning for full-scale demobilisation and the demobilisation of Child Soldiers.

DFID has provided about £505,000 of assistance to UNICEF for child soldier disarmament and demobilisation, as well as the return, reunification and reintegration of vulnerable children. We have also provided about £312,000 of assistance to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for three DDR field advisers under their preparatory support for reintegration for former combatants and community based weapons reduction. In addition we are also providing a DDR adviser to act as a resource person to the Inter Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in the IGAD-led peace talks, and to the international community through the UN Resident Coordinator for Sudan.

Both DFID and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office are also pressing the UN at the highest levels to ensure that DDR is given the utmost priority, and is fully supported during coming peacekeeping missions.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what action his Department is taking to support the development of effective governance in Sudan. [174775]

Hilary Benn: DFID hopes that a framework peace agreement will emerge from the Sudan peace talks soon. DFID sees a sustainable and just peace as key to effective governance in Sudan so the United Kingdom has committed itself to supporting Sudan in implementing the peace agreement.

One of DFID's objectives for the programme in Sudan is the development of effective public administration, security and judicial systems. To this end we are supporting policy development, for example, by helping the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) to develop good governance principles for the new Government of South Sudan. DFID is also working on plans to support capacity building on safety, security and accessible justice; on local government; and on public financial management. In addition we have financed a consultancy report on the development of policing in Sudan, and are considering support for security sector reform.

Zimbabwe

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions *(a)* he, *(b)* members of his Department and *(c)* other members and representatives of the Government have had with (i) representatives of the World Food Programme (WFP) and Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), (ii) members and representatives of the Government of Zimbabwe and (iii) members and representatives of the Government of South Africa concerning the WFP and FAO's crop assessment missions recently cancelled by Zimbabwe officials; what assessment his Department has made of this incident; and if he will make a statement. [174641]

Hilary Benn: The Government of Zimbabwe's recent decision to cancel the crop assessment mission has been discussed extensively in numerous meetings in Harare involving DFID Zimbabwe, the British embassy, United Nations agencies, and other donors. Officials from DFID and the embassy, as well as the UN, have expressed concerns to the Zimbabwean Government. DFID and embassy officials have also discussed this issue with South African officials.

The Government of Zimbabwe's cancellation of the mission means that there is no internationally accepted estimate of Zimbabwe's harvest, and their decision not to request international food aid means that normal advance planning processes will not take place. The Zimbabwean claim that they have produced 2.4 million metric tonnes (MT) of maize this year is simply not credible. The actual harvest is probably below 1.2 million MT, compared to a requirement of about 1.8 million MT. Given the significant shortage of foreign exchange in Zimbabwe, it will be difficult for the Government to import enough grain to fill this gap. Many poor and vulnerable people may therefore go very hungry, if not worse, as a result of these decisions.

DFID Zimbabwe, in collaboration with other major donors and the UN system, will monitor the humanitarian situation in Zimbabwe closely, while continuing to provide targeted food assistance and other humanitarian support to the most vulnerable sections of Zimbabwe society through NGO programmes which DFID is able to fund directly. DFID will press the Government of Zimbabwe to recognize the humanitarian need within the country and to collaborate with the international community to provide an apolitical and co-ordinated response.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the continuing need for international food aid to Zimbabwe. [174776]

Hilary Benn: The Government of Zimbabwe have decided to cancel the joint crop assessment mission with the UN which had started in late April. This means that there is no internationally accepted estimate of Zimbabwe's harvest. Their separate decision not to request international food aid means that normal advance planning processes for delivery of food aid will not take place. The Zimbabwean claim that they have produced 2.4 million metric tonnes (MT) of maize this year is simply not credible. The actual harvest is probably below 1.2 million MT, compared to a requirement of about 1.8 million MT. Given the significant shortage of foreign exchange in Zimbabwe, it will be difficult for the Government to import enough grain to fill this gap. Many poor and vulnerable people may therefore go very hungry, if not worse, as a result of these decisions.

The UN and donors, including the UK, have expressed our concern to the Zimbabwean Government about their handling of the humanitarian situation. DFID, in collaboration with other major donors and the UN system, will monitor the position in Zimbabwe closely, while continuing to provide targeted food assistance and other humanitarian support to the most vulnerable sections of Zimbabwe society through NGO programmes which we are able to fund directly. DFID will press the Government of Zimbabwe to recognize the humanitarian need within the country and to collaborate with the international community to provide an apolitical and coordinated response.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

VAT

26. **Claire Ward:** To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners what response he has received from churches to the announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the extension of VAT for listed places of worship. [174918]

Sir Stuart Bell: I and my colleagues in the Churches receive many indications of appreciation from parishes for the Chancellor's extension of the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme to repay the full amount of VAT paid on repairs to listed church buildings after 1 April 2004.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Museums and Galleries Month

10. **Linda Perham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on activities and events that have taken place and are taking place in museums and galleries month. [174900]

Estelle Morris: Museums and Galleries Month comprises more than 1,100 special events that will attract an estimated 10 million people during May. The month shows that museums and galleries are becoming ever more interesting and accessible to all sections of society, and I congratulate the organisers and all those taking part.

Cinema

11. **Mr. Rendel**: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has to improve access to the cinema for small towns and rural communities. [174901]

Estelle Morris: The UK Film Council, the Government's strategic agency for film, oversees several strategies to improve access to cinema, including in small towns and rural areas.

These include the establishment of a Digital Screen Network; the installation of audio-descriptive captioning in 78 cinemas to enhance the cinema-going experience of visually impaired people; continued funding for film societies; and a fund to help film clubs, societies and community groups to buy digital projection equipment.

Amateur Sports Clubs

12. **Tony Cunningham**: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the take-up of rate relief support for amateur sports clubs. [174902]

Tessa Jowell: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave earlier today to my hon. Friend the Member for Gloucester (Parmjit Dhanda), *Official Report*, column 1293.

Landmark Buildings

13. **Bob Spink**: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assistance is available for the preservation of landmark buildings within small communities. [174903]

Estelle Morris: English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund run a number of grant schemes which provide assistance for the preservation of listed buildings of historic or architectural importance in both large and small communities. Additionally, English Heritage and local authorities provide advice on practical measures with preservation.

Ofcom (Television Access)

14. **Tom Levitt**: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she expects Ofcom to publish its code on television access services for people with hearing or sight difficulties. [174904]

Tessa Jowell: I understand from OFCOM that they expect to publish the code in the summer.

Olympics 2012

15. **Sir Sydney Chapman**: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will report progress on London's bid for the 2012 Olympics. [174905]

19. **Miss McIntosh:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on progress on the Olympics bid for 2012. [174910]

Tessa Jowell: On 18 May the International Olympic Committee announced that London had been accepted as a Candidate City for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, together with Paris, Madrid, New York and Moscow.

London 2012 is now working on the completion of the Candidate files, which will be submitted to the IOC by 15 November 2004.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans there are to hold Olympic events in Wales. [174907]

Tessa Jowell: The bidding company, London 2012 announced the venues for the bid to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games on 16 January. The Olympic football competition will be held in stadia in Cardiff, Belfast, Birmingham, Glasgow, Manchester, Newcastle and London. There will be opportunities for sporting facilities across the UK to be used by national teams for training camps.

In addition the Cultural Olympiad will take place across the UK over the four years up to and including 2012 and the 2012 Olympic Torch Relay is likely to involve every major city and town throughout the UK over several months.

Community Radio

16. **Ian Lucas**: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she will announce the funding arrangements for community radio. [174906]

Estelle Morris: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State announced on 5 March 2004 that £0.5 million pounds has been made available for community radio for each of the next two financial years. OFCOM will administer the fund.

Athletics

17. **Mr. Amess**: to ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps her Department is taking to promote participation in athletics; and if she will make a statement. [174908]

Mr. Caborn: Athletics is benefiting from the Government's investment of £10 million into Club Links, which aims to increase the percentage of young people moving between School Sport Partnerships and governing body accredited clubs. This will build new, and strengthen existing, links between schools and clubs and increase participation opportunities.

King Edward VII Convalescent Home

18. **Mr. Andrew Turner**: to ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the future of the former King Edward VII convalescent home for officers, Osborne. [174909]

Tessa Jowell: English Heritage has considered a range of options. A recent study suggests that the most feasible would be to convert the former convalescent home at Osborne House into a high quality hotel.

Audio-description Technology

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what proportion of British live theatres are *(a)* equipped for and *(b)* operating equipment for audio-description of live performances; and if she will make a statement. [175015]

Estelle Morris: Arts Council England estimates that of the 283 theatres they fund in England, 53 (about 19 per cent.) are equipped with and operate their own audio description equipment. 11 additional theatres have their own equipment and use Vocaleyes, an Arts Council England funded organisation, to provide audio description. In the last 12 months, 12 additional theatres have used Vocaleyes for both their equipment and audio description service.

Arts Council England has committed £165,000 to the core funding of Vocaleyes in 2005–06, an increase of 68 per cent. since 2003–04.

Licensing Act

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what account she has taken of representations from the circus industry in developing the draft guidance under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003. [175556]

Mr. Caborn: We considered carefully the views expressed to us by, and on behalf of, the circus industry when drawing up the draft Guidance to licensing authorities which was laid before Parliament on 23 March. We have, in so far as possible, made the draft Guidance clearer in relation to circuses. We did not accept their case for exemption during the passage of the Licensing Bill, nor for amending the arrangements for temporary events. Further, it is not possible to create exemptions to the Licensing Act 2003 through the Guidance, as it cannot amend the Act.

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will delay further parliamentary consideration of the draft guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 until further representations from the circus industry due to be received on 27 May have been considered. [175557]

Mr. Caborn: We want to see the Licensing Act 2003 implemented as soon as possible so that consumers, industry and local communities can benefit from the reforms. We do not, therefore, wish to delay Parliament's consideration of the draft Guidance to licensing authorities which was laid on 23 March. I do, however, understand the concerns of circuses and I look forward to meeting the hon. Member and circus industry representatives on 27 May to consider how to assist this important and popular part of our cultural heritage to adjust to the requirements of the new regime in a way that is as smooth and manageable as possible.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Electoral Registration

28. **Mr. Barnes:** To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission what information the Electoral Commission holds on the shortfall in electoral registration. [174920]

Mr. Viggers: Last year, the Electoral Commission published research assessing the impact on levels of registration of new registration arrangements in Northern Ireland. I understand that the Commission does not currently hold up-to-date information relating to registration shortfalls in England, Scotland and Wales. However, the Commission is currently establishing a research project to identify the extent and nature of under-registration in Great Britain, as well as reviewing the operation and impact of rolling registration since 2001.

All-postal Voting

29. **Bob Russell:** To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission what arrangements the Electoral Commission has made for spot checks on households in all-postal voting areas. [174917]

Mr. Viggers: While the Electoral Commission has a statutory duty to evaluate the pilot schemes in June, it has no operational role in the conduct of the elections. The Commission has advised Returning Officers of the post-election checks they might use to provide assurance of the security of postal voting, but has no plans to undertake any checks itself during the course of the election period as this could interfere with the conduct of the ballot.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Crown Prosecutors

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Solicitor-General what the annual leave allowance is for each grade of Crown Prosecutor. [167303]

The Solicitor-General: The annual leave allowance for all grades of crown prosecutor below the Senior Civil Service grade (SCS) is 25 days per year on entry to the department, and 30 days upon completion of 10 years' service. Crown prosecutors in the SCS and the Chief Crown Prosecutor grades, are entitled to 30 days' annual leave on entry to the department.

Discontinued Cases (Merseyside)

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Solicitor-General how many cases in the Merseyside area were referred to *(a)* the Crown court and *(b)* a magistrates court in each year since 1997; and how many of those cases were subsequently discontinued. [173129]

The Solicitor-General: The following tables show the number of cases received by CPS Merseyside in the magistrates courts and in the Crown court in each year

since 1997. Magistrates courts receipts include cases referred to the Crown Prosecution Service by the police for pre-charge advice and non-criminal proceedings, as well as cases referred to the Service for prosecution. Crown court receipts include appeals and committals for sentence, as well as cases committed for trial.

The tables show the outcome of cases prosecuted, both in numerical terms and as a proportion of completed cases. The number and percentage of cases discontinued in the magistrates courts, and the number and percentage resulting in a judge ordered acquittal in the Crown court, are included for each year.

1997		1998		1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
47,080	—	45,557	—	47,969	—	49,158	—	42,307	—	46,876	—	48,383	—
5,451	13.1	5,550	13.7	6,502	15.2	6,759	15.9	6,084	16.3	5,447	14.0	5,584	13.9
3,138	7.6	2,112	5.2	3,434	8.0	3,042	7.2	2,255	6.0	2,260	5.8	1,749	4.4
41	0.1	39	0.1	48	0.1	11	0.0	7	0.0		0.0	67	0.2
47	0.1	56	0.1	81	0.2	78	0.2	85	0.2	88	0.2	110	0.3
946	2.3	673	1.7	457	1.1	708	1.7	622	1.7	520	1.3	647	1.6
25,603	61.7	26,374	65.0	25,615	59.9	24,487	57.6	23,173	61.9	24,706	63.4	25,088	62.4
4,226	10.2	4,137	10.2	5,012	11.7	5,883	13.8	3,989	10.7	4,985	12.8	5,834	14.5
2,051	4.9	1,662	4.1	1,619	3.8	1,541	3.6	1,200	3.2	945	2.4	1,114	2.8
9,623	23.2	8,430	20.8	10,522	24.6	10,598	24.9	9,053	24.2	8,315	213	8,757	20.3
31,880	76.8	32,173	79.2	32,246	75.4	31,911	75.1	28,362	75.8	30,636	78.7	32,036	79.7

1997		1998		1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
5,022	—	4,854	—	4,411	—	4,569	—	3,947	—	4,183	—	4,518	—
447	10.9	637	14.8	443	12.7	589	16.0	687	19.0	654	18.0	686	18.9
45	1.1	123	2.9	188	5.4	123	3.3	142	3.9	123	3.4	78	2.2
56	1.4	52	1.2	49	1.4	61	1.7	64	1.8	75	2.1	85	2.3
273	6.7	253	5.9	259	7.4	263	7.1	330	9.1	299	8.2	301	8.3
2,969	72.4	2,843	66.0	2,178	62.6	2,330	63.2	2,062	56.9	2,105	57.8	2,151	59.3
313	7.6	397	9.2	363	10.4	323	8.8	338	9.3	384	10.5	324	8.9
821	20.0	1,065	24.7	939	27.0	7,036	28.7	7,223	33.8	7,757	37.6	7,750	31.7
3,282	80.0	3,240	75.3	2,541	73.0	2,653	77.9	2,400	66.2	2,489	68.4	2,475	68.3

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Joint Custody

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many separated parents have joint custody of their children; and if he will make a statement. [173556]

Margaret Hodge: Since the Children Act 1989 was implemented in 1991, "custody" of a child has ceased to be a concept in the law of England and Wales. Under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 a court has the power to make a residence order, being

"an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom a child is to live".

Section 1(5) of the Children Act provides that a court cannot make an order unless it considers that doing so would be better for the child than making no order at all ("the no order principle"). It follows that, if parents are agreed on the arrangements for their child, then it may be that the matter never comes before a court, or that, if it is before a court, the court considers that it is better for the child that no order be made. In other cases, such as those where there is no agreement between the parents, it is open to the court to make a residence order, if it considers that it is in the best interests of the child to do so. Such an order might be a "shared residence" order (so that the child lives with both parents, at different times, usually spending around half his time with each). The following table shows the latest available judicial statistics (2002). During 2002 a total of 103,191 section 8 orders were made in private law.

Disposal of selected applicants in private law in all tiers of court, 2002

Nature of application	*Applications withdrawn*	*Orders refused*	*Orders of no order*	*Orders made*
Parental responsibility	773	290	132	8,240
Section 8				
Residence	1,536	158	431	30,006
Contact	2,373	518	945	61,356
Prohibited steps	300	40	77	8,889
Specific issue	207	33	67	2,940

Connexions

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the effects on the private sector of his Department's decision to reduce the amount it will offset against Connexions partnerships' VAT costs. [172650]

Margaret Hodge: We have recommended that partnerships look to improve their tax efficiency. It does not automatically follow that this will have any effect on sub-contracting to private providers. The Department is monitoring how partnerships are dealing with the reduction in VAT transitional funding and we have made it clear that we expect them to continue to involve the private sector. We know that the lead body model is the most tax efficient and an increasing number of areas are adopting this, leaving private sector careers contracts in place.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations he has received from private providers of Connexions services concerning his Department's decision to reduce the amount it will offset against partnership's VAT costs. [172671]

Margaret Hodge: In total my Department has received 12 representations from private providers about the decision to reduce the amount of transitional support to Connexions partnerships.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether it is his Department's policy to ensure that Connexions partnerships commit themselves to maintaining the pension benefits of private providers' staff if a partnership opts to shift from a sub-contracting operational model to a system of direct delivery and to incorporate the private providers' staff. [172676]

Margaret Hodge: Connexions Partnerships are private companies with obligations to their individual boards. As such the Department is unable to become involved in individual decisions about pension benefits for Connexions staff. This includes where a partnership opts to shift from a sub-contracting operational model to a system of direct delivery and to incorporate the private providers' staff. We would however expect Connexions partnerships to give due regard to any incoming staff and to make every effort to ensure that they are not disadvantaged in any way.

Departmental Annual Report

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much the production of his Department's latest annual report cost; how many copies were printed; how many copies of it were sold at its cover price; to whom copies of the report have been provided free of charge; and how many copies were provided free of charge. [171137]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: While the Department pays for some production costs of its annual report, these only cover the design and typesetting. The costs of printing are met directly by the publisher, The Stationery Office (TSO) and do not fall to the Department. The Department buys in copies from the TSO to distribute internally and to our partners.

The costs for the Department for Education and Skills 2004 Report was:

	£
Typesetting and design	17,500
Buying in copies from TSO	12,000
Total	29,500

Other costs of printing and publication are met directly by the publisher, The Stationery Office Limited (TSO), and do not fall to Government. It is also for TSO to decide how many are printed. As the report was published on 30 April, there is no meaningful information yet available on numbers of copies sold by TSO.

The number of copies distributed free of charge was:

	Number of copies
Vote Office	150
Paper Office	50
HMT	10
Ofsted	15
DfES internal	
Parliamentary Office	22
Library	20
Press Office	25
Labour Attachés	50
SoS, Ministers, Special Advisers	9
Board, DGs, Directors	32
DMs and policy contributors	125
Total	508

The report is also available on the departmental website free of charge at http://www.dfes.gov.uk/deptreport2004/.

Disabled Children

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many families of disabled children have been provided with short breaks through the Quality Protects programme; what proportion that represents as a total of such families; and if he will make a statement. [170610]

Margaret Hodge: £60 million was earmarked for services for disabled children and their families for the years 2001–04 through the Quality Protects programme. This funding was mainstreamed into local authority budgets from 2004–05. We do not count the number of additional children supported by the Quality Protects grant. The Children in Need Census 2003, collected information of any disabled child receiving resources from the Local Authority Social Services Department within the Census week, and identified a total of 4,560 disabled children as receiving short term breaks from a total of 29,700 receiving a service. There are approximately 320,000 disabled children in England, including 110,000 severely disabled children.

Education Services (Essex)

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average class size in state primary schools was in *(a)* the County of Essex in each year from 1980 to 1997 and *(b)* the County of Essex and the unitary authorities of Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock in each year from 1998 to 2003. [173326]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The requested information is given in the table.

Maintained primary schools[1]: average class size[2]—position in January each year 1980 to 2003

	Average size of one teacher classes		
	Essex LEA[3]	*Southend-on-Sea[4]*	*Thurrock[4]*
1980	27.1	[5]—	[5]—
1981	26.8	[5]—	[5]—
1982	26.7	[5]—	[5]—
1983	26.4	[5]—	[5]—
1984	26.5	[5]—	[5]—
1985	26.6	[5]—	[5]—
1986	27.1	[5]—	[5]—

Maintained primary schools[1]: average class size[2]—position in January each year 1980 to 2003

	Average size of one teacher classes		
	Essex LEA[3]	*Southend-on-Sea*[4]	*Thurrock*[4]
1987	26.5	[5]—	[5]—
1988	26.1	[5]—	[5]—
1989	26.0	[5]—	[5]—
1990	26.1	[5]—	[5]—
1991	26.7	[5]—	[5]—
1992	26.6	[5]—	[5]—
1993	26.8	[5]—	[5]—
1994	26.9	[5]—	[5]—
1995	26.9	[5]—	[5]—
1996	26.9	[5]—	[5]—
1997	27.3	[5]—	[5]—
1998	27.6	[5]—	[5]—
1999	27.7	28.4	27.6
2000	27.4	28.0	26.9
2001	26.9	28.0	26.4
2002	26.5	28.0	25.5
2003	26.6	27.9	26.3

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Classes as taught during a selected period on the day of the census.
[3] Definition of the local education authority area changed in 1999 as a result of government office reorganisation.
[4] Applicable from 1999—after local government reorganisation.
[5] Not applicable.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

School Meals

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in *(a)* Brent East and *(b)* each London borough claim free school meals; and what estimate he has made of those eligible to claim free school meals in each case. [172817]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Available information relates to (i) the number of pupils who are known to be eligible for and claim a free school meal, and (ii) the number of pupils who took a free school meal.

Figures for Brent East are given in the table. The same information for local education authorities in London has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1]: School meal arrangements as at January 2004 (provisional)[2]—Brent East Parliamentary Constituency

	Number of pupils on roll[3]	*Pupils who are known to be eligible for and claim free school meals*		*Pupils who have a free school meal*[4]	
		Number	*Percentage*[5]	*Number*	*Percentage*[5]
Primary schools	7,590	2,340	30.9	1,910	25.2
Secondary schools	2,730	930	34.0	780	28.7

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10
[3] Includes pupils with single and dual registration.
[4] The number of pupils who took a free school meal on the day of the census.
[5] Pupils expressed as a percentage of total pupils on roll.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1]: School meal arrangements as at January 2004 (provisional)[2]—London local education authority areas

		Primary schools				
		Number of pupils on roll[3]	*Pupils who are known to be eligible for and claim free school meals*		*Pupils who have free school meals*[4]	
			Number	*Percentage*[5]	*Number*	*Percentage*[5]
	London	628,490	167,530	26.7	139,060	22.1
	Inner London	229,910	88,380	38.4	74,780	32.5
202	Camden	11,460	4,900	42.8	4,040	35.2
201	City of London	0	0	[6]—	0	[6]—
204	Hackney	17,950	7,360	41.0	6,400	35.7
205	Hammersmith and Fulham	9,780	4,350	44.5	3,700	37.8
309	Haringey	21,920	7,860	35.9	6,850	31.2
206	Islington	14,740	6,000	40.7	5,230	35.5
207	Kensington and Chelsea	7,040	2,810	39.9	2,360	33.6
208	Lambeth	19,900	7,500	37.7	6,410	32.2
209	Lewisham	22,130	6,260	28.3	4,920	22.2
316	Newham	31,280	11,480	36.7	9,240	29.5
210	Southwark	23,630	8,480	35.9	6,910	29.2
211	Tower Hamlets	22,030	11,880	53.9	9,910	45.0
212	Wandsworth	17,220	5,110	29.7	4,960	28.8
213	Westminster	10,830	4,390	40.5	3,860	35.6

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1]: School meal arrangements as at January 2004 (provisional)[2]—London local education authority areas

		Secondary schools				
		Number of pupils on roll[3]	Pupils who are known to be eligible for and claim free school meals		Pupils who have free school meals[4]	
			Number	Percentage[5]	Number	Percentage[5]
	London	420,270	100,400	23.9	77,310	18.4
	Inner London	126,160	49,460	39.2	39,080	31.0
202	Camden	9,700	2,890	29.8	2,450	25.3
201	City of London	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—
204	Hackney	7,350	3,060	41.7	2,130	28.9
205	Hammersmith and Fulham	7,220	2,350	32.5	1,900	26.3
309	Haringey	11,250	4,290	38.1	3,710	33.0
206	Islington	7,880	3,540	45.0	2,590	32.9
207	Kensington and Chelsea	3,500	990	28.4	830	23.8
208	Lambeth	9,800	3,050	39.1	2,550	32.7
209	Lewisham	11,650	3,560	30.6	2,570	22.1
316	Newham	18,140	7,830	43.2	6,240	34.4
210	Southwark	10,040	4,650	46.3	4,110	40.9
211	Tower Hamlets	12,930	7,680	59.4	5,350	41.4
212	Wandsworth	10,300	2,710	26.3	2,070	20.1
213	Westminster	8,410	2,850	33.9	2,590	30.8

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.
[3] Includes pupils with single and dual registration.
[4] The number of pupils who took a free school meal on the day of the census.
[5] Pupils expressed as a percentage of total pupils on roll.
[6] Not applicable; no schools of this type
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1]: School meal arrangements as at January 2004 (provisional)[2]—London local education authority areas

		Primary schools				
		Number of pupils on roll[3]	Pupils who are known to be eligible for and claim free school meals		Pupils who have free school meals[4]	
			Number	Percentage[5]	Number	Percentage[5]
	Outer London	398,580	79,150	19.9	64,270	16.1
301	Barking and Dagenham	18,490	4,510	24.4	3,840	20.8
302	Barnet	25,830	4,900	19.0	4,130	16.0
303	Bexley	21,480	2,770	12.9	1,960	9.1
304	Brent	22,820	6,670	29.2	5,550	24.3
305	Bromley	24,210	3,320	13.7	2,570	10.6
306	Croydon	30,300	6,650	22.0	5,350	17.6
307	Ealing	26,200	6,720	25.7	5,450	20.8
308	Enfield	26,840	6,710	25.0	5,710	21.3
203	Greenwich	20,660	7,380	35.7	5,680	27.5
310	Harrow	19,520	3,090	15.8	2,520	12.9
311	Havering	20,110	2,400	11.9	1,920	9.6
312	Hillingdon	24,210	3,950	16.3	2,900	12.0
313	Hounslow	18,980	4,250	22.4	3,660	19.3
314	Kingston upon Thames	11,640	920	7.9	750	6.4
315	Merton	14,570	2,030	13.9	1,670	11.4
317	Redbridge	23,680	3,870	16.4	3,240	13.7
318	Richmond upon Thames	12,590	1,180	9.4	970	7.7
319	Sutton	15,140	2,030	13.4	1,670	11.0
320	Waltham Forest	21,320	5,810	27.3	4,750	22.3

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1]: School meal arrangements as at January 2004 (provisional)[2]—London local education authority areas

		Secondary schools				
		Number of pupils on roll[3]	Pupils who are known to be eligible for and claim free school meals		Pupils who have free school meals[4]	
			Number	Percentage[5]	Number	Percentage[5]
	Outer London	294,110	50,940	17.3	38,220	13.0
301	Barking and Dagenham	12,090	3,220	26.6	2,140	17.7
302	Barnet	21,150	3,280	15.5	2,530	12.0
303	Bexley	18,020	1,530	8.5	1,120	6.2
304	Brent	15,940	3,500	21.9	2,590	16.2
305	Bromley	22,240	2,300	10.4	1,780	8.0

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1]: School meal arrangements as at January 2004 (provisional)[2]—London local education authority areas

		Secondary schools				
		Number of pupils on roll[3]	Pupils who are known to be eligible for and claim free school meals		Pupils who have free school meals[4]	
			Number	Percentage[5]	Number	Percentage[5]
306	Croydon	18,680	3,490	18.7	2,770	14.8
307	Ealing	14,950	4,210	28.1	3,410	22.8
308	Enfield	21,640	4,350	20.1	2,690	12.4
203	Greenwich	14,410	4,250	29.5	3,100	21.5
310	Harrow	9,050	1,650	18.2	1,380	15.2
311	Havering	16,520	1,630	9.9	1,280	7.7
312	Hillingdon	17,810	2,960	16.6	2,310	12.9
313	Hounslow	16,680	3,110	18.7	2,780	16.6
314	Kingston upon Thames	9,340	810	8.7	680	7.3
315	Merton	8,600	1,370	16.0	1,030	11.9
317	Redbridge	20,020	2,960	14.8	2,060	10.3
318	Richmond upon Thames	7,350	1,210	16.5	940	12.7
319	Sutton	15,730	1,280	8.1	940	6.0
320	Waltham Forest	13,890	3,840	27.6	2,710	19.5

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.
[3] Includes pupils with single and dual registration.
[4] The number of pupils who took a free school meal on the day of the census.
[5] Pupils expressed as a percentage of total pupils on roll.
[6] Not applicable; no schools of this type
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Head Lice

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the prevalence of head lice in schools. [175279]

Margaret Hodge: The Department does not keep records of the incidence of head lice in schools and has not made an assessment. To help schools combat this problem the Department of Health have produced a leaflet, "The prevention and treatment of head lice". The local primary care trust can also provide information which teachers can pass on to children and parents as part of an overall health education policy.

Inter-country Adoption

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps he is taking to facilitate inter-country adoption with all signatories of the 1993 Hague Convention. [172218]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 19 May 2004]:* The UK ratified the 1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in relation to inter-country adoption on 1 June 2003. My Department, which under the Convention acts as the central authority for the UK, is working closely with other signatories to remove any obstacles to the successful operation of the Convention.

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many signatories of the 1993 Hague Convention have suspended inter-country adoption with the UK. [172215]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 19 May 2004]:* Romania has introduced a suspension on all inter-country adoptions, not just with the UK. No other signatories to the Convention have suspended work on inter-country adoption with the UK.

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research he has commissioned into the impact of the arrangements for inter-country adoption which came into effect on 1 June 2003. [172217]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 19 May 2004]:* My Department launched a full public consultation on arrangements for intercountry adoption on 31 January 2004. This will bring intercountry adoption within the framework of the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

The consultation document specifically asked for comments and feedback on the implementation of the current arrangements for intercountry adoption, which came into effect on 1 June 2003. The consultation closed on 30 April. My Department also held consultation meetings with frontline staff and other stakeholders to discuss the impact of the 1 June 2003 changes.

All of the feedback received on the changes made on 1 June 2003 will be taken into account before the new arrangements to be made under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 are finalised.

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions he has had with Belarus regarding intercountry adoption. [172219]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 19 May 2004]:* My Department has opened a dialogue with the Central Authority in Belarus regarding the procedures for intercountry adoption following Belarus' ratification of the 1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in respect of Intercountry Adoption.

International Baccalaureate

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* state secondary schools and *(b)* sixth form colleges offer the International Baccalaureate as an alternative to A-levels. [174860]

Mr. Miliband: There are 18 maintained secondary schools that offer the International Baccalaureate. Of these, nine submitted results for 16 to 18-year-olds for publication in the 2004 Performance Tables.

There are two Sixth Form Colleges that offer the International Baccalaureate. Neither of these submitted results for 16 to 18-year-olds for publication in the 2004 Performance Tables.

Local Network and Children's Funds

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money has been allocated through the *(a)* Local Network Fund and *(b)* Children's Fund to the North East of England; what criteria his Department has laid down for the allocation of this money; and how the arrangements are audited. [173699]

Margaret Hodge: The total allocation for the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People and the Children's Fund, in the North East, since May 2001 when the programmes were launched is as follows.

	£
Local Network Fund for Children and Young People	7,215,152
Children's Fund:	38,122,961

Criteria

The Local Network Fund and Children's Fund are key elements of the Government's agenda to improve outcomes and opportunities for disadvantaged children and young people. The two programmes have different criteria and delivery arrangements:

The Children's Fund targets 5 to 13-year-olds and aims to develop local preventive strategies for children and young people at risk from social exclusion. The Fund contributes to the development of the wider Local Preventative Strategy which the Government have asked each local authority to develop for 0 to 19-year-olds. Local Children's Fund partnership boards, covering unitary authorities, decide local priorities for preventive services and allocate funds through direct commissioning or by inviting applications.

The Local Network Fund targets 0 to 19-year-olds and is delivered through the voluntary sector. Grants up to £7,000 and capacity building support are available to small community groups working with children and young people facing disadvantage. Applicants can bid for funding under one of four themes: economic disadvantage, isolation and access, aspirations and experiences and children's voices. Decisions on funding are taken by panels of local people with experience of the issues faced by young people in their area.

Audit

The Children's Fund, in the North East is administered through 12 programmes each with their own partnership board, lead agency and accountable body. Partnership boards comprise voluntary organisations, statutory agencies as well as members of the local community. The lead agency is responsible for the operational direction of the programme while the accountable body ensures the financial probity of the Fund.

The Local Network Fund is delivered through a network of 57 local Funds run by voluntary organisations with grant-making and community development experience. Local Funds report, quarterly, to DFES on financial and service performance. DFES also undertakes regular monitoring visits to Funds to assess and improve performance and undertakes an annual financial and performance audit of the Fund.

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money from *(a)* the Children's Fund and *(b)* the Local Network Fund has been allocated to projects serving Newcastle East and Wallsend parliamentary constituency. [173700]

Margaret Hodge: Information on both the Local Network Fund and Children's Fund is not collected on a parliamentary constituency basis.

Newcastle East and Wallsend is covered by the Tyne and Wear Local Network Fund which has a total allocation since 2001 of £3,146,297.

Newcastle East constituency is within the Newcastle Children's Fund which has a total allocation since 2001 of £4,965,059.

Wallsend is within the North Tyneside Children's Fund which has a total allocation since 2001 of £2,080,433.

Allocations for both programmes are based on indices of child poverty.

Panjabi

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has for the teaching of Panjabi in schools. [175047]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Department encourages schools to offer a wide range of languages, including community languages. Under current national curriculum requirements, schools are free to offer any modern foreign language, including Panjabi, as long as the offer includes at least one of the working languages of the European Union.

Learners of Panjabi will be able to have their language skills recognised by the Languages Ladder—the National Recognition Scheme—which will be rolled out nationally from September 2005.

Prison Education

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the budget was in each of the last five years for prisoners undertaking *(a)* distance learning courses, *(b)* Open University or other degree courses, *(c)* basic skills qualifications, *(d)* GCSE qualifications and *(e)* A-level qualifications. [172423]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Funding for the Offenders' Learning and Skills Unit is ring-fenced and administered jointly by DfES and the Home Office. Prisons are allocated a total education budget and have flexibility to use this to purchase education to meet their learners' needs.

Budgets are not disaggregated by level of course or qualification. Core funding for prisoners' education for the last five years is:

£ millions

Financial year	Education expenditure
1999–2000	40.9
2000–01	41.9
2001–02	52.6
2002–03	59.4
2003–04	70.9

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many prisoners in each of the last five years successfully completed *(a)* distance learning courses, *(b)* Open University or other degree courses, *(c)* basic skills qualifications, *(d)* GCSE qualifications and *(e)* A-level qualifications. [172425]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The table as follows shows all prisoner achievements in Open University courses over the past five years.

	Completed	Passed
1998–99	185	160
1999–00	220	189
2000–01	245	211
2001–02	250	213
2002–03	343	307

We do not hold information on the completion of Distance Learning courses and current data collection systems do not allow us to report on awards gained across the prison estate at GCSE and A level.

The table as follows shows prisoner achievement in basic skills against national targets over the past four years. In 2000–01 and 2001–02 targets were set at level 2 because qualifications at this level are considered key to enhancing individual employability.

We widened targets from 2002–03 to cover all levels to enable prison establishments to be more responsive to the range of learning needs among their population.

	Target	Achievement (percentage)
2000–01	[1]14,500	12,500 (86)
2001–02	[1]18,000	16,000 (88)
2002–03	[2]28,800	41,518 (144)
2003–04[3] (provisional)	[2]36,631	46,597 (127)

[1] Level 2
[2] All levels
[3] Provisional

Recycling

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will introduce measures to promote recycling in schools. [173198]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Citizenship curriculum includes teaching pupils about issues that impact on the society and the environment. Pupils should learn about what improves and harms their local environment and about the importance of recycling. This is part of Education for Sustainable Development which is a statutory requirement in the Science, Geography, Design and Technology and Citizenship curricula.

School Councils

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to promote school councils in primary schools. [173330]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: To support schools to introduce a school or class council, the Department has funded School Councils UK to produce a primary schools toolkit to help teachers and pupils to set up effective councils. The primary toolkit was made available to schools in September 2000. The Department has just issued statutory guidance to LEAs and school governing bodies ("Working Together: giving children and young people a say") on pupil participation, which promotes the value of school councils in actively engaging pupils in decision making processes.

The National Assembly for Wales which has responsibility for Education there has decided to make school councils mandatory in all Welsh schools.

School Governors

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to give special recognition to school governors with 25 years' service. [175430]

Mr. Miliband: The Department is currently examining ways in which the profile of school governors can be raised and their efforts celebrated and better recognised. A project board has been established and will hold its first meeting early in June. The board's representatives are drawn from the National Governors' Council, the National Association of Governors and Managers, the National Co-ordinators of Governor Services, the Trades Union Congress, the Confederation of British Industry, HSBC Bank, The Rayne Foundation, The Education Network and the School Governors' One-Stop Shop. Long-service awards are being considered as part of this initiative.

School Nurses

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance he issues to *(a)* primary care trusts and *(b)* local education authorities on the employment of school nurses. [170372]

Mr. Miliband: The Department for Education and Skills has not issued specific guidance to primary care trusts or local education authorities on the employment of school nurses, as school nurses come within the remit of the Secretary of State for Health. We do, however, recognise that school nurses play an important role in offering health and nursing advice and support to schools, such as in advising and training staff on managing pupils' medical conditions. This is acknowledged in the joint DfES and Department of Health good practice guide 'Supporting pupils with medical needs'.

Schools (Capital Investment)

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 17 May, *Official Report*, column 709W, on schools (capital investment), what priority will be given in subsequent waves to schools excluded from a wave one bid which did not cover all schools in a local education authority. [175235]

Mr. Miliband: Schools in a local authority that have been successful in wave 1 of Building Schools for the Future which are not in its wave 1 project will not be given any special priority in subsequent waves of investment. Decisions on prioritisation of all groups of schools submitted by local authorities for the next waves of investment will be taken on the basis of the published criteria.

Schools (South Ribble)

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the effects on schools of changes since 1997 in the level of investment in schools in South Ribble. [171673]

Mr. Miliband: Details of investment in education initiatives in schools in the South Ribble constituency have been placed in the Library.

Secondary Transfer (Barnet)

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on secondary transfer in Barnet, with reference to children whose birthdays fall close to 31 August. [173927]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: I am aware that in Barnet some parents are encountering problems in transferring their child to secondary school because the child has been educated below its chronological year group. My officials have written to the Local Education Authority to ask it to work with its schools to broker a solution. We understand that an established Working Party, set up by the Admissions Forum, has agreed to look into the issue, and to consider strategies for dealing with the current situation.

All admission authorities have a duty to consider applications for places at their schools in accordance with their published admission arrangements. Where places are sought for children who are out of their normal year groups, the School Admissions Code of Practice advises admission authorities to consider such requests fully and to make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case, even if it is not their general practice to educate children out of year group.

Sure Start

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has further to develop Sure Start programmes in Tamworth constituency, with particular reference to rural areas. [173279]

Margaret Hodge: Children's centres represent the next stage of the Government's plans to expand high quality integrated service provision for young children. By March 2008 we aim to have children's centres services available to all under-fives and their families living in the 20 per cent. most disadvantaged wards, which include Glascote in Tamworth.

As a first step to achieving this, local authorities have been allocated funding and targets to enable them to reach 65 per cent. of under-fives and their families through children's centres by March 2006. We expect them to build on their existing Sure Start local programmes, Early Excellence Centres and Neighbourhood Nurseries. Additional funding has also been made available to cover the extra costs of providing children's centre services in rural areas. It is the local authority's responsibility to determine how to allocate these resources to best serve the needs of families.

Targeted Capital Fund

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the bids he received from Staffordshire Local Education Authority for the 2004–05 Targeted Capital Fund by *(a)* name of school, *(b)* type of school, *(c)* location of school, *(d)* purpose of bid, *(e)* amount of bid and *(f)* whether the bid was successful. [174732]

Mr. Miliband: Staffordshire local education authority (LEA) submitted three bids to the Targeted Capital Fund (TCF) for 2004–05. One was for a project at LEA schools and two were for projects at voluntary aided (VA) schools. These are in the following table:

Bid A—Rugeley reorganisation

Schools included	*Type of school*	*Location of school*	*Purpose*	*Amount of bid*	*Successful (yes or no)*
Chancel Infants	Community	All Rugeley	To rationalise the schools, provide additional early years places, community and special Education need (SEN) facilities and remove 520 surplus places.	3,531,000	Yes
Churchfield C of E (C) Junior	Voluntary controlled				
Flaxley Primary	Community				
Hob Hill C of E/Methodist Primary	Voluntary controlled				
Nursery Fields Primary	Community				
Pear Tree Community Primary	Community				
Ravenhill Primary	Community				
Western Springs Primary	Community				

Bid C—Extension/alterations to St. John Fisher Catholic School

Schools included	Type of school	Location of school	Purpose	Amount of bid (£)	Successful (yes or no)
St. John Fisher Catholic High School	VA	Newcastle	To raise standards, by expanding opportunity and flexibility of provision especially at 14–19: extending provision for SEN and the wider inclusion agenda providing for worksorce reform.	3,329,054	No

Bid D—St John the Evangelist Catholic School Amalgamation

Schools included	Type of school	Location of school	Purpose	Amount of bid (£)	Successful (yes or no)
St. John the Evangelist Catholic Primary	VA	Stoke on Trent	To amalgamate St. John the Evangelist Catholic split site primary school onto the upper site in Gloucester Road.	1,875,465	No

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what the purpose is of the 2004–05 Targeted Capital Fund; [174736]

(2) if he will list the criteria by which bids for the 2004–05 Targeted Capital Fund were judged; [174737]

(3) what plans the Department has to invite bids for a further Targeted Capital Fund; [174729]

(4) how many bids for the 2004–05 Targeted Capital Fund were made by *(a)* state schools and *(b)* voluntary-aided schools; [174731]

(5) if he will list the 68 projects which were successful in making bids of £186 million to the 2004–05 Targeted Capital Fund; [174734]

(6) how many bids for the 2004–05 Targeted Capital Fund were made by schools in the West Midlands region; and how many were successful. [174730]

Mr. Miliband: The Targeted Capital Fund (TCF) is a relatively limited programme and is intended to support projects which contribute directly to meeting the Government's educational priorities, and which might not otherwise be supported through formulaic allocations to local education authorities (LEAs) and schools.

The key criteria for 2004–05 TCF bids focused on schools causing concern, curriculum improvements, expansion of popular and successful schools, surplus place removal, improved special education needs provision and innovative use of buildings. Full details of the bid criteria for 2004–05 are listed in the guidance, a copy of which can be found in the Library. Bids for TCF projects are made to the Department by LEAs on behalf of their schools.

We hope to announce shortly the arrangements for the TCF for 2005–06. For the 2004–05 TCF round, we received 202 LEA bids covering 373 schools in total, and 199 voluntary aided school bids covering 223 schools. For the West Midlands region, 39 bids were made, nine of which were successful.

The following table shows the 68 successful 2004–05 TCF bids:

2004–05 TCF projects

LEA	Project	Net cost (£)
Hackney	Replacement and expansion of primary school	4,803,120
Hammersmith and Fulham	Establishment of centralised single-site pupil referral unit	507,500
Islington	Physical and Sensory SEN Service Area Development—school co-location	3,896,000
Tower Hamlets	To raise standards by improving premises	681,264
Croydon	Autistic resource at special school	960,000
Ealing	Replacement SEN School with new centre of excellence	4,520,000
Enfield	Wilbury Primary School, new build and remodelling to replace huts	3,868,000
Kingston-upon-Thames	Regeneration of primary school	2,694,268
Kingston-upon-Thames	To provide a learning centre based on the City Learning Centre model	1,862,436
Merton	Improvement of SMART centres to meet pupils medical educational needs	692,000
Coventry	New replacement 1.5 FE community primary school and nursery	3,000,000
Sandwell	New build primary school and children's centre, Tipton	3,019,753
Walsall	To open a two FE primary with a 26 FTE nursery class	2,550,818
Wolverhampton	Primary rationalisation	3,506,090
Liverpool	New building for amalgamated school	3,157,472
Wirral	Rationalisation of science accommodation	644,010
Wirral	Construction of sports hall	1,540,887
Bury	A new high school for Radcliffe	5,000,000
Manchester	Development and expansion of two successful and popular primary schools	4,960,000
Rochdale	Transformation in Central Heywood primary schools	3,391,635
Stockport	Inclusive space to raise standards and to deliver the Workplace Reform	1,772,290
Trafford	Replace school with significant defects and remove surplus places	3,999,163
Bradford	Specialist provision for pupils with emotional and behavioural needs	4,106,500
Cornwall	Improve primary and SEN provision in Penzance	1,415,248
Tameside	To replace one primary school with a 1.5 FE building	2,125,000
Wigan	New primary school in Platt Bridge	2,405,601
Sheffield	Woodthorpe	3,100,000
Calderdale	New sixth form and community facility	4,786,444

2004-05 TCF projects

LEA	*Project*	*Net cost (£)*
Kirklees	Refurbishment and remodelling of two schools in special measures	2,492,000
Leeds	Establishment of a new school in the Holbeck area	3,507,930
South Gloucestershire	King Edmund Target Capital Fund bid	2,471,930
Stockton-on-Tees	Replacement of faculty of science and technology to enhance curriculum	1,569,500
North Lincolnshire	Establishment of new school to replace existing school	3,375,804
York	Performing arts and community education centre	2,600,000
Milton Keynes	Successful school expansion to be enhanced by ICT Infrastructure	4,970,000
Derbyshire	New library, ICT and music block	1,640,800
Derbyshire	Learning resource centre	2,590,049
Derby	Establish accommodation for a pupil referral unit for KS3	1,849,600
Durham	21st century community school—Gurney Valley	2,714,856
Brighton and Hove	Provision of post-16 places for young people with special needs	3,028,800
Leicestershire	Project to support inclusion and develop SEN expertise in the area	3,526,264
Leicester	Braunstone Primary Reorganisation 2	1,649,032
Leicester	Braunstone Primary Reorganisation 1	2,996,125
Staffordshire	Rugeley Reorganisation	3,531,000
Stoke-on-Trent	Proposed Woodhouse primary school	2,064,000
Wiltshire	Integrated provision for ASD pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4	862,420
Swindon	Autistic spectrum disorder—centre of excellence	1,600,000
Bracknell Forest	Raising performance at Brakenhale Campus through the provision of an OLC	2,400,000
Wokingham	The Wokingham Special School of the Future	5,000,000
Cambridgeshire	Residential provision for children with special educational needs	435,115
Devon	Raising standards in Exeter	3,621,501
Devon	14 to 19 Learning Centre to increase participation in rural community	741,407
Plymouth	Modernisation and refurbishment of special school	2,711,035
Torbay	Brixham primary re-organisation	1,475,840
Southend-on-Sea	Improvement of sport, PE and performing arts infrastructure	2,464,236
Southend-on-Sea	Remodelling special schools as centres of excellence	2,101,791
Thurrock	Improved special educational needs provision	5,000,000
Worcestershire	Provision of additional accommodation, science facilities and LRC	2,268,800
Worcestershire	To provide enhanced management facilities and new focused entrance	502,240
Kent	Replace temporary accommodation by incorporating into main building	2,004,800
Medway	Creation of a full service extended school: community hub	2,312,407
Nottingham	Establishment of new school to replace unsuitable 1930's school	4,216,337
Gloucestershire	Archway School refurbishment	4,999,602
Hertfordshire	Design technology replacement and additional accommodation	1,869,040
Norfolk	South Lynn—new school and relocation of nursery	3,066,431
Northamptonshire	Transfer of Raeburn Special School to Tiffield	4,576,000
Northumberland	First school replacement	1,604,000
Suffolk	Primary school—regeneration	5,000,000

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the projects which made successful bids to the Targeted Capital Fund by *(a)* name of school, *(b)* location of school, *(c)* type of school, *(d)* name of local education authority, *(e)* purpose of bid and *(f)* amount of money awarded. [174738]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested has been placed in the Libraries.

Trafficked Children

Mr. Dawson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what conclusions he has reached about services for trafficked children following Operation Paladin. [173797]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 19 May 2004]:* I welcome the findings of the Paladin report which was published on Monday. Operation Paladin has been a valuable exercise in determining the nature of child migration to the UK. We will work with the Home Office and other organisations in considering the report and its recommendations.

It is of course for local authorities to decide how best to provide support and services for children in need in its area, including those who are the victims of trafficking. When a child enters the country alone and claims asylum or there are concerns that he or she may have been trafficked, the immigration service should immediately refer the child to the relevant local authority's social services department. The social services department will undertake a needs assessment and will provide services in the light of the outcome of that assessment. These services should be tailored to the individual needs of the child, just as they should be for any child in need.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Airports (Aid)

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which airports in Northern Ireland receive financial aid from *(a)* Her Majesty's Government, *(b)* the European Union and *(c)* other public sources; what the total cost of that support was during the most recent financial year for which information is available; and how much that support represented per passenger. [174199]

Mr. Spellar: During the most recent financial year for which information is available, April 2003 to March 2004, no financial aid was provided from Her Majesty's Government, the European Union or other public sources, for which the Government have responsibility, to airports in Northern Ireland.

Armagh College

Mr. Mallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* A5 and *(b)* A2 students were enrolled by Armagh College of Further and Higher Education to study (i) French, (ii) chemistry, (iii) art, (iv) physics and (v) economics in (A) 2001–02, (B) 2002–03 and (C) 2003–04. [174044]

Mr. Gardiner: The following table contains the requested information.

AS/A2 level enrolments at Armagh college 2001–02 to 2003–04

	2001–02		2002–03		2003–04	
Subject area	*AS*	*A2*	*AS*	*A2*	*AS*	*A2*
French	15	8	12	10	9	2
Chemistry	25	21	30	23	23	22
Art	23	5	15	8	13	3
Physics	31	11	18	22	4	12
Economics	27	21	10	14	1	11
Total	121	66	85	77	50	50

Source:
Armagh College (data are provisional).

Arts Funding

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what conditions of *(a)* copyright and *(b)* royalty payments are attached to grant aid awarded by the (i) Arts Council of Northern Ireland, (ii) Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure and (iii) Ulster-Scots Agency. [173188]

Angela Smith: The Arts Council of Northern Ireland does not attach conditions relating to *(a)* copyright or *(b)* royalty payments to any award. The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure does not award grant aid for the publication of creative writing in Ulster-Scots. Government support for the arts in Northern Ireland is disbursed chiefly through the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

The Ulster-Scots Agency has stipulated conditions relating to copyright and "royalty" payments in the letters of offer it issues on grant applications. With regard to copyright the Agency has attempted to ensure that it can use material it has grant aided, for example in promotions or on the Agency website. With regard to royalty payments the Agency has attempted to ensure that grants it has made which have a commercial aspect (such as to publishers who will sell books printed with Agency assistance) contain a 'claw back' clause, whereby a percentage of the income from such sales is returned to the Agency. Both of these practices are currently under review.

Corporation Tax

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the impact the low corporation tax rates in operation in the Republic of Ireland has on manufacturing industries in Northern Ireland. [174198]

Mr. Gardiner: No formal assessment has been made as to the impact that the low corporation tax rate in operation in the Republic of Ireland (RoI) has had on manufacturing industries in Northern Ireland.

Although the RoI can offer a lower rate of corporation tax, in recent years, Invest NI has successfully secured new investment from the RoI by promoting Northern Ireland as a region where companies can reap the benefits of the greater competitiveness of the Northern Ireland economy. In practice, it has been found that the more competitive cost base in Northern Ireland often outweighs the corporate taxation differential between Northern Ireland and the RoI.

Indeed, a recent report, commissioned by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, into the cost of operating business in Northern Ireland concluded that lower labour and property costs, which represent a significant component of the cost base of many firms, places Northern Ireland businesses at a competitive advantage vis-a-vis Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland.

Creative Writing

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total amount of public money granted by the *(a)* Arts Council of Northern Ireland, *(b)* Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure and *(c)* Ulster-Scots Agency was towards the publication of creative writing in the Ulster-Scots language in Northern Ireland in each year since 1999. [173187]

Angela Smith: The Arts Council of Northern Ireland has not made funding available specifically for the publication of writing in the Ulster-Scots language. However, in the 1998–99 financial year, the Arts Council made a grant of £7,500 to the Ulster-Scots Language Society for the publication of a book by Philip Robinson. Since then the Arts Council has received no applications for publications in the Ulster-Scots language.

The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure's funds in support of the arts in Northern Ireland are disbursed chiefly through the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the Department has not made any funding directly available for the publication of creative writing in the Ulster-Scots language.

The amount of funding granted by the Ulster-Scots Agency towards the publication of creative writing in the Ulster-Scots language in Northern Ireland since 1999 is detailed in the following table.

	Amount (£)
1999	—
2000	—
2001	—
2002	6,280.00
2003	—
2004	[1]21,855.00

[1] Projected.

Electricity Tariffs

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made in the application to the European Commission for clearance for a scheme to reduce electricity tariffs in Northern Ireland. [173409]

Mr. Gardiner: A paper has been submitted to the European Commission outlining the Government's proposal to make an intervention aimed at bringing about a 10 per cent. decrease in electricity prices for non-domestic consumers below the level they would otherwise have been.

It is hoped that a meeting to discuss the matter with Commission officials will be held shortly.

Government Investment

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of financial support to business from *(a)* the Industrial Development Board for Northern Ireland, *(b)* the Local Enterprise Development Unit and *(c)* Invest Northern Ireland was represented by (i) capital grants, (ii) grants for research and development, (iii) grants for training, (iv) grants for marketing, (v) loans and (vi) investment in equity in each of the last five years. [173651]

Mr. Gardiner: The following table shows the percentage of financial support to business by category in each of the last five years offered by Invest NI and its predecessors. Although the question does not specifically mention the Industrial Research and Technology Unit, as this agency was responsible for providing research and development support prior to Invest NI being set up, it has also been included in the table. Information relating to training support under the Company Development Programme (CDP) as administered by the Business Support Division of DETI has also been incorporated, as this function is now included within Invest NI's remit. In all cases the figures shown relate to offers of assistance made by the organisations concerned.

It has not been possible to provide detailed information on levels of marketing support as a marketing grant is a form of revenue grant and cannot easily be separated from other revenue grants.

Percentage of Assistance Offered By Assistance Category (1999–2000 to 2003–04)

Percentage

	1999–2000	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04 (Provisional)*
Capital Grant	28	15	19	11	9
Research and Development	8	9	13	29	18
Training (CDP)	7	13	10	6	12
Loans	0	0	2	4	3
Equity	1	2	4	6	6
Revenue Grant[1]	43	47	37	28	33
Other Assistance[2]	13	14	15	16	19
Total	100	100	100	100	100

[1] Revenue Grants include a range of grants such as marketing grant, employment grant, management salary grant and operating grant.
[2] Other Assistance includes consultancy grants, incentive grants, quality grants, trade missions, business improvement services, tourism development as well as assistance to third party organisations.

Housing (Central Heating)

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many and what percentage of Northern Ireland Housing Executive homes have had *(a)* oil and *(b)* gas-fired central heating installed, broken down by Housing Executive District Office Area. [174376]

Mr. Spellar: The information is as follows:

	Oil		*Gas*	
NIHE District Office	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
Belfast 1	310	13.4	1,066	45.9
Belfast 2	883	22.5	1,645	42.0
Belfast 3	783	22.7	1,891	54.8
Belfast 7	564	13.1	2,404	55.7
Belfast 4	374	9.6	1,594	41.1
Belfast 5	494	11.5	1,934	45.1
Belfast 6	261	7.3	1,956	54.7
Ballymena	1,164	34.9	2	0.1
Antrim	815	28.3	2	0.1
Newtownabbey 1	386	15.1	591	23.1
Newtownabbey 2	446	18.0	726	29.4
Carrickfergus	374	16.8	360	16.2
Larne	319	17.8	311	17.4
Ballycastle	366	38.9	0	0.0
Ballymoney	873	53.8	0	0.0
Coleraine	1,421	40.3	2	0.1
Banbridge	710	35.8	0	0.0
Newry	1,350	38.4	0	0.0
Armagh	636	29.3	0	0.0
Lurgan	1,449	46.8	0	0.0
Portadown	595	33.5	0	0.0
Dungannon	892	44.6	0	0.0
Fermanagh	965	41.6	0	0.0
Bangor	429	14.0	416	13.6
Newtownards	997	22.7	517	11.8
Castlereagh	710	16.3	592	13.6
Lisburn	979	20.1	617	12.7
Lisburn Dairyfarm	307	14.1	1,203	55.1
Downpatrick	1,001	37.3	1	0.1
Waterloo Place	908	34.8	1	0.1
Waterside	995	36.6	0	0.0
Collon Terrace	643	23.6	0	0.0
Limavady	522	32.1	0	0.0
Magherafelt	511	34.6	1	0.1
Strabane	624	25.2	0	0.0
Omagh	740	34.9	0	0.0
Cookstown	434	36.2	0	0.0
Total:	26,230	25.6	17,832	17.4

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many and what percentage of Northern Ireland Housing Executive homes have *(a)* coal-fired and *(b)* electric and *(c)* no central heating, broken down by Housing Executive District Office Area. [174377]

Mr. Spellar: The information is as follows.

NIHE District Office	Coal		Electric		None	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Belfast 1	460	19.8	443	19.1	42	1.8
Belfast 2	715	18.2	665	17.0	10	0.3
Belfast 3	545	15.8	211	6.1	0	0.0
Belfast 7	684	15.8	620	14.4	42	1.0
Belfast 4	737	19.0	1,054	27.2	110	2.8
Belfast 5	1,030	24.0	538	12.6	269	6.3
Belfast 6	1,033	28.9	322	9.0	6	0.2
Ballymena	1,274	38.1	850	25.4	37	1.1
Antrim	1,263	43.8	725	25.2	9	0.3
Newtownabbey 1	564	22.0	1,013	39.5	6	0.2
Newtownabbey 2	643	26.0	656	26.5	0	0.0
Carrickfergus	853	38.4	635	28.6	1	0.0
Larne	635	35.5	506	28.3	16	0.9
Ballycastle	515	54.8	25	2.7	8	0.9
Ballymoney	576	35.5	138	8.5	5	0.3
Coleraine	1,329	37.7	757	21.5	3	0.1
Banbridge	1,048	52.9	201	10.1	11	0.6
Newry	1,719	48.9	419	11.9	1	0.0
Armagh	1,230	56.7	274	12.6	15	0.7
Lurgan	834	26.9	761	24.6	26	0.8
Portadown	784	44.2	395	22.3	1	0.1
Dungannon	889	44.5	160	8.0	14	0.7
Fermanagh	1,145	49.3	201	8.7	1	0.0
Bangor	1,059	34.7	1148	37.6	3	0.1
Newtownards	1,878	42.7	997	22.7	2	0.0
Castlereagh	912	21.0	2,130	49.0	0	0.0
Lisburn	2087	42.9	1,140	23.4	38	0.8
Lisburn Dairyfarm	457	20.9	184	8.4	0	0.0
Downpatrick	1,196	44.6	474	17.7	5	0.2
Waterloo place	1,183	45.3	465	17.8	12	0.5
Waterside	1,244	45.8	452	16.6	1	0.0
Collon terrace	1,478	54.3	583	21.4	20	0.7
Limavady	847	52.1	224	13.8	6	0.4
Magherafelt	780	52.8	142	9.6	0	0.0
Strabane	1,701	68.6	83	3.3	56	2.3
Omagh	1,173	55.4	183	8.6	19	0.9
Cookstown	552	46.0	86	7.2	1	0.1
Total:	37,052	36.2	19860	19.4	796	0.8

Note:
Properties where no central heating is recorded include redevelopment properties, properties due for demolition, and properties not within the Rent Scheme.

Marching Season

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the role played by local community activists during the 2003 marching season; and what plans he has to provide support for local community activists during the 2004 marching season. [174091]

Mr. Pearson: During 2003, a wide range of people in the community played an important role in easing tensions and resolving problems around parading and I am most grateful for that. In preparing for the forthcoming marching season, the Secretary of State and I intend to hold a series of meetings similar to last year, which will include all those who have the ability to help ensure that 2004 passes off as peacefully as 2003.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his assessment is of the Police Service of Northern Ireland security assessment relating to Portadown recently received by the Parades Commission; and if he will make a statement on his assessment of security over the forthcoming marching season. [174094]

Mr. Pearson: The Parades Commission is independent of Government and the Secretary of State does not see PSNI advice to the Commission. There is currently no information which would suggest this marching season will be significantly different from 2003. However, with regard to the forthcoming marching season, the Secretary of State and I intend to hold a series of meetings similar to last year, which will include all those who have the ability to help ensure that 2004 passes off as peacefully as 2003.

PPP Contracts

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether a company which successfully bids for inclusion in an education-related public private partnership scheme retains the right *(a)* to put the contract on the market at any stage, *(b)* to sell the contract at a profit and *(c)* to keep the profit from the sale of the contract without a requirement to provide guarantees that the scheme will be completed to the specifications to which they initially signed up; and whether revenue generated through weekend and evening openings of buildings constructed under such a scheme is required to be invested in the school or its pupils. [174008]

Mr. Gardiner: *(a)* A PPP contractor, which successfully bids for inclusion in an education related PPP project, may put the contract on the market at any time during the life of the contract. The prior written consent of the school authority is required and this can be withheld at its discretion.

(b) Provided the prior written consent of the school authority has been obtained, a PPP contractor may sell a PPP contract at a profit.

(c) A PPP contract specifies the level of service which an authority can expect to receive in return for payment of the unitary charge. If a contractor were to sell, or otherwise dispose of a PPP contract, it would retain any profit accruing and the service requirements and obligations would transfer to the new contractor. The new contractor would be expected to deliver the full range of services as if there had been no change in ownership.

The net income from any third party usage of a school that has been procured under PPP is shared between the school authority and the contractor on the basis agreed in the contract.

Public Administration Review

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total cost incurred by the Review of Public Administration has been since the beginning of financial year 2001–02. [170438]

Mr. Pearson: In May 2002, the Northern Ireland Executive agreed an overall budget of £3 million for the Review of Public Administration. To date a total expenditure of £1.71 million has been incurred by the Review.

Racial Attacks

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what information he has received about the extent and trend of racial attacks in Northern Ireland; what action is being taken with regard to them; and if he will make a statement. [174188]

Mr. Spellar: The following table sets out the number of racial incidents reported to the police in Northern Ireland since 2001.

The Government have frequently put on record their abhorrence of all forms of intolerance and racism. They are committed to eradicating such manifestations of hatred, whether based on racism or on sectarianism and are developing a co-ordinated response to the problem in Northern Ireland.

I will shortly bring forward an Order in Council to enable courts to deal more severely with crimes motivated by racist, sectarian and homophobic hatred.

The proposals will require sentencers to treat racial and religious aggravation as aggravating factors, where proven, when sentencing and to extend this legislation to offences motivated by hatred of sexual orientation.

The proposals also increase maximum sentences available for certain specified, mainly violent, offences including where racial, religious or sexual aggravation is proven.

The Community Safety Unit (CSU) is leading the development of a Hate Crime recording and monitoring system for Northern Ireland. The minority ethnic communities are represented and fully participating on the Working Group. Integral to the development of the System will be the engagement with the various minority ethnic communities to establish protective and preventive security schemes, and the carrying out of research into racially motivated crime. The CSU has provided funding to a number of counter-racism/sectarian projects under the Challenge Competition—seven at a total cost of £384,000.

The final version of the Race Equality Strategy (which takes account of extensive consultation with all sections of NI society) will be published by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister this summer and specific actions will be included in a detailed implementation plan developed in line with the strategy.

These measures will send out a clear message that racism has no place in our society.

Number of racial incidents reported to the police in Northern Ireland 1998–2004

	Total number of racial incidents
1998–99	93
1999–2000	237
2000–01	260
2001–02	185
2002–03	226
2003–04	453

Republican Intelligence Operation (Stormont)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost was of personal security measures introduced for individuals following the discovery of a Republican intelligence operation at Stormont in October 2002. [173743]

Mr. Pearson: Since 1 January 2000, the Government have committed £12.2 million to provide physical security measures at the homes of those whose personal details were compromised.

Residents Parking Schemes

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will provide resources to introduce pilot residents parking permit schemes in Northern Ireland. [174090]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has written to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin to Mr. Roy Beggs, dated 20 May 2004:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question asking if he will provide resources to introduce pilot residents' parking permit schemes in Northern Ireland. I have been asked to reply as the issue raised falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

Roads Service has been examining the case for introduction of a limited number of residents' parking schemes and has identified potential pilot schemes in the south Belfast area. These pilot

schemes would take at least 12 months to implement and Roads Service is willing to allocate the necessary resources. We are in discussions with the PSNI regarding enforcement.

I hope this information is helpful.

Water Cannon Vehicles

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on what date he received the request from the Irish Government for the loan of two water cannon vehicles used by the Gardai for dispersing anti-globalisation protestors on 1 May 2004; what the duration of the loan was; how many Police Service of Northern Ireland and other personnel *(a)* accompanied the vehicles and *(b)* were involved in their operation; what the cost was of the loan arrangement; and what charge has been levied upon the Irish authorities. [174535]

Mr. Pearson: I am advised that on 23 March 2004 the Police Service of Northern Ireland received a written request from the Commissioner of An Garda Siochana to provide two water cannon vehicles for the period 18 April to 4 May inclusive. This was to facilitate the training of Garda officers to work in the use of water cannon and cover the period of potential protests from 1 to 3 May. The request was made direct from one police service to another and not from the Irish Government. A service level agreement was drawn up between the two services to cover this arrangement.

I am given to understand that no PSNI officers accompanied the vehicles to the Republic of Ireland nor were PSNI officers involved in their operation in Dublin. On this occasion no charge was levied for the provision of the vehicles in the spirit of joint co-operation between An Garda Siochana and PSNI, as set out in chapter 18 of the report of the Independent Commission on policing in Northern Ireland.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what requests for loans of water cannon vehicles have been received from the Irish authorities for days during *(a)* June and *(b)* July. [174536]

Mr. Pearson: I have been advised that PSNI has received no requests from either An Garda Siochana or the Irish Government for the provision of PSNI water cannon during June or July 2004.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what training in the use of water cannons has been provided for non-UK personnel; how many persons were trained over what period; what the cost was of training provided; and what charge has been levied upon the beneficiary states. [174537]

Mr. Pearson: The Police Service of Northern Ireland has advised me that the service provided water cannon training for 21 non United Kingdom personnel. Eighteen officers from An Garda Siochana were trained in the operation of water cannons over a period of six days and three Senior Officers received training in command and control issues relating to the deployment and use of water cannon. No charge was levied for this training on the basis of furthering co-operation with other police services, as recommended in the report of the Independent Commission on policing in Northern Ireland.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what reports have been received from the Irish authorities concerning the effectiveness and safety of water cannon weaponry on loan from the Police Service of Northern Ireland for the period covering 1 May; what weight of water was discharged; and whether any persons were injured by the use of this equipment. [174538]

Mr. Pearson: I have been advised by PSNI that they have not received any written reports concerning the use of water cannon on this occasion. PSNI would therefore not have specific information such as the weight of water used or whether there were injuries resulting from the use of water cannon. However, they have indicated that An Garda Siochana contacts have advised that the water cannons were judged to be an effective tactical option.

DEFENCE

A400M

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the delivery of the A400M. [173371]

Mr. Ingram: As previously stated to my hon. Friend on 5 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1151W, the in-service date of the A400M (defined as acceptance into service of the seventh aircraft) is 2011. We expect delivery of the final (twenty fifth) aircraft to be in 2015.

Al Yamamah Contracts

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he met Prince Turki bin Nasser during 2000; where the meeting took place; what the purpose of the meeting was; and what was discussed. [171751]

Mr. Hoon: I met His Highness Prince Turki Bin Nasser in my office on 12 October 2000. Prince Turki introduced his successor as Head of the Al Yamamah Project within the Royal Saudi Air Force. Amongst other matters, there was also some general discussion of events in the Middle East and I was able to take the opportunity to thank Prince Turki for his work in support of the Al Yamamah programme, which has brought benefits for both nations over many years.

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he intends to conduct further internal investigations into the role of his officials in alleged corruption involving the Al Yamamah arms contracts. [171752]

Mr. Hoon: Any evidence of improper behaviour by officials will be fully investigated. This includes any evidence uncovered during the current enquiries into allegations against a retired official formerly associated with the Al Yamamah programme.

Eurofighter

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions have taken place on the possibility of selling Eurofighter Typhoon aircraft

ordered for the Royal Air Force to other countries without being delivered to the RAF; and if he will make a statement. [172420]

Mr. Ingram: Some consideration has been given to the scope to provide for early export of Eurofighter Typhoon to potential overseas customers. If pursued, a sale might be accomplished by adjusting the delivery profile to the RAF. The RAF remains, however, the primary customer for these aircraft and any decision made will take full account of its requirements.

Gunnery Capability

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the saluting battery capability in the Tower of London could be provided by a regiment with no gunnery training or capability. [174443]

Mr. Ingram: Only personnel with the appropriate gunnery training could provide the saluting battery capability in the Tower of London

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what plans he has for the Gun Troops, Honourable Artillery Company; [174444]

(2) whether the Honourable Artillery Company will maintain a gunner role. [174445]

Mr. Ingram: Plans for future Army structures continue to evolve, but there are currently no plans to change the role of the Gun Troop, Honourable Artillery Company.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for how long the Honourable Artillery Company has performed a gunner role. [174446]

Mr. Ingram: The Honourable Artillery Company's gunner lineage dates from the early 1780s, when the City Corporation of London presented the Company with two Brass Field Pieces.

Helicopters

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Battlefield helicopters are deployed on operations; in which theatres they are deployed; and with which units they are in service. [174543]

Mr. Ingram: A total of 68 Battlefield helicopters are deployed in operational areas, in Bosnia, Afghanistan, Northern Ireland and Iraq. I am withholding details of the specific units with which these assets are deployed under Exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information as this would give a clear indication of their operational capability.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many Royal Navy *(a)* Merlin helicopters and *(b)* squadrons of Merlin helicopters are (i) fully operational and (ii) preparing to become fully operational; [174883]

(2) when all of the Royal Navy Merlin helicopters and squadrons are expected to be fully operational. [174881]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 21 May 2004]:* The Royal Navy currently has four commissioned squadrons of Merlin helicopters. A further squadron is planned to be commissioned in October 2004. At present, all RN Merlin helicopters have been grounded as a precautionary measure pending the investigation into the crash of a Merlin helicopter on 30 March 2004. It is too early to say when flying will be resumed.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* budget and *(b)* cost of running, maintenance, training and other non capital costs was for the Royal Naval Merlin helicopter squadron in each year since the aircraft was first acquired. [174885]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 21 May 2004]:* This information is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

HMS Turbulent

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether there are sufficient stocks of *(a)* foul-weather suits and *(b)* jumpers on board HMS Turbulent to avoid crew members coming on watch while the boat is on the surface having to wear the kit of those coming off watch. [175061]

Mr. Ingram: HMS Turbulent has a full allowance of 40 sets of Mk IV Foul Weather Clothing, which is an increase of 16 over the previous scale for the Mk III Foul Weather Clothing.

Submariner's jerseys are issued to individuals on a personal basis and ample stocks were available before HMS Turbulent deployed.

Iraq

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many members of the Iraq Survey Group are still in the field in Iraq; how many are United Kingdom citizens; and if he will make a statement on each of the tasks carried out by the group since 1 January. [175083]

Mr. Hoon: On 13 May 2004, there were 1,270 people employed in the Iraq Survey Group of which 54 were UK citizens. The Iraq Survey Group's primary task is assessing the extent of Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction and associated programmes. The Iraq Survey Group has produced two interim reports, in October 2003 and March 2004, and a further report is expected later this year. Posted testimony for both reports can be found on the CIA website www.cia.gov.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 18 May, *Official Report*, column 873W, on Iraq, from which Vote each of the 49 British personnel serving with the Iraq Survey Group is paid; who in the United Kingdom has line management responsibility for each; to whom they report in the United Kingdom in respect of their work with the Iraq Survey Group; and if he will make a statement. [175101]

Mr. Hoon: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend for Leyton and Wanstead (Mr. Cohen) on 12 February 2004 *Official Report*, column 1637W on Iraq Survey Group costs.

Line Management responsibility for the British personnel with the Iraq Survey Group rests with the Deputy Commander Iraq Survey Group, who is a United Kingdom Officer with the rank of Brigadier.

Light Guns

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many light guns are on issue to the British Army; and to which units they have been issued; [174448]

(2) how many Territorial Army batteries have a full complement of the light gun; [174449]

(3) how many automatic positioning systems for the light gun have been issued; and to which batteries; [174450]

(4) how many *(a)* Regular and *(b)* Territorial Army batteries have a full complement of automatic positioning systems allocated to their light guns; and how many are using dial sights. [174451]

Mr. Ingram: 136 guns have been issued to those units designated Light Gun Units, as shown in the table.

Three TA units, 103 Regiment, 100 Regiment and the Honourable Artillery Company (HAC) are issued with guns fitted with the Automatic Pointing System. HAC have their full complement of four guns. 103 Regiment have 12 guns, but are established for 18, and therefore operate with 3x4 gun batteries. 100 Regiment have 14 guns, but are established for 18, and therefore operate with 2x5 gun batteries and 1x4 gun battery. The number of guns issued is determined by the number of Automatic Pointing Systems (APS) available. However, although 100 Regiment and 103 Regiment are short of the establishment, the compliment is considered sufficient to meet their requirements. Other TA Units, listed at Serials 14 to 17 in the table, hold Saluting Guns only. Saluting Guns do not require sights to be fitted.

The APS has been fitted to 112 guns as shown in the table. Those guns without APS fitted are used either for classroom purposes or for saluting only. Dial sights are no longer in service.

Serial	*Unit*	*Guns fitted with APS*	*Guns without sights*	*Saluting Guns*
1	7 Para RHA Aldershot	18	—	—
2	29 Cdo Regiment RA Plymouth/Arbroath	18	—	—
3	100 Regimen: RA(V) Luton	14	—	—
4	103 Regiment RA(V) Liverpool	12	—	—
5	BF Falkland Islands	8	—	—
6	RSA Larkhill	18	—	—
7	ESTRA Larkhill	1	—	—
8	SEME Bordon	1	2	—
9	BATSU Wainwright Canada	6	—	—
10	BATU Kenya	6	—	—
11	HAC London	4	—	4
12	40 Regiment RA Topcliffe	6	—	—
14	104 Regiment RA(V) Cardiff	—	—	4
15	105 Regiment RA(V) Newtownards	—	—	3
16	105 Regiment RA(V) Edinburgh	—	—	6
17	Royal Gibraltar Regt	—	—	4
18	Defence Academy	—	1	—
	Total	112	3	2

Missiles

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make it his policy to arm Type-45 destroyers with *(a)* TacTom land attack cruise missiles and *(b)* the Mark 41 launcher; and if he will make a statement. [171861]

Mr. Ingram: There is currently no requirement to fit Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles to Type 45 destroyers. However, should such a requirement arise, these could be fitted in the future. The Mark 41 launcher would be one option for launching these missiles.

Royal Navy Visits

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the Royal Navy's ship visits to *(a)* Spanish ports and *(b)* Gibraltar in the last 12 months. [173376]

Mr. Ingram: Details of ship visits to Spanish ports in the 12 months up to 12 May 2004 are as follows:

Port	*Ship*	*Start*	*End*
Algeciras	Orangeleaf	13 August 2003	14 August 2003
Alicante	Northumberland	2 June 2003	3 June 2003
		3 June 2003	5 June 2003
		5 June 2003	9 June 2003
Barcelona	Chatham	25 July 2003	29 July 2003
	Fort Austin	20 May 2003	23 May 2003
	Gloucester	28 January 2004	2 February 2004
	Norfolk	25 March 2004	28 March 2004
	Portland	29 October 2003	3 November 2003
	Sutherland	21 November 2003	26 November 2003
Cadiz	Blyth	4 March 2004	8 March 2004
	Campbeltown	21 February 2004	24 February 2004
	Sir Galahad	29 July 2003	1 August 2003
La Coruna	Bangor	16 June 2003	17 June 2003
	Pembroke	10 December 2003	14 December 2003
	Sandown	16 June 2003	17 June 2003

Port	Ship	Start	End
Las Palmas, Gran Canaria	Fort George	29 November 2003	2 December 2003
	Fort Victoria	1 October 2003	5 October 2003
	Ocean	12 March 2004	16 March 2004
Malaga	Grey Rover	31 July 2003	4 August 2003
	Liverpool	31 July 2003	4 August 2003
Mallorca	Campbeltown	7 April 2004	13 April 2004
Palma, Mallorca	Ark Royal	29 April 2003	5 May 2003
	Bangor	7 June 2003	11 June 2003
	Campbeltown	6 May 2004	9 May 2004
	Northumberland	12 May 2003	14 May 2003
	Roebuck	30 May 2003	3 June 2003
	Sandown	7 June 2003	11 June 2003
Rota	Ark Royal	13 May 2003	13 May 2003
	Blyth	19 February 2004	24 February 2004
	Campbeltown	2 April 2004	5 April 2004
	Kent	9 June 2003	10 June 2003
		19 June 2003	20 June 2003
	Newcastle	25 February 2004	28 February 2004
		7 March 2004	8 March 2004
	Somerset	11 October 2003	14 October 2003
Santa Cruz, Tenerife	Invincible	1 October 2003	5 October 2003
Valencia	Newcastle	6 May 2004	11 May 2004
	Lindisfarne	18 September 2003	22 September 2003
Villagarcia de Arosa	Blyth	15 May 2003	17 May 2003
	Brocklesby	15 May 2003	17 May 2003

Details of ships' visits to Gibraltar in the 12 months up to 12 May 2004 are as follows:

Ship	Start	End
Brambleleaf	14 November 2003	20 November 2003
Campbeltown	7 October 2003	8 October 2003
Chiddingfold	27 June 2003	30 June 2003
Cornwall	12 July 2003	13 July 2003
	17 October 2003	19 October 2003
Cumberland	23 April 2004	24 April 2004
Echo	26 January 2004	4 February 2004
Edinburgh	21 May 2003	24 May 2003
	26 April 2004	28 April 2004
Exeter	23 March 2004	24 March 2004
Glasgow	2 May 2004	3 May 2004
Gloucester	26 October 2003	28 October 2003
Gold Rover	16 May 2003	17 May 2003
Grafton	20 February 2004	20 February 2004
Grey Rover	25 March 2004	27 March 2004
Grimsby	24 July 2003	28 July 2003
Kent	12 December 2003	15 December 2003
Ledbury	24 July 2003	28 July 2003
Lindisfarne	5 December 2003	10 December 2003
Marlborough	3 August 2003	4 August 2003
	20 September 2003	22 September 2003
	26 September 2003	27 September 2003
Newcastle	9 January 2004	9 January 2004
Norfolk	19 October 2003	21 October 2003
Northumberland	3 August 2003	4 August 2003
Oakleaf	19 February 2004	24 February 2004
	12 March 2004	15 March 2004
Ocean	21 May 2003	24 May 2003
Orangeleaf	4 July 2003	7 July 2003
	25 July 2003	28 July 2003
	8 October 2003	8 October 2003
	14 October 2003	15 October 2003
	28 November 2003	1 December 2003
	12 December 2003	14 December 2003
Portland	13 December 2003	13 December 2003
	12 March 2004	15 March 2004
Ramsey	24 July 2003	28 July 2003
Richmond	26 July 2003	27 July 2003
	29 November 2003	1 December 2003
	5 December 2003	5 December 2003
Sabre	26 October 2003	27 October 2003
	12 November 2003	16 November 2003
	2 December 2003	7 December 2003
Scimitar	16 May 2003	22 May 2003
Scott	19 November 2003	24 November 2003
Shoreham	24 July 2003	28 July 2003
Sir Tristram	24 July 2003	28 July 2003
St. Albans	14 November 2003	17 November 2003
Sutherland	13 June 2003	14 June 2003
Trenchant	10May 2004	15 May 2004
Turbulent	9 October 2003	15 October 2003
Wave Ruler	24 March 2004	25 March 2004
	7 April 2004	8 April 2004
Westminster	5 June 2003	6 June 2003
	6 June 2003	7 June 2003
	11 June 2003	12 June 2003
York	11 October 2003	13 October 2003

Territorial Army

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the Territorial Army's role in the Royal Artillery. [174447]

Mr. Caplin: The Territorial Army undertakes a variety of roles in supporting the Royal Artillery, which include Surveillance and Target Acquisition, Reinforcement, and provision of Multi Launch Rocket Systems and Javelin Air Defence capabilities.

UK Defence Industry

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what areas are considered by his Department to be key industrial capabilities which the UK defence industry must maintain. [170744]

Mr. Ingram: The Government's Defence Industrial Policy, published in October 2002, is aimed at enhancing the competitiveness and sustainability of the UK Defence industry, while continuing to provide the armed force with high quality equipment at best value for money. There are a very small number of capabilities which for national security reasons we place a high priority on retaining within the United Kingdom industrial base. Examples exist in the fields of nuclear technology, defence against biological, chemical and radiological warfare, and some counter-terrorist capabilities.

UN Operations

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the relationship between British Armed Forces and the Iraqi Government will be following the handover of power on 30 June 2004. [169381]

Mr. Hoon: The relationship between British Armed Forces and the Iraqi Government following the assumption of authority on 30 June will be determined primarily by the United Nations Security Council Resolution which we expect to see concluded before 30 June. We envisage that the Resolution will cover amongst other issues the mandate of the Multi-National Force currently authorised by UNSCR1511.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what military role British troops will play following the handover of power in Iraq on 30 June 2004; [169384]

(2) what role British troops will play in the new phase of economic, military and political co-operation between the United States of America, the Coalition and the Iraqi civilian government following the handover of power on 30 June 2004. [169383]

Mr. Hoon: Following the assumption of authority by the Interim Iraqi Government on 30 June, British troops will contribute to the Multi-National Force in support of the Iraqi Government. We expect that the mandate for the Multi-National Force, which is currently authorised by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1511, will be set out in a further United Nations Security Council Resolution in due course.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the progress of investigations in the case of Gary Bartlam of the 1st Battalion, Royal Regiment of Fusiliers; what action has been taken; and what recommendations have been made as a result. [172944]

Mr. Ingram: The case involving Fusilier Gary Paul Bartlam has been referred to the Army Prosecuting Authority for consideration. I am withholding details under Exemption 12 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Mr. Maples: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what representations he has made to his US counterpart regarding the International Committee of the Red Cross report on the treatment by the Coalition forces of prisoners of war in Iraq. [173405]

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what representations he has made to the US Administration regarding the International Committee of the Red Cross report on the treatment by Coalition forces of prisoners of war in Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [173401]

Mr. Hoon *[holding answer 14 May 2004]*: I have had a recent discussion with Mr Rumsfeld, as part of my regular contact with him. Since before the report came to my attention the US Government has made it clear that allegations of abuse of prisoners are being rigorously investigated and that anyone found to have acted wrongly will be dealt with appropriately.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence at how many UK run prisons in Iraq Iraqi prisoners are being held; and where each prison is located. [174354]

Mr. Ingram: The United Kingdom's only detention facility is in Shaibah.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list each of the weapons containing uranium used in Operation Telic. [174372]

Mr. Ingram: Depleted uranium was contained in 120mm Armour Piercing CHARM 3 rounds fired by the British Challenger II tanks, during Operation Telic. Additionally, 20mm rounds used by the Royal Navy's Close-in Weapons System known as PHALANX, contain depleted uranium. These rounds were fired for calibration purposes only, prior to hostilities.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Arms Trade

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether it is his policy to seek a legally binding international arms trade treaty. [173278]

Mr. MacShane: The Government's objective is to work through the Transfer Controls Initiative to achieve an international agreement on transfers of small arms and light weapons.

UN Peacekeeping

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the *(a)* numbers, *(b)* efficiency and *(c)* effectiveness of the UN administrative staff in New York charged with planning, launching and overseeing UN peacekeeping missions; and if he will make a statement. [175122]

Mr. Rammell: At the request of the United Nations General Assembly, the UN Secretary-General requested the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) to evaluate the impact of the recent restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Their report (A/58/746) was issued on 25 March 2004, and is available on the UN website (www.un.org).

Following the recommendations in the Brahimi report of 2000 on peacekeeping reform, an additional number of posts were agreed for the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The Civilian Police Division was granted the greatest increase, followed by the military division and then the civilian departments. Nearly all of the new posts are now filled. OIOS believe that the quality of personnel recruited has been satisfactory, and argue that reform has enhanced the UN's capacity to tackle complex, multidimensional peacekeeping missions.

We have no reason to disagree with OIOS's assessment. However, in the light of the current surge in demand for UN peacekeeping, we are closely monitoring the UN's evolving capacity to meet new and existing challenges.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recommendations his Department has made for the reform of the planning and administrative structure of UN peacekeeping missions; when these recommendations were last revised; what response he has received from *(a)* UN officials and *(b)* officials of other member states; and if he will make a statement. [175181]

Mr. Rammell: We have been at the forefront of the push for the prompt implementation of the recommendations contained in the Brahimi report of July 2000 on peacekeeping reform. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister underlined our commitment at the Millennium Summit 2000. Under the Global Conflict Prevention Pool, run jointly by the FCO, MOD and DfID, we have developed a programme of co-operation and assistance designed to enhance the peacekeeping and peace-building capacity of the UN, and to strengthen the capacity and effectiveness of countries contributing troops and civilian police to UN peacekeeping missions. In addition to bilateral work with the UN and other interested parties, the Government are working multilaterally in the UN and the EU to maintain peacekeeping reform on the international agenda. The Secretary-General's High Level Panel on threats, challenges and change, which we have welcomed, may recommend changes to the peacekeeping structures within the UN. The Panel's report will be published later this year.

World War Two Medals

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if the Government will make an exception to the rule preventing UK citizens accepting campaign medals from other countries to enable the British people who served on the Arctic convoy during World War Two to receive the Defence of the Soviet Arctic Region Medal. [170126]

Mr. Straw: The Government are currently considering the possibility of an exception to the rules governing the acceptance and wearing of foreign awards, to enable British veterans who served on Arctic convoys during the Second World War to receive the Russian Defence of the Soviet Arctic Region medal.

Abdullah Ocalan

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which human rights organisations have been allowed to visit Abdullah Ocalan to see what prison conditions he is being held under; what his general state of health is; and if he will make a statement. [174357]

Mr. MacShane: The Council of Europe's Committee for Prevention of Torture has regularly visited Abdullah Ocalan and published its most recent report in February 2004. There have been a number of press reports on Ocalan's health, some of which have been confirmed in our Embassy's contact with Ocalan's lawyers. We note that Ocalan has daily basic health checks from the civilian doctors who attend him. There is also a military doctor on site at all times.

Annan Plan

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what communications his Department is undertaking with the Greek Cypriots to seek an alternative to the Annan Plan. [174503]

Mr. MacShane: The Government's position continues to be one of support for the UN Secretary General's Plan. We believe that this offers the best possible basis for a settlement. Now is not the time to seek an alternative to the Annan Plan.

We look forward to the UN Secretary General's report on his Good Offices Mission and his thinking on next steps.

Burma

Jane Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Burmese Government regarding Thet Win Aung, who is sentenced to 60 years imprisonment. [174390]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Thet Win Aung is among a large number of political prisoners in Burma. Amnesty International estimate that there are 1,300 to 1,400, many of them prisoners of conscience.

We have repeatedly called on the Burmese regime to release fully all political prisoners and to allow them to play an active role in national reconciliation in Burma. We shall continue to do so. Their plight was most recently raised in April's UK co-sponsored UN Commission on Human Rights resolution.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Burmese regime over the military offensives in *(a)* northern Karen and *(b)* Karenni state; and if he will make a statement. [174558]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We have not made recent representations on this subject because contacts with the Burmese regime are irregular. However, human rights violations have been highlighted by successive highly critical UK and EU co-sponsored UN Resolutions, most recently at the UN Commission on Human Rights on 21 April 2004. This referred to the violations of human rights suffered in particular by persons belonging to ethnic minorities, women and children, especially in non-ceasefire areas and the situation of the large number of internally displaced persons as well as the flow of refugees to neighbouring countries. It emphasised the obligations of Burma under international law to pursue through dialogue and peaceful means the immediate suspension and permanent end of conflict with all ethnic groups in the country and to conclude a ceasefire agreement with the Karen National Union (KNU). The Burmese regime knows how critical we are of their Human Rights abuses.

We are, however, encouraged by the recent verbal ceasefire agreement between the regime and the KNU and hope that this will lead to a lasting peace settlement.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to urge the European Union to strengthen sanctions against Burma in response to the atrocities against the Karen, Karenni and Shan peoples by the Burmese military. [174559]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The UK and its European partners follow events in Burma closely. We remain willing to support a genuine process of national reconciliation, leading to the restoration of democracy and full respect for human rights in Burma.

We share the view of a number of international partners that the best interests of all the people of Burma continue to be served by targeted measures against those responsible for the obstruction of reform and progress, together with humanitarian support to ensure that the ordinary people of Burma do not suffer as a result of the damaging policies of their government.

EU Foreign Ministers agreed on 26 April 2004 to maintain the Common Position on Burma for a further 12 months. We believe that this will maintain pressure on the regime. We are closely monitoring the National Convention process and stand ready to respond proportionately to future developments in Burma, positive or negative.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make it his policy to recognise the actions taken by the Burmese military against the *(a)* Karen, *(b)* Karenni and *(c)* Shan peoples as (i) war crimes and (ii) crimes against humanity. [174560]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The British Government is one of the strongest critics of the Burmese regime's abuses of human rights. We are aware of a consistent pattern of serious violations over many years, particularly against the ethnic groups. These have been highlighted in successive EU co-sponsored resolutions on Burma in the United Nations General Assembly and UK co-sponsored resolutions in the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. But we do not consider that the atrocities constitute "war crimes" and "crimes against humanity", which have specific definitions under international law. Nor does the United Nations Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Burma. Professor Sergio Pinheiro, who has regular access to Burma, used these terms to describe the situation there.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to raise the Burmese military actions against the Karen, Karenni and Shan peoples at the UN Security Council. [174561]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We have raised our concerns about the security situation in Burma and the resulting human rights violations with our Security Council Partners. However, there is no consensus at present to bring Burma before the Security Council.

Atrocities against ethnic groups in Burma have been highlighted in successive EU co-sponsored UN Resolutions on Burma, most recently at the UN Commission on Human Rights on 21 April 2004.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the Government's policy is on relationships with the military Government in Burma; and if he will make a statement. [175171]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We have full diplomatic relations with Burma and continue to press the military regime to enter into a substantive and genuine dialogue with all political parties and ethnic groups in Burma leading to national reconciliation, democratisation and full respect for human rights. We fully respect the decision of the National League for Democracy (NLD) not to participate in the constitutional convention which opened in Rangoon on 17 May 2004 and urge the regime to reconsider the NLD's reasonable requests. We have repeatedly called on the regime to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD's Vice Chairman U Tin Oo from house arrest, to release all political prisoners, and to re-open all NLD offices in Burma.

Departmental Staff

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many staff were employed in the Department to work in the communications field, and what the total expenditure on communications for the Department was, broken down by *(a)* Government Information and Communication Service staff and *(b)* other staff, broken down by (i) press officers, (ii) special advisers and (iii) others, in (A) 1994–95, (B) 1996–97, (C) 1997–98 and (D) 2001–02. [168674]

Mr. Rammell: Figures for staff with Government Information and Communications Service qualifications are not available prior to 2003–04 without incurring disproportionate costs.

For details of Press Office staff between 1997 and 2002, I refer the hon. Member to the answer the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, my hon. Friend the Member for Exeter (Mr. Bradshaw), gave to the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight (Mr. Turner) on 10 April 2002, *Official Report*, column 63W. For details of Press Office staff in 2003, I also refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Leicester East (Keith Vaz) on 2 July 2003, *Official Report*, column 310W. For details of special advisers costs and staff numbers, I refer the hon. Member to the answer my hon. Friend the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mike O'Brien) gave to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 23 January 2003, *Official Report*, column 467W.

For details of other staff in the communications field (Information Department) between 1997 and 2002, I refer the hon. Member to the answer the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, my hon. Friend the Member for Exeter (Mr. Bradshaw), gave to the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight (Mr. Turner) on 10 April 2002, *Official Report*, column 63W.

The salary costs of Information Directorate, including employee contributions for 2001–02 was £9.6 million of which the Press Office (News Department) was £1.1 million and Information Department was £2.3 million. For 2002–03 the figures are £4.6 million, £1.3 million and £2.2 million respectively. Figures for previous years are not readily available and obtaining them would incur disproportionate costs.

Emergency Planning

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what intra EU arrangements are in place for co-ordination between hospitals and emergency services in the event of a major civil emergency. [174684]

Mr. MacShane: A community mechanism to facilitate reinforced co-operation in civil protection assistance interventions was established by a council decision of 23 October 2001 (2001/792/EC, Euroatom). The community mechanism enables a stricken nation to request all forms of civil protection assistance it requires from participating States.

In the event of a major civil emergency the EU Commission would facilitate close co-ordination and co-operation between the stricken state and states participating in the community mechanism, through the monitoring and Information Centre (MIC) established by the council decision.

EU Constitution

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) if he will list the changes made in the text of the proposed EU Constitution since it was published by Her Majesty's Government in Cm 5897; and whether the Government *(a)* was consulted on and *(b)* approves of each change; [174936]

(2) whether unanimity is required for changes to the draft Constitutional Treaty; [174947]

(3) which EU member states have *(a)* submitted formal amendments to the official draft of the proposed constitution of the European Union published in August 2003 and *(b)* have given notice that they are likely to do so; by what dates such amendments have to be tabled prior to the meeting of the European Council on 17 to 18th June 2004; and what arrangements he is making for their consideration by Parliament. [175107]

Mr. MacShane: The draft EU Constitutional Treaty proposed by the Convention on the Future of Europe has no legal status. The European Council decided in June last year that it was a good basis for starting negotiations in the Intergovernmental Conference. The Italian and subsequently Irish Presidencies of the EU have proposed changes to the EU Constititonal Treaty as drafted by the Convention, after consulting with all Member States. Their proposals (summarised in the most recent Irish papers CIG 70/04, 73/04, 75/04, 76/04 and 77/04) have been deposited in the Library of the House and are available from the Presidency website (www.eu2004.ie). They are the subject of discussion in the Intergovernmental Conference. The Government has taken part fully in these discussions. Nothing is finally agreed until everything is agreed. The EU Constitutional Treaty, like any new EU Treaty, can only be agreed by the common "accord of all Member States.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list in full the Government's red lines on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe; and if he will make a statement. [174995]

Mr. Straw: The Government's policy towards the negotiations on the EU Constitutional Treaty remains as set out in the White Paper on the Intergovernmental Conference (Cm 5934), presented to Parliament on 9 September 2003.

Honduras

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the Government of Honduras' recent crackdown on the Mara Salvatrucha street gang. [175114]

Mr. Rammell: The Government of Honduras has acknowledged publicly that it has a serious problem with gang-related lawlessness. Our embassy in Guatemala, responsible for our relations with Honduras, and officials in London have been monitoring the measures taken by the Honduran Government to tackle this problem, including legislation prohibiting gang membership. Since the introduction of this new law, there has been a reported reduction in gang violence. But concern has been expressed by some NGOs and members of civil society that the new legislation, which resulted in mass arrests of gang members and those suspected of being gang members, infringed human rights. The Government of Honduras has responded to this criticism by undertaking to provide training and rehabilitation schemes for those either in prison or wishing to leave the gangs. We have made clear to the Government of Honduras, bilaterally and in the company of our EU partners, the importance we attach to respect for human rights. I raised human rights, particularly those in respect of children, with Honduran Security Minister Oscar Alvarez, during his recent visit to the UK.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received concerning the fire of 17 May at the prison in San Pedro Sula in Honduras; what assessment his Department has made of conditions at *(a)* that prison and *(b)* other prisons in Honduras; and if he will make a statement. [175115]

Mr. Rammell: The San Pedro Sula incident has been widely reported in the UK and local media. 104 prisoners, all gang members are reported to have died and only a few injured. Our embassy in Guatemala, responsible for our relations with Honduras, is watching developments closely and the DFID representative in Tegucigalpa attended a briefing on 18 May given by the Honduran Government.

Our non-resident ambassador, who was visiting Honduras at the time, has raised this incident with members of the Honduran Government.

The Government of Honduras has ordered an inquiry that will include investigating claims that: prison wardens refused to open cell doors; the fire services arrived late: and the fire was started by wardens.

We have made no specific assessment of the conditions at the San Pedro Sula Prison or that of other prisons in Honduras but we are aware of the problem of serious overcrowding. We continue to discuss human rights concerns with the Honduran authorities, particularly those relating to children.

Iraq

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the costs deducted from oil revenues by *(a)* the Coalition Provisional Authority, *(b)* Iraqi Government

institutions and *(c)* other parties before the oil receipts are deposited in the Development Fund for Iraq accounts; and if he will make a statement. [173910]

Mr. Straw: United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1483 of 22 May 2003 decided that all proceeds from the export sale of Iraq's oil should be deposited into the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI). The only exception to this is that 5 per cent. of proceeds from oil should be deposited into the United Nations Compensation Fund for Kuwait established in accordance with UNSCR 687 of 1991 and subsequent relevant resolutions. As outlined in UNSCR 1483, this latter requirement will be binding on an internationally recognised sovereign government of Iraq unless that government and the Governing Council of the United Nations Compensation Commission decide otherwise. Neither the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), Iraqi Government institutions, nor any other parties deduct costs from oil revenues. The CPA meets its own costs from coalition funding, and Iraqi Government Departments and agencies are funded through the Iraqi budget.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of the UN Oil for Food programme in Iraq. [175409]

Mr. Rammell: Figures from the World Health Organisation (WHO), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the UN, confirm that the Oil for Food programme (OFF):

reduced the incidence of chronic malnutrition in children under five from 32 per cent. in 1996 to 25 per cent. in 2002 (WHO);

reduced the mortality rate of children under five in northern Iraq from 80 per 1,000 in 1989 (i.e. before UN sanctions were imposed) to 72 in 1999 (UNICEF);

increased the Iraqi ration (first introduced during the Iran-Iraq war) from 1,300 kCal to 2,215 kCal per day (UN); and

reduced the incidence of tuberculosis from 78.5 cases per 100,000 in 1989 (i.e. before UN sanctions were imposed) to 43.3 cases per 100,000 in 2001 (UN).

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether his Department has seen the list of names discovered by the Iraqi Governing Council in respect of the UN Oil for Food programme in Iraq. [175410]

Mr. Rammell: The Government have received copies of documents alleging corruption in the Oil for Food programme. These documents include a list of names. The documents have been passed to the appropriate investigative authority.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action his Department has taken in respect of the Iraqi Governing Council's demand for an inquiry into the UN Oil for Food programme in Iraq. [175411]

Mr. Rammell: The UK supports both the UN and Iraqi inquiries into the allegations of corruption of the Oil for Food programme. The Secretary of State for International Development and Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials met Paul Volcker, head of the independent UN inquiry, on 6 and 7 May. Ernst and Young have won the contract to carry out the Iraqi investigation on behalf of the Iraqi Board of Supreme Audit. We will co-operate fully with both investigations.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when his Department first received *(a)* representations on and *(b)* reports of concerns about the conduct of the UN Oil for Food programme in Iraq. [175412]

Mr. Rammell: Over the life of the Oil for Food programme, we and other UN member states became aware of attempts to breach the Iraq sanctions regime. The Government took action in response in a range of ways according to the circumstances. These included approaches to other Governments and the UN Secretariat, and action through the United Nations Security Council to counter attempted corruption.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the number of *(a)* countries and *(b)* individuals involved in alleged corrupt practices in the UN oil-for-food programme in Iraq. [175413]

Mr. Rammell: The Government have received copies of documents alleging corruption in the oil-for-food programme. These documents include a list of names. The documents have been passed to the appropriate investigative authority.

Middle East

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to discuss suspension of the EU/Israeli trade agreement with his partners in the EU. [175041]

Mr. MacShane: The Government do not believe that suspension of the EU/Israel Association Agreement would bring the parties any nearer to a peaceful resolution of their differences.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of Israel's compliance with the human rights clauses in the EU/Israeli trade agreement. [175043]

Mr. MacShane: Along with our EU partners, we have followed a policy of constructive engagement with Israel on humanitarian and human rights issues. We have raised our concerns on human rights violations both bilaterally, most recently with Prime Minister Sharon's advisers on 18 May, and through the institutions established by the EU/Israel Association Agreement. In this respect, at the last EU/Israel Association Council in November 2003, the EU called on Israel to abstain from any punitive measures that are not in accordance with international law.

Russian Nuclear Submarines

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has held with the Russian Government on the decommissioning of Russian nuclear submarines; and what estimate has been made of the number of such submarines. [175161]

Mr. Rammell: The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) is responsible for the UK's programme of assistance to Russia for the dismantling of nuclear submarines. The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the DTI, my hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh, South (Nigel Griffiths) visited Russia in February, this year to view the progress of the UK programme.

Currently, two Oscar-1 class submarines are being dismantled as part of this programme at a shipyard near Archangel and discussions are underway for further projects. The Russian Government has informed us that there are approximately 60 decommissioned nuclear submarines in North West Russia awaiting dismantling and a further 30 in the Russian Far East.

Co-operation in this area continues to feature in regular bilateral discussions between officials. Further detail on the UK's programme of support for the G8 Global Partnership against weapons and materials of mass destruction can be found in the Department for Trade and Industry's First Annual Report on the Former Soviet Union Nuclear Legacy Programme at http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/nuclear/fsu/news/First_annual_report.pdf.

Sudan

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the British Government voted in favour of Sudan becoming a member of the UN Human Rights Commission; and if he will make a statement. [174595]

Mr. Rammell *[holding answer 20 May 2004]*: Sudan's membership of the UN Commission on Human Rights was agreed by the African Group, who put them forward as part of an agreed regional nomination. There was, therefore, no vote on the matter. The Government believe members of the Commission on Human Rights should meet certain minimum standards of behaviour regarding the implementation of human rights in their own countries. We are working with others to identify ways to improve the quality of membership.

UN Civilian Police

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many UK citizens are serving as civilian police for the UN; what operations they are involved with; where they are stationed; and how many were serving in each of the last seven years. [175188]

Mr. Rammell: A total of 127 UK citizens (serving and retired police officers) are currently serving as civilian police in UN peacekeeping missions. Four are serving in UNMISET (East Timor), 113 in UNMIK (Kosovo) and 10 in UNAMSIL (Sierra Leone).

The following table sets out the average numbers of UK police officers who served in UN missions in each year from 2001–03. This information can also be accessed through the UN peacekeeping website: http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/)

Figures before April 2001 are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate costs.

	UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (1999-May 2002)	*UN Mission of Support in East Timor (established May 2002)*	*UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (established 1999)*	*UN Mission in Sierra Leone (established 1999)*	*UN Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1995–2002)*
2003	0	9 (range 0–10)	116 (range 79–1 33)	6 (range 5–10)	0
2002	7 (range 0–15)	7 (range 0–12)	158 (range 135–166)	0	60 (range 0–76)
2001 (Figures from April-December only)	14 (range 13–15)	0	142 (range 135–168)	0	77 (range 76–80)

Victor Bout

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions his Department has held with the *(a)* US authorities, *(b)* French authorities and *(c)* UN about Victor Bout. [174782]

Mr. Rammell: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has, over many years, had many discussions with international partners including the US and France, bilaterally and in the United Nations about Victor Bout. The UK has supported international efforts to end Bout's illegal activities. For example, we co-sponsored Security Council Resolution 1521 (2003) on Liberia, which imposed a travel ban on him. UK Ministers have publicly welcomed action taken against his sanctions-busting activities.

PRIME MINISTER

Correspondence

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Prime Minister when he will reply to the letter of 19 April from the hon. Member for Richmond Park. [174391]

The Prime Minister: I have replied to the hon. Member today.

India

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the Indian Congress Party's electoral win. [174842]

The Prime Minister: I have spoken and written to the new Prime Minister of India, Manmohan Singh, to congratulate him on his appointment. We have strong relations with India and look forward to developing them further with the incoming Government.

Iraq

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 12 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 385W, on Iraq, what inquiries are made by the Coalition Provisional Authority into methods employed by Coalition forces in gathering information important to the CPA's aim. [174327]

The Prime Minister: None. Under the Geneva Conventions, responsibility for the methods employed by Coalition forces in gathering information lies with the states supplying the military forces concerned.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Prime Minister if he will instruct the British representative of the Coalition Provisional Authority to require the Coalition forces to conduct an inquiry into the attack upon Mukaradeeb in western Iraq in which it is reported 40 civilians were killed. [175777]

The Prime Minister: The attack referred to in Mukaradeeb involved US forces. We understand that the US authorities are undertaking a formal investigation.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Prime Minister if he will institute a debate in Government time before 30 June, on the situation in Iraq. [175778]

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House gave to the hon. Member for North-East Hertfordshire (Mr. Heald) at business questions on 13 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 473.

Secondments

Bob Spink: To ask the Prime Minister how many staff in his Office were seconded from the *(a)* private and *(b)* academic sector in each of the last three years. [174816]

The Prime Minister: There were no secondments to my Office from the private or academic sectors in 2001 and 2002. In 2003, one member of staff was seconded to my Office from the academic sector.

Tibet

Harry Cohen: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make a statement on discussions he had on Tibet with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and other Chinese official representatives during their recent visit to the UK. [174831]

The Prime Minister: I discussed a wide range of issues with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, including the issue of Tibet. The Government support another visit to China by representatives of the Dalai Lama and believe a peaceful resolution is best achieved through meaningful dialogue without pre-conditions.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Child Maintenance Payments

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much child maintenance has not been paid in each of the last 10 years; and how much of this is due to one of the parents moving *(a)* abroad and *(b)* to another EU member state. [166729]

Mr. Pond: I have been asked to reply. The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to my hon. Friend with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Barry Sheerman, dated 24 May 2004:

In replying to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much child maintenance has not been paid in each of the last 10 years; and how much of this is due to one of the parents moving *(a)* abroad and *(b)* to another EU member state.

As at 31 March 2003 the reported cumulative debt figure on full maintenance assessments was £664 million (page 86 para 6.1 of the Child Support Agency Annual Report and Accounts 2002/03.) I have no information to determine how much of this is due to parents residing either abroad or in the EU.

Fine Enforcement

John McDonnell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many persons were fined by magistrates courts in England and Wales in each of the last three financial years; and what percentage of the fines were collected in each year. [173119]

Mr. Leslie: Information on the number of offenders is not available from magistrates courts systems. The latest Home Office statistics available, for the 2002 calendar year, showed that 970,400 offenders were fined by magistrates courts.

A national payment rate of 76 per cent. was achieved in the last quarter of 2003–04. The full year outturn stood at 74 per cent. The payment rate in 2001–02 was 59 per cent. and 55 per cent. in 2002–03. These figures are not comparable with the 2003–04 data due to collection and calculation changes. In 2003–04 the payment rate was revised so that it focused clearly on fines and excluded confiscation orders, civil and family moneys and cancelled fines.

Public Bodies

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many staff are employed by *(a)* the Public Guardianship Office, *(b)* the Civil Justice Council, *(c)* the Strategic Investment Board, *(d)* the Information Tribunal, *(e)* the Advisory Group on Implementation of the Freedom of Information Act, *(f)* the Advisory Group on the Delivery of Enforcement Services, *(g)* the Review of Procedures Consequent on the Decision to Transfer or Commit Fraud Trials and *(h)* the Office of the Public Trustee; and what their annual budgets are in 2004–05. [174665]

Mr. Lammy: The information requested is set out in the following table.

		Number of staff employed	*Annual budgets in 2004–05 (£ million)*
(a)	Public Guardianship Office	291	5.081
(b)	The Civil Justice Council	4	0.214
(c)	The Strategic Investment Board	0	0.13
(d)	The Information Tribunal	0	0.6
(e)	The Advisory Group on Implementation of the Freedom of Information Act	—	—
(f)	The Advisory Group on the Delivery of Enforcement Services	—	—
(g)	The Review of Procedures Consequent on the Decision to Transfer or Commit Fraud Trials	—	—
(h)	The Office of the Public Trustee	58	1.7
	Total	353	7.725

The Strategic Investment Board does not employ staff as such. It has a Chairman and five Appointed Members (one vacancy at present) who are all non-executive, but in receipt of fees. Both the Information Tribunal and the Advisory Group on Implementation of the Freedom of Information Act do not directly employ any staff. The Advisory Group on the Delivery of Enforcement Services was formally dissolved during the last financial year. The Review of Procedures Consequent on the Decision to Transfer or Commit Fraud Trials ceased to exist about eight years ago.

Unified Court Boundaries

John McDonnell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether the unified court boundaries to be introduced next year will be coterminous with *(a)* probation and *(b)* prison service boundaries. [173126]

Mr. Leslie: The unified courts agency will be established in April 2005 and will have 42 local management areas. These areas will directly align with the local boundaries of the National Probation Service. Her Majesty's Prison Service has a 12-region structure that is coterminous with the boundaries of the 42 management areas.

The local management areas of the unified courts agency will be contained within seven regions. The boundaries of these regions are coterminous with the regional Prison Service boundaries with the exception of Cheshire and Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, which for the way court business is currently organised, will link with Wales and the South West respectively. The Government will review this position in 2006–07.

The Government announced in January 2004 the creation of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), which will oversee the management of probation and public sector prisons. The proposed structure of the NOMS is still being considered.

HEALTH

Ambulance Services

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether there is a national standard for clinical performance in ambulance services. [174098]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Ambulance services have been set response time targets by the Government that include the target that, immediately life-threatening emergency calls (Category A) should be responded to 75 per cent. of the time within eight minutes, irrespective of location.

The national service framework (NSF) for coronary heart disease emphasises the importance of ambulance services providing advanced life support to patients with suspected heart attack or cardiac arrest, within eight minutes, to maximise the benefits of resuscitation should it be necessary.

The latest information about ambulance performance is contained in the Department of Health Statistical Bulletin, "Ambulance Services, England 2002–03". A copy of the bulletin is available in the Library and on the Department's website at www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sb0313.htm.

Asthma

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in *(a)* Lancashire and *(b)* Chorley suffer from asthma. [173763]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested.

In 2002–03, there were 1,549 finished admission episodes with a primary diagnosis of asthma for Lancashire area, of which 286 were for the area covered by Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust.

Notes:
1. A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
2. The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (seven prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the Hospital Episode Statistics data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.
3. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed)

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics, Department of Health.

Asylum Seekers

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether a failed asylum seeker is entitled to free NHS prophylactic bronchodilators from a general practitioner; [171044]

(2) how a doctor who has treated a failed asylum seeker may demonstrate to a funding primary care trust that the person's treatment was immediately necessary; [171046]

(3) which ailments will entitle failed asylum seekers requiring NHS treatment to free treatment in *(a)* primary care and *(b)* secondary care. [171047]

Mr. Hutton: Each primary care trust (PCT) has a duty to meet all reasonable requirements to provide or secure national health service primary medical services in its area. For their part, general practitioner practices have discretion to accept a failed asylum seeker as a registered NHS patient. However, since the NHS is intended for those living lawfully in the United Kingdom, existing guidance discourages GP practices from accepting failed asylum seekers as patients.

On 14 May, I issued a consultation document setting out proposals to clarify eligibility and introduce charges for those overseas visitors, including failed asylum seekers, who would then be ineligible for free routine NHS primary medical treatment.

Under these proposals, practices would continue to be required to provide treatment, including potentially for asthma, which they regard as emergency or immediately necessary to anyone who needs it. Where a practice provides such treatment to an individual not registered at the practice, it notifies the PCT in writing of the clinical care given.

In secondary care, if an asylum seeker has been in the UK for more than 12 months when their asylum claim is finally rejected, any course of treatment already under way at the time of the final rejection remains free of charge. Furthermore, certain secondary care services are exempt from charges for everyone, irrespective of their immigration status. This includes treatment provided solely in an accident and emergency department, treatment of certain specified communicable diseases and compulsory mental health treatment. In the case of services which relate to HIV/AIDS only the initial test and counselling is free. Influenza immunisations are given to those who are in at risk categories. These categories include anyone over six months with respiratory disease (including asthma), chronic heart disease, renal disease, diabetes and immunosuppressant or staying or living in long stay facilities, or who at the GP's discretion needs to have a flu jab on the basis of clinical need.

Blood Transfusion Service (Edgware Hospital)

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on progress concerning the relocation of the blood transfusion service at Edgware hospital. [173528]

Mr. Hutton: I understand arrangements are in place between Barnet Primary Care Trust and the National Blood Service to relocate the blood transfusion clinic on the Edgware Site in June 2004.

Breastfeeding

Ms Drown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will commission an economic analysis of the benefits of breastfeeding to *(a)* the NHS and *(b)* the UK economy. [173946]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department remains fully committed to promoting breastfeeding but has no current plans to commission an economic analysis its benefits.

Ms Drown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make recommendations in support of World Health Organisation findings that infants should continue to be breastfed up to two years of age and beyond. [173947]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Government support the World Health Organisation's global recommendation that infants should continue to breastfed up to two years of age. The Department recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life, then continuing breastfeeding with appropriate types and amounts of weaning foods until the end of the first year of life or longer.

Cardiac Deaths

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many sudden cardiac deaths there were in each of the last five years, broken down by age range; and if he will make a statement. [175164]

Ruth Kelly: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mrs. Iris Robinson, dated 24 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many sudden cardiac deaths there were in each of the last five years broken down by age range. I am replying in his absence. (175164)

It is not possible to give an exact number of cardiac deaths which occurred suddenly, as information on whether or not a death was sudden is not currently recorded at death registration. We have therefore provided figures for all heart diseases, sudden cardiac death (so described), acute ischaemic heart disease and cardiac arrhythmias.

The latest year for which data are available is 2002. Figures are shown in the attached table for each year from 1998 to 2002.

Number of deaths from (a) all heart diseases, (b) sudden cardiac death, so described, (c) acute ischaemic heart disease and (d) cardiac arrhythmias[1], by age England and Wales, 1998 to 2002[2]

Cause of death	Age 0–14	15–44	45–64	65–84	85+
(a) All heart diseases					
1998	101	1,775	17,332	86,487	41,719
1999	104	1,748	16,470	82,090	41,169
2000	89	1,702	15,756	76,195	39,822
2001[3]	96	1,680	14,952	73,047	40,906
2002[3]	81	1,712	14,355	70,775	41,194
(b) Sudden cardiac death, so described					
1998	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]
1999	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]
2000	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]
2001[3]	0	6	4	1	1
2002[3]	0	4	1	5	0
(c) Acute ischaemic heart disease					
1998	4	621	8,017	38,395	13,597
1999	3	579	7,435	34,899	12,917
2000	1	555	6,694	31,470	12,292
2001[3]	4	552	6,184	28,879	11,306
2002[3]	1	553	5,928	27,875	11,453
(d) Cardiac arrhythmias					
1998	13	46	90	1,526	1,405
1999	6	49	110	1,528	1,546
2000	5	50	133	1,409	1,554
2001[3]	10	50	84	1,348	1,625
2002[3]	5	40	75	1,365	1,764

[1] The cause of death was defined using the ICD-9 for the years 1998 to 2000, and ICD-10 for 2001 and 2002. The codes used are listed below:

All heart diseases ICD-10 120–151, ICD-9 410–429

Sudden cardiac death, so described ICD-10 I46.1, ICD-9 no equivalent code

Acute ischaemic heart disease ICD-10 I21, I24, ICD-9 410–411

Cardiac arrhythmias ICD-10 I44–I49, ICD-9 426–427.

[2] Figures are based on deaths occurring in each calendar year.

[3] The introduction of ICD-10 for coding cause of death in 2001 means that data for heart diseases are not completely comparable between ICD-9 and ICD-10. In particular there is no equivalent code for I46.1—Sudden cardiac death (so described). Any sudden changes in the above figures in 2001 should therefore be interpreted with caution. An article describing the changes to circulatory diseases in more detail is due to be published in Health Statistics Quarterly on May 27. (Griffiths C, Brock A and Rooney C (2004) The effect of the introduction of ICD-10 on mortality from circulatory diseases in England and Wales. Health Statistics Quarterly 22, in press.

[4] Figures only available from 2001, after the introduction of the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) for coding cause of death.

Community Care (Ribble Valley)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have received care packages to enable them to stay in their homes in the Ribble Valley in each of the last five years. [173471]

Dr. Ladyman: The table shows the number of clients aged 18 and over who received community based services following a community care assessment in Lancashire councils with social services responsibilities for the years 2000–01 to 2002–03. Data for previous years are not available.

Information on the number of clients who received community based services in the Ribble Valley is not centrally available.

Number of clients receiving community based services[1] in Lancashire, 2000–01 to 2002–03

	Lancashire
2000–01[2]	35,100
2001–02	28,200
2002–03	29,400

[1] Community based services include services such as day care, meals, respite care, direct payments, professional support, transport and equipment as well as home care.

[2] Care should be taken when comparing data across the years, as levels of completion and quality may have changed.

Source:
RAP form P1.

Advisers/Consultants

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many consultants had signed the new consultant contract by the end of April. [173842]

Mr. Hutton: Data collected on the take up of the consultant contract as at 30 April 2004 shows that nearly two thirds of those consultants who had expressed an interest before 31 October 2003 in moving onto the new contract had either moved onto the new contract or received a final job plan offer.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much his Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies spent on external consultants and advisers in each of the last three years; [171713]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The expenditure by the Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies is shown in the table.

All those units that could provide details without incurring disproportionate costs have been included.

	Total (£)
2001–02	9,078,407
2002–03	10,508,410
2002–04	13,153,386

Dentistry

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of *(a)* adults and *(b)* children in the United Kingdom were registered with a NHS dentist at the end of February. [173030]

Ms Rosie Winterton: At the end of February 2004, 44.3 per cent. of adults and 60.7 per cent. of children in the United Kingdom were registered with a general dental service (GDS) dentist.

However, patients do not necessarily have to be registered with a dentist to receive national health service treatment. The community dental service, personal dental service, the salaried service of the GDS and the hospital dental service are all services which do not require the patient to be registered with a dentist before treatment.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists per 10,000 population there are in England. [173032]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are 4.7 dentists per 10,000 of the population in England.

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists in England are accepting new adult patients to be treated on the NHS; and what the equivalent number was 10 years ago. [173821]

Ms Rosie Winterton: On 17 May, 2,716 surgeries in England were registering new charge paying adults to be treated on the national health service; 3,049 surgeries were registering new charge exempt adults to be treated on the NHS and 1,583 surgeries were offering occasional treatment to non-registered patients. Personal dental services pilots, including dental access centres, provide NHS dental care to patients without registration.

Comparable information is not available for 10 years ago.

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists are practising in *(a)* Lincolnshire and *(b)* England. [173822]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of national health service dentists practising in both Lincolnshire and England as a whole as at 30 September 2003 is shown in the table.

	England	*Lincolnshire*
General dental service (GDS)	18,536	243
Personal dental services	802	13
Community dental services	1,518	10
Hospital dental services	2,245	36
Salaried service of GDS	128	1
Total	23,229	303

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many registered dentists in Lincolnshire are accepting new adult patients to be treated on the NHS. [173823]

Dr. Ladyman: There are four primary care trusts (PCTs) in the Lincolnshire area: North East Lincolnshire PCT, West Lincolnshire PCT, Lincolnshire South-West Teaching PCT and North Lincolnshire PCT.

Information on the number of dental surgeries accepting new national health service patients in these PCT areas, as at 17 May 2004, is shown in the table.

Dental surgeries in Lincolnshire accepting new NHS patients by type of patient

PCT	*Charge paying adults*	*Charge exempt adults*	*Occasional non-registered patients*
North East Lincolnshire	—	—	1
West Lincolnshire	1	—	—
Lincolnshire South West Teaching	1	2	—
North Lincolnshire	1	—	—

Source:
www.nhs.uk.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average number of patients on an NHS dental surgery list was in each of the last five years. [170632]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information in the table shows the number of registered patients, number of general dental service (GDS) principals and the average dentist list size at September each year between 1999 to 2003.

Registrations cover patients seen in the last 15 months who are registered with the dentist. Many people choose not to register with a GDS dentist and only visit the dentist when they require treatment.

GDS: Average dentist list size at September each year in England

	Number of patients registered per million	*Number of GDS principals*	*Average list size*
1999	23.47	16,089	1,459
2000	23.66	16,276	1,454
2001	23.58	16,451	1,433
2002	23.47	16,445	1,427
2003	23.32	16,648	1,401

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many times on average an NHS dental patient visited an NHS dentist in each of the last five years. [170633]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is not collected in the requested format.

The total number of courses of treatment for adults in the general dental service has risen from 25.9 million in 1999–2000 to 26.6 million in 2003–04.

£ million

Period	*Adult courses of treatment in GDS—England*
1996–97	24.6
1997–98	25.3
1998–99	26.2
1999–2000	25.9
2000–01	26.4
2001–02	26.3
2002–03	26.3
2003–04	26.6

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people joined private practice dental surgeries in 2003–04 in *(a)* Worthing and *(b)* England. [170631]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of people joining private dental surgeries is not collected centrally. The Office of Fair Trading report, "The Private Dentistry Market in the UK", published in 2003, stated that some 210 practices are totally private in the United Kingdom out of 11,000 practices in total. This equates to less than two per cent..

Dermatology

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action he is taking to encourage more practice nurses to undertake dermatology training. [173926]

Mr. Hutton: This is a matter for the national health service locally. Post registration training for NHS staff is determined against local NHS priorities, through appraisal processes and training needs analyses. Training needs analyses are informed by local delivery plans and the needs of the service.

The Department published an "Action on Dermatology" good practice guide in January 2003, drawing on the experiences of 15 Action on Dermatology pilot sites. The guide suggested the development of a structure of specialist clinics, as well as a comprehensive nurse-led service.

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the impact on waiting times for secondary dermatology care is of treating actinic keratosis in secondary rather than primary care. [174126]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not collected centrally. No assessments have been made of the impact of waiting times based on the setting where a treatment is provided.

Doctor Vacancies

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many doctor vacancies there were in *(a)* North West London Hospitals NHS Trust, *(b)* Brent Primary Care Trust and *(c)* each strategic health authority in England in each year since 1997; and what the average figures for strategic health authorities in (i) London and (ii) England were in each year. [172818]

Mr. Hutton: The Department's doctor vacancy survey started in 1999. It collects all hospital and community health service three-month vacancies, excluding the house officer, senior house officer and registrar staff groups.

The Department's annual general practitioner (GP) recruitment and retention vacancy survey started in 2000. This is a count of all GP vacancies that have occurred during each year. It will include existing posts that doctors have left and also new posts created to increase the workforce, even where they were filled very quickly.

The average doctor three-month vacancy rate and number for strategic health authorities (SHAs) in London and England since 1999 has been placed in the Library. Data are provided from 2000 for North West London Hospitals National Health Service Trust. Data are not collected for the Brent Primary Care Trust (PCT) area.

The number of GP vacancies in Brent PCT for the year April 2002 to March 2003, the first year data was collected at PCT level, was 16. The number of GP vacancies for each SHA since 2000 has been placed in the Library.

Drug Treatment (Manchester)

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in Manchester, Central are receiving drug treatment. [174365]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In 2000–01, there were 3,652 people receiving drug treatment in Manchester. This is the latest available data. Data broken down by drug action team for 2001–02 and 2002–03 has not yet been finalised and published.

Eating Disorders

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people are on a waiting list to receive treatment at each of the specialist eating disorders units; and what the average waiting time to receive treatment is. [172472]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is not available in the requested format.

The finished admission episodes, mean and median time waited in days for treatment for eating disorders on the national health service are shown in the table.

Primary diagnosis (ICD-10 F50) eating disorders. Method of admission—elective (waiting list and booked) cases. Count of finished admission episodes, mean and median time waited—NHS hospitals, England 2002–03

	Number
Mean time waited	38 days
Median time waited	8 days
Count of finished admission episodes	226

Notes:
1. A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
2. The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (seven prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the hospital episodes statistics (HES) data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.
3. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (ie the data are ungrossed).
4. Time waited statistics from HES are not the same as the published waiting list statistics. HES provides counts and time waited for all patients admitted to hospital within a given period whereas the published waiting list statistics count those waiting for treatment on a specific date and how long they have been on the waiting list. Also, HES calculates the time waited as the difference between the admission and decision to admit dates. Unlike published waiting list statistics, this is not adjusted for self-deferrals or periods of medical/social suspension.

Source:
HES, Department of Health.

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in the UK have been admitted as inpatients for the treatment of eating disorders in each of the last five years; and how many of these in-patients were admitted to general psychiatric wards. [172473]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is not available in the requested format.

The number of finished admission episodes in national health service hospitals with a primary diagnosis of eating disorder in each of the last five years is shown in the table.

Finished admission episodes, NHS hospitals in England, 1998–99 to 2002–03

	Anorexia nervosa	*Bulimia nervosa*
1998–99	1,022	170
1999–2000	1,148	137
2000–01	1,061	136
2001–02	1,139	137
2002–03	1,156	123

Notes:

1. A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
2. These figures do not represent all people with an eating disorder, as many do not require admission to hospital.
3. The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (seven prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the hospital episode statistics (HES) data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.
4. Diagnostic criteria for Anorexia nervosa is based on ICD-10 (F50.0 and F50.1); Bulimia nervosa is based on ICD-10 (F50.2 and F50.3).
5. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (ie the data are ungrossed).

Source:

HES, Department of Health.

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have been diagnosed as suffering from *(a)* Anorexia nervosa and *(b)* Bulimia nervosa, in each of the last five years. [172475]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is not available in the requested format.

The number of finished consultant episodes in national health service hospitals with a primary diagnosis of eating disorder in each of the last five years is shown in the table.

Finished consultant episodes, NHS hospitals in England, 1998–99 to 2002–03

	Anorexia nervosa	*Bulimia nervosa*
1998–99	1,157	189
1999–2000	1,264	157
2000–01	1,193	151
2001–02	1,273	160
2002–03	1,315	131

Notes:

1. Finished consultant episodes—a count of the number of hospital episode statistics (HES) records submitted on behalf of English national health service hospital providers that relate to episodes of in-patient care which ended during the HES year. These figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year.
2. The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (seven prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the HES data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.
3. Diagnostic criteria for Anorexia nervosa is based on ICD-10 (F50.0 and F50.1); Bulimia nervosa is based on ICD-10 (F50.2 and F50.3).
4. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (ie the data are ungrossed).

Source:

HES, Department of Health.

Emergency Planning

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how closely co-ordinated health authorities are with those bodies that would provide airlift relief in the event of a serious emergency. [174682]

Mr. Hutton: In addition to its own helicopter air ambulances, the National Health Service has long-standing arrangements to seek additional support, if required, from the armed forces. Further support is available, as and when required, through arrangements made at the local level.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how well advanced Government plans are for the co-ordination of NHS casualty units and co-ordination between hospitals in the event of a serious emergency. [174683]

Mr. Hutton: National health service organisations have well developed major incident plans, including mutual aid, and national guidance to NHS organisations requires that all major incident plans be reviewed and tested on a regular basis. The NHS has been conducting major incident training exercises for many years, often in conjunction with local emergency partners.

Initially, the ambulance service will co-ordinate the NHS response; deploy vehicles to the scene; and put hospitals on stand-by to take casualties. If the incident continues, local health services will take on further co-ordination of the response.

The NHS is an integral part of the integrated approach across government to protect the public and maintain essential services.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many of his Department's staff work in each of the English Government Office regions. [173839]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested can be found in Table D (page 40–41) in the publication, "Civil Service Statistics 2002". This is the latest published information available. Copies are available in the Library and also at www.civil-service.gov.uk/statistics/css.

Epsom and St. Helier Trust

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what study has been carried out by the East Elmbridge and Mid-Surrey Primary Care Trust on the viability of demerging the Epsom and St. Helier Trust. [173233]

Mr. Hutton: The South West London and Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authorities advise me that there are currently no plans to demerge Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals National Health Service Trust.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the representation by East Elmbridge and Mid-Surrey Primary Care Trust to the Chief Executive of the South West London

Strategic Health Authority during the recent arbitration hearing about the possibility of demerging the Epsom and St. Helier NHS Trust. [173234]

Mr. Hutton: No plans exist within Epsom and St. Helier National Health Service Trust or South West London Strategic Health Authority for the demerger of Epsom and St. Helier. East Elmbridge and Mid-Surrey Primary Care Trust raised the matter during an arbitration hearing, but it has not been explored further.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes would be required to maintain accident and emergency services at Epsom hospital following a demerger of the Epsom and St. Helier NHS Trust. [173230]

Mr. Hutton: This is a matter for the local national health service. Epsom and St. Helier NHS Trust has not undertaken any detailed studies on the effect of demerger of Epsom and St. Helier hospitals.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what capital charges are payable on the Epsom hospital site. [173231]

Mr. Hutton: The total capital charges for Epsom Hospital for 2003–04 were £3.295 million.

Foundation Hospitals

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many places on the boards of governors of the first wave of foundation hospitals which *(a)* are vacant and *(b)* were filled unopposed. [168067]

Mr. Hutton: This is a matter for the office of the independent regulator of National Health Service foundation trusts. The chairman will write to the hon. Member and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

GP Contracts

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to introduce quality measures for dermatology into the general practitioner contract. [173924]

Mr. Hutton: Changes to the quality and outcomes framework (QOF) of the new general medical services contract will be negotiated between the NHS Confederation and the British Medical Association, following recommendations from an independent, United Kingdom-wide review group. The independent review group will decide which disease areas to consider for addition to the QOF.

Health Services (Derby, North)

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of patients with suspected cancer in Derby, North saw an NHS consultant within two weeks in each year between 1997 and 2003. [173740]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not available in the format requested. However, information from 1999 onwards for the organisations that service the Derby, North constituency is shown in the table.

All Cancer waiting times, Southern Derbyshire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust Urgent referrals received within 24 hours

	Total referrals seen during the year	*Number of patients seen during the year by a specialist within 14 days of the decision to refer by their general practitioner*	*Number of patients seen during the year by a specialist after 14 days of the decision to refer by their general practitioner*	*Percentage compliance with the two week standard*
1999–2000	470	461	9	98.1
2000–01	1,336	1,306	30	97.8
2001–02	4,185	4,019	166	96.0
2002–03	5,300	5,212	88	98.3
2003–04[1]	4,338	4,300	38	99.1

Note:
[1] Only three quarters data is available for 2003–04. Date for quarter ended March 2004 will be published on 4 June 2004.
Source:
Department of Health form QMCW

Health Services (Nottinghamshire)

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* nurses, *(b)* midwives and *(c)* health visitors were working within Nottinghamshire health authority areas in each year since 1997. [173525]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many prescriptions were issued to NHS patients within Nottinghamshire health authority areas in each year since 1997. [173552]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not available in the format requested. However, information for the years that are available is shown in the following table.

Number of prescription items prescribed in general practitioner practices in Trent Strategic Health Authority (SHA) at primary care trust (PCT) level and total number of prescription items prescribed in general practitioner (GP) practices in England that were dispensed in the community—for 2001–02, 2002–03 and 2003–04

PCT/SHA where prescriptions prescribed PCTs	*Financial Years*		
	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Mansfield District	1,250,648	1,319,701	1,380,595
Newark and Sherwood	1,528,463	1,601,288	1,676,492
Gedling	1,038,381	1,087,665	1,132,335
Nottingham City	3,282,767	3,433,254	3,623,316
Bassetlaw	1,405,639	1,492,650	1,547,934
Broxtowe and Hucknall	1,505,645	1,603,861	1,645,517
Ashfield	1,086,997	1,145,424	1,194,587
Rushcliffe	1,253,255	1,314,968	1,383,004

Notes:
1. This information was obtained from the prescribing analysis and cost (PACT) system, which covers prescriptions prescribed by GP practices in England and dispensed in the community. Prescriptions written within a GP practice but dispensed outside the PCT will be included in the PCT in which the GP practice is based. Prescriptions written in England but dispensed outside England are included. Prescriptions written in hospitals/clinics that are dispensed in the community, prescriptions dispensed in hospitals and private prescriptions are not included in PACT data.
2. Prescriptions are written on a prescription form. Each single item written on the form is counted as a prescription item.
3. With effect from October 2002, the prescription pricing analysis (PPA) information systems were changed to reflect Shifting the Balance of Power. Shifting the Balance of Power saw the creation

of SHAs and PCTs, which shifted the balance of power within the national health services away from Whitehall and towards front line clinical staff and their patients. Due to Shifting the Balance of Power, from the October 2002 release of ePACT.net, PCT data reflects the organisational structures in place on 1 October 2002. This was true for all 36 months historic data on ePACT.net, so data on ePACT.net prior to October 2002 was also amended retrospectively so that it was in line with Shifting the Balance of Power.

Health Services (Wigan)

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS beds were available in Wigan in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [169350]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Wigan and Leigh Health Services NHS Trust 1996–97 to 2000–01

Average daily number of available beds, by sector

Year	All specialties (excluding day only)	General and Acute	Acute	Geriatric	Mental illness	Learning disability	Maternity	Day only
1996–97	1,021	729	611	118	233		59	31
1997–98	990	710	580	131	220		60	33
1998–99	927	703	620	83	170		54	31
1 999–2000	886	695	612	83	137		54	33
2000–01	919	719	636	83	146		54	35

Source:
Department of Health form KHO3

Wrightington Health Services NHS Trust 1996–97 to 2000–01

Year	All specialities (excluding day only)	General and acute	Acute	Geriatric	Mental illness	Learning disability	Maternity	Day only
1996–97	148	148	132	16	-	-	-	-
1997–98	154	154	140	14	-	-	-	-
1998–99	158	158	158	-	-	-	-	-
1999–2000	158	158	158	-	-	-	-	-
2000–01	158	158	158	-	-	-	-	-

Source:
Department of Health form KHO3

Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust 2001–02 to 2002–03.

Year	All specialities (excluding day only)	General and Acute	Acute	Geriatric	Mental illness	Learning disability	Maternity	Day only
1996–97	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1997–98	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1998–99	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1999–2000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2000–01	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2001–02	1,083	900	817	83	130	-	53	36
2002–03	899	850	801	49	-	-	49	70

Source:
Department of Health form KHO3

Heroin

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the latest figures are for heroin addiction within the Greater London area. [174485]

Mr. Hutton: This information is not collected centrally.

ICT Training

Mr. Simon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his targets are for improving the information and communication technology (ICT) skills base of staff within *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies; and what method he uses to certify the competence levels achieved by staff receiving training in ICT. [173719]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Neither the Department nor its executive agencies have targets for improving the information and communication technology (ICT) skills base of staff.

Staff are encouraged to improve their ICT skills and every major corporate application implementation or upgrade of desktop software packages is accompanied by training opportunities. The Department offers a range of training options: classroom training, at-desk training, computer based training, short seminars and

workshops. Staff are also able to undertake the European computer driving licence, leading to formally recognised qualifications in ICT.

The Department and its agencies are very heavily reliant on ICT for the conduct of their business and, while there is no formal, corporate process for validating staff competence in ICT, staff are assessed, as part of the performance appraisal process, on their ability to undertake their roles effectively. This may include ICT related tasks.

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funds will be made available to *(a)* strategic health authorities and *(b)* primary care trusts to cover the costs of (i) training clinical staff to use new IT systems as part of the National Programme for IT rollout and (ii) covering for clinical staff while they are training. [174104]

Mr. Hutton: Training plans to support the national programme for information technology in the national health service in England (NPfIT) are still evolving, as is to be expected when approaching a phased programme of implementation and roll out of new applications, systems and services.

General IT skills are now an everyday element for any public service and service based organisation, including the NHS, and provision for this will form part of the normal continuing professional and personal development for all NHS staff within existing budgets and training plans. The European computer driving licence is helping to improve general skills across the NHS. The move to e-learning and development and the NHS university will both create more demand for computer and online skills and provide more channels and solutions to bring training to people.

As we complete the more detailed plans for each geographical cluster and local service provider contract we will map out the extent of IT support for clinical practice and patient care to support the implementation of the NPfIT. This will generate clearer training requirements and will enable us to consider the most appropriate ways of providing training and development and produce firmer costs. The bids submitted by the service suppliers for the NPfIT include an element for supporting the delivery of training within the NHS.

Infleximab/Remicade

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps he is proposing to take to ensure that Infleximab/Remicade is made available on the NHS for all patients requiring this treatment; [174141]

(2) what steps he is taking to ensure that *(a)* Cherwell Vale Primary Care Trust and *(b)* other primary care trusts are operating in line with the National Institute for Clinical Excellence guidelines on the prescription by consultant rheumatologists of Infleximab/Remicade. [174142]

Ms Rosie Winterton: National health service bodies are under a statutory obligation to fund treatments recommended in National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) technology appraisals. We expect primary care trusts to meet their statutory obligations and strategic health authorities to follow up any allegations of non-compliance.

However, clinicians may depart from the NICE guidance if, in their view, the circumstances of the individual patient justify doing so. But they will be held accountable, through clinical governance arrangements, for their clinical decisions.

Maternity Services

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many full-time midwives are employed in the NHS; and how many were employed *(a)* five years ago and *(b)* 10 years ago. [173581]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the following table.

NHS hospital and community health services: registered midwives by nature of contract in England as at 30 September each year

Headcount

	Total	*Full-time*	*Part-time*	*Blank/ Unknown*
2003	23,941	10,462	11,796	1,683
1998	22,841	11,638	9,511	1,692
1993	23,353	12,205	7,185	3,963

Notes:
1. A new classification of the non-medical workforce was introduced in 1995.
2. Information based on this classification is not directly comparable with earlier years.

Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the merits of permitting people to commence midwifery training without having to undergo prior training as a nurse. [173738]

Mr. Hutton: Entry requirements, content or structure of pre-registration nursing and midwifery training programmes are matters which are the responsibility of the Nursing and Midwifery Council as the regulatory body for these professions. The arrangements for direct entry midwifery training leading to professional qualifications and the right to practice have proved successful over the last decade and have the support of the professional bodies and higher education institutions.

NHS Direct

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many calls were made to NHS Direct in 2003–04. [173844]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Between 1 April 2003 and 31 March 2004, NHS Direct answered 6,427,321 calls.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost of NHS Direct was in 2003–04. [173845]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The total budgeted cost for the NHS Direct telephone service, NHS Direct Online and other related services for 2003–04 is £124 million.

NHS Recruitment

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of healthcare workers from overseas who have been granted work permits were employed by *(a)* the NHS and *(b)* the private

health sector for their first job on entering the United Kingdom in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [170665]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 4 May 2004]*: I have been asked to reply.

The structure of the Work Permits (UK) database and record storage facilities does not allow for a breakdown of the number of work permits awarded to healthcare workers by employer type, i.e. in NHS or private healthcare sector. This information therefore can only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Midwives/Nurses

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many midwives were employed in the national health service in each year from 1974 to 2003. [173637]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the table.

NHS Hospital and Community Health Services (HCHS): Registered midwives in England as at 30 September each year

	Whole-time equivalent	*Headcount*
2003	18,444	23,941
2002	18,119	23,249
2001	18,048	23,075
2000	17,662	22,572
1999	17,876	22,799
1998	18,168	22,841
1997	18,053	22,385
1996	18,262	22,595
1995[1]	18,034	22,022
1994	19,291	23,050
1993	19,554	23,353
1992	20,283	24,020
1991	19,685	23,368
1990	19,897	23,143
1989	19,213	22,391
1988	19,290	22,319
1987	19,312	22,117
1986	18,850	21,549
1985	18,431	21,067
1984	17,820	20,438
1983	17,309	19,814
1982[2]	16,268	18,439
1981	12,743	14,763
1980	13,056	15,209
1979	12,525	14,617
1978	12,115	14,078
1977	12,277	14,192
1976	12,248	14,144
1975	11,380	13,311
1974	10,562	12,300

[1] A new system of occupation coding for NHS non-medical staff was introduced in 1995. The new codes classify staff according to what they do rather than the terms and conditions under which they are employed i.e. national pay scales. Figures based on new occupation codes are not directly comparable with those based on the old pay scale classification. Therefore figures since 1995 are not comparable with earlier years.

[2] From 1982 onwards data are taken from the Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census. Prior to 1982 data are taken from the Health and Personal Social Services Statistics for England (HPSSS). Data from HPSSS contains hospital-based staff only and is therefore not directly comparable with later years.

Notes:
Figures are rounded to the nearest whole number.
All figures exclude learners and agency staff.

Sources:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.
Health and Personal Social Services Statistics for England (HPSSS).

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many nurses have *(a)* entered and *(b)* completed training since 1997; and how many of those have (i) been recruited into the national health service and (ii) are still working in the national health service. [174105]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of nurses and midwives entering training each year since 1997 is shown in the table.

Pre-registration nursing and midwifery training commissions

	Headcount
1996–97	14,984
1997–98	16,539
1998–99	17,689
1999–2000	18,707
2000–01	20,021
2001–02	21,770
2002–03	22,956

Source:
Quarterly Monitoring Reports.

Information on the number of nurses who complete training each year was collected by the English National Board for Nursing, until its abolition in March 2002 with the creation of the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). The latest complete information is only available for the 1997–98 cohort of nursing and midwifery students, of whom 72 per cent. had completed training by October 2001.

Information is not collected centrally on the number of nurses completing training recruited into the national health service or still working in the NHS. The NMC holds information on the number of nurses and midwives initially entering the register, a pre-requisite for employment in the NHS and other sectors in the United Kingdom. This information can be found on the NMC website at www.nmc-uk.org.

Between 1997 and 2003, there has been a net increase of 67,503 qualified nurses employed in the NHS.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action is being taken to increase the input of front-line nurses into departmental policy formation. [173737]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Frontline nurses contribute directly to policy development as individual members of working groups, policy boards and clinical advisory networks. They also contribute though their national health service trusts, modernisation programmes and professional organisations which meet regularly with the Chief Nursing Officer (CNO). The contribution of frontline nurses to policy is being increased by engaging the new strategic health authority lead nurses, greater use of electronic communication, visits to the NHS by Ministers and officials and linking modernisation programmes to policy work.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of nursing students withdrew from university courses in each of the past five years. [173766]

Mr. Hutton: Information for England on the percentage of pre-registration student nurses who have left their university course is shown in the following table. The recently received attrition data for the

2002–03 academic year administered by the Higher Education Statistics Agency is in the process of being analysed.

	Percentage withdrawn
1996–1997	20.38
1997–1998	20.16
1998–1999	18.16
1999–2000	13.44
2000–2001	6.21

Note:
This data is based on a snapshot in time of a particular cohort(s) and therefore each year there will still be students who have yet to complete their course.

Obesity

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many children have undergone stomach stapling operations for obesity related problems in each of the last five years; [172587]

(2) how many adults have undergone stomach stapling operations in each of the last five years. [172589]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* The table shows the number of finished admission episodes for stomach stapling operations performed on adults over the last five years. No children had stomach stapling operations in relation to obesity during the time period.

	Children: 0–18 years	Adults: 19 years and over
1998–99	0	4
1999–2000	0	12
2000–01	0	14
2001–02	0	10
2002–03	0	6

Source:
Department of Health, Hospital Episode Statistics.

Opticians

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether his Department plans to offer financial support to the compulsory continued education and training programmes for *(a)* opticians and *(b)* dispensing opticians. [171045]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As part of a three-year agreement on fees for sight-tests under the general ophthalmic services (GOS), the Department has agreed to make a financial contribution towards the costs of continuing education and training. These arrangements cover optometrists who are obliged to undertake continuing education to maintain their registration with the General Optical Council and also those ophthalmic medical practitioners who undertake no professional work other than conducting sight tests and who are also obliged to undertake continuing education as part of the registration requirements of the General Medical Council.

Under the terms of the three-year sight-test fee agreement, the financial support towards continuing education has been set at £270 for the year 2004–05 and £425 for the year 2005–06.

Dispensing opticians are not contracted to provide GOS and are therefore outside of these national health service arrangements and were not part of the pay agreement reached with contractors.

The Department is due shortly to begin a review of the GOS and the position of dispensing opticians within the NHS will be considered as part of that review.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reasons dispensing opticians are not recognised by his Department as healthcare professionals. [172703]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Dispensing opticians are recognised as health care professionals and are regulated under the Opticians Act. Under legislative changes introduced in 1986, dispensing was deregulated and became a private transaction. Dispensing opticians are therefore not included on primary care trust lists.

Cancer

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women are being treated for cancer in the Greater London area. [174496]

Mr. Hutton: Information on treatment for cancer is not available in the format requested. Information on the number of finished admission episodes with a primary diagnosis of neoplasms for the five London strategic health authorities for 2002–03 is shown in the table.

Primary Diagnosis (ICD-10 C00-D48)—Neoplasms: Count of finished admission episodes for London Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs) of treatment NHS hospitals, England 2002–03

	SHA of treatment	Female	Male	Not known	Not specified	Total
Q04	North West London HA	22,179	18,842	6	—	41,027
Q05	North Central London HA	18,975	17,048	1	—	36,024
Q06	North East London HA	18,519	17,883	—	—	36,402
Q07	South East London HA	13,369	12,714	—	4	26,087
Q08	South West London HA	22,057	19,705	2	—	41,764
	London SHAs	95,099	86,192	9	4	181,304

Finished admission episodes
A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider.
Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
Diagnosis (Primary Diagnosis)
The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (7 prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.
Ungrossed Data
Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).
Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Patient Statistics (Wandsworth)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients there were per general practitioner within the London borough of Wandsworth at the most recent recorded date. [174494]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is collected by primary care trust (PCT) rather than London borough. Information for Wandsworth PCT is shown in the table.

Patients of unrestricted principals and equivalents (UPEs)[1] for Wandsworth PCT

	Wandsworth PCT
UPEs	174
Patients of UPEs	302,798
Average list size	1,740

[1] UPEs include general medical service unrestricted principals, personal medical services contracted general practitioners and personal medical service salaried GPs. Data as at 30 September 2003.

Source:
Department of Health general and personal medical services statistics.

PFI Schemes

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the aggregate annual revenue payments from 2004–05 onwards are in respect of NHS private finance initiative schemes which have reached financial close. [173841]

Mr. Hutton: The annual aggregate revenue payments for all national health service private finance initiative (PFI) schemes with a capital value of £10 million or over which have reached financial close are in the table.

	Payment (£ million)
2004–05	389.2
2005–06	477.7
2006–07	567.9
2007–08	599.0
2008–09	641.3
2009–10	641.5
2010–11	641.1
2011–12	642.2
2012–13	642.5
2013–14	642.8
2014–15	643.6
2015–16	643.5
2016–17	642.1
2017–18	641.0
2018–19	640.4
2019–20	640.7
2020–21	640.8
2021–22	640.4
2022–23	639.8
2023–24	637.1
2024–25	634.2
2025–26	631.9
2026–27	613.5
2027–28	613.9
2028–29	613.4
2029–30	609.3

These figures are submitted bi-annually to Her Majesty's Treasury. Table C19 of the Budget report contains an aggregate figure for the revenue payments from all Government Departments and they appear in Treasury Ministers' autumn report to Parliament.

Statistics are not collected centrally for schemes with a value less than £10 million.

Prescription Charges

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the cost to his Department of freezing prescription charges at their current price over the next five years. [173184]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The level of the prescription charge is considered annually and no forecast is made of future charge levels. It is therefore not possible to estimate the cost of freezing the current charge.

Prostate Cancer

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many men are being treated for prostate cancer in *(a)* Lancashire and *(b)* Chorley. [173762]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested.

In 2002–03, there were 1,263 finished admission episodes with a primary diagnosis of prostate cancer for Lancashire area, of which 189 were for the area covered by Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust.

Notes:
1. A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
2. The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (seven prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the Hospital Episode Statistics (HRS) data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.
3. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics, Department of Health.

Psychiatrists

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) by what percentage the number of NHS psychiatrists has changed since 1997; [175036]

(2) how many consultant psychiatrists are employed by the NHS in *(a)* Leicestershire and *(b)* England. [175037]

Mr. Hutton: The number of staff within the psychiatry group in England increased by 21.8 per cent. between September 1997 and September 2003. The number of consultants within the psychiatry group in England increased by 35.1 per cent. between September 1997 and December 2003.

The table shows the number of consultants within the psychiatry group, broken down by psychiatry specialties, in England and Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland Strategic Health Authority as at December 2003.

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS): Consultants within the psychiatry group in England and Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland Strategic Health Authority by organisation: as at 30 December 2003

Numbers (headcount)

			Of which				
		Psychiatry group	*Child and adolescent psychiatry*	*Forensic psychiatry*	*General psychiatry*	*Learning disabilities*	*Old age psychiatry*	*Psychotherapy*
England		3,305	526	216	1,804	206	442	111
Of which								
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland SHA	Q25	84	13	[1]—	40	7	19	5
Of which								
Leicestershire & Rutland Healthcare NHS Trust	RT5	58	8	[1]—	29	5	14	2
Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust	RNS	3	3	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Trust	RP1	23	2	[1]—	11	2	5	3

[1] Zero

Source:
Department of Health medical and dental workforce census

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures are planned to increase the recruitment and retention of psychiatrists in the NHS. [175038]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Government's agenda to improve the recruitment and retention of psychiatrists is being taken forward by the National Institute for Mental Health in England national workforce programme.

The Department and the Royal College of Psychiatrists have issued a joint action plan providing recommendations to increase the recruitment and overall numbers and the retention of consultant psychiatrists in January. The recommended actions cover the whole career pathway from initial recruitment of medical graduates into psychiatry through to the timing of retirement and improving international recruitment.

The national workforce programme is currently producing an analysis of demand and supply of staff to influence the commissioning of funding for education and training by the workforce development confederations by way of the national workforce numbers advisory board.

The programme is also exploring proposals to create more flexibility between specialist registrar and senior house officer posts with a view to reducing potential difficulties in filling them.

Radiography Services (Berkshire)

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many qualified radiographers have been employed at the Royal Berkshire Hospital in each of the last five years. [173730]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Requested information on number of qualified radiographers is provided in the table.

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified radiography staff in the Royal Berkshire and Battle Hospitals NHS Trust by area as at 30 September each specified year.

headcount

	1998	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Total qualified radiographers	94	74	90	91	90	95
of which:						
Diagnostic radiographers	75	58	70	73	74	76
Therapeutic radiographers	19	16	20	18	16	19

Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census

Rubber Ferrules

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the expenditure was on the acquisition of rubber ferrules in each year since 1997. [174158]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* Ferrules are supplied to the national health service as part of the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency's national agreement for the supply of walking aids. The Department holds information on ferrules bought since 1998–99. The contract is not mandatory, and therefore some NHS bodies may buy ferrules from other sources.

The expenditure on the contract was as follows:

	£
1998–99	96,670.37
1999–2000	103,094.37
2000–01	87,739.36
2001–02	96,896.97
2002–03	101,855.81
2003–04	106,347.92

Note:
All figures include Value Added Tax.

Radiology

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many interventional radiologists practise in the NHS; and if he will make a statement. [174967]

Mr. Hutton: Interventional radiology is the use of imaging guidance for the purpose of treating patients.

There is no certificate of completion of specialist training in interventional radiology. Therefore, the Department does not collect data on the numbers of interventional radiologists practising in the national

health service. Many clinical radiologists undertake interventional radiological procedures and most of them combine diagnosis and intervention in their practice.

Sick Leave

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of the staff of his Department were absent from work due to sickness as a proportion of the staff time available in each year since 2000. [173838]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on sickness absence in the Department is available in the publication, "Analysis of Sickness Absence in the Civil Service". Copies of "Analysis of Sickness Absence in the Civil Service" are available in the Library and at www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/civilservice/publications/sickness/index.htm. The website also contains reports for the previous three years.

Information on the number of staff employed by the Department can be found in the publication, "Civil Service Statistics".

Copies of "Civil Service Statistics" are available in the Library and at www.civil-service.gov.uk/Statistics/css/htm. The website contains publications since the financial year 1970.

Skin Cancer

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the effect of the two week wait rule on the management of suspected skin cancers. [174124]

Miss Melanie Johnson: A two-week outpatient waiting time standard was introduced for urgently referred cases of suspected skin cancer from October 2000. In the last quarter (October to December 2003), 99.5 per cent., of urgently referred patients with suspected skin cancer were seen within two weeks of urgent referral. We have issued general practitioner cancer referral guidelines to assist GPs in determining those patients who need to be referred urgently to see a specialist within two weeks, those patients that can be referred for a routine appointment and those who can be safely watched at a primary care level. The referral guidelines are currently being reviewed by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence.

Smoking

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what consultation he has undertaken on a possible ban on the smoking of tobacco in public places. [174383]

Miss Melanie Johnson: On 3 March, the Government launched "Choosing Health?", a consultation on action to improve people's health. This sets out a range of questions on which the Government are seeking views.

Questions regarding smoking of tobacco in public places are:

Should the Government pass a law to make all enclosed workplaces/public places smoke-free?

What about restaurants?

What about pubs and bars?

Would local authorities be better placed than central Government to introduce laws?

Apart from bans how else could local towns and cities respond to calls for more smoke-free public places?

The consultation continues until 28 May.

Social Care

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the recent TV advertising campaign in respect of social care careers. [173952]

Dr. Ladyman: During the five weeks of the campaign, the social care careers helpline received more than 66,000 calls against a forecast of 23,000, with the majority of the calls generated by television. This is a very high response and indicates that for many people, social care is a viable career option.

The website, www.socialcarecareers.co.uk, attracted more than 23,000 unique visitors and to support those interested in jobs, links were established to local authority job pages and to Jobcentre Plus.

St. George's Hospital

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many assaults there were on members of staff during the last 12 months at St. George's Hospital, Tooting. [174495]

Mr. Hutton: During 2002–03, there were 60 violent incidents[1] on directly employed staff at the St. George's Healthcare National Health Service Trust.

[1] Violent incidents are counted as any incident where staff are abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances related to their work, involving an explicit or implicit challenge to their safety, well being or health.

Notes:
1. Data at individual hospitals are not available centrally as information is collected at NHS trust or primary care trust level.
2. Data are collected on a financial year basis.

Source:
Department of Health Violence, Accidents and Harassment Survey 2002–2003.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many nurses are employed at St. George's Hospital, Tooting; and how many are *(a)* agency nurses and *(b)* recruited from overseas countries. [174498]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of nurses at St George's Healthcare National Health Service Trust is shown in the table. Information is not available centrally on the number agency nurses or the number of nurses recruited from overseas countries by the trust.

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff in the St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust as at 30 September 2003

		Headcount
RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	2,375

Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census

Supporting People Scheme

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidelines he is putting in place for health agencies

on the effects on the provision of *(a)* learning disability and *(b)* mental health services of changes in the Supporting People budgets. [167857]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No guidelines are being issued with regard to any changes in the Supporting People budgets.

Waiting Lists/Times

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time is for a patient to get an appointment to be seen at a genito-urinary medicine clinic in each strategic health authority area in England. [174038]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* Data on average waiting times are shown in the table.

Estimated average out-patient wait for those seen under the genito-urinary medicine specialty for March 2004 by Strategic Health Authority (SHA)

SHA name	Median (weeks)
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	2.00
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	2.11
Essex	2.25
North West London	—
North Central London	2.07
North East London	2.00
South East London	2.01
South West London	—
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	2.02
County Durham and Tees Valley	—
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	2.00
West Yorkshire	2.02
Cumbria and Lancashire	—
Greater Manchester	2.04
Cheshire and Merseyside	2.14
Thames Valley	2.00
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	2.00
Kent and Medway	2.41
Surrey and Sussex	—
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	2.72
South West Peninsula	3.13
Somerset and Dorset	2.00
South Yorkshire	2.01
Trent	—
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	2.03
Shropshire and Staffordshire	—
Birmingham and The Black Country	2.02
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire	2.03

Source:
Department of Health form QM08.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the *(a)* average and *(b)* maximum waiting time to see (i) an occupational therapist, (ii) a physiotherapist and (iii) a speech and language therapist in (A) England and (B) each strategic health authority; [174479]

Mr. Hutton: Information on waiting times for these services is not collected centrally.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Antisocial Behaviour

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many places have been designated as areas of persistent antisocial behaviour by the Metropolitan police since the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 came into force; how many dispersal orders have been issued in those areas; and how many unsupervised children have been escorted home from those areas. [172402]

Ms Blears: The Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis tells me that the information requested is not currently held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Asylum

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much money has been spent by the National Asylum Support Service in each year since its inception *(a)* on subsistence only support, *(b)* on NASS accommodation and *(c)* in total. [173399]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* The information requested on the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) accommodation costs and total NASS expenditure is as follows.

£ million[1]

Financial Year	(a) Subsistence only support[2]	(b) Expenditure on NASS Accommodation	(c) Total NASS Expenditure
2000–01	Not recorded separately	Not recorded separately	783
2001–02	Not recorded separately	439	1,082
2002–03	Not recorded separately	594	1,124
2004–04	Not recorded separately	Not yet available	Not yet available

[1] All figures rounded to the nearest million.
[2] Specific information on the costs of providing subsistence only are not readily available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women from the Ukraine have sought political asylum in the United Kingdom in each of the last five years; and how many applications have been granted. [173539]

Mr. Browne: The tables show asylum application and initial decision data for Ukranian nationals, by gender, for those years for which data are available:

Asylum applications[1] received in the United Kingdom, excluding dependants, and initial decisions[2], on applications, by gender, 2001–03

	Applications	Initial decisions				
	Total applications	Total initial decisions	Grants of asylum	Grants of ELR	Grants of HP/DL	Refusals
Male						
2001[3,4]	315	830	5	15	n/a	810
2002[4]	280	230	*	5	n/a	225
2003[4]	205	230	—	5	*	225

Asylum applications[1] received in the United Kingdom, excluding dependants, and initial decisions[2], on applications, by gender, 2001–03

	Applications	Initial decisions				
	Total applications	*Total initial decisions*	*Grants of asylum*	*Grants of ELR*	*Grants of HP/DL*	*Refusals*
Female						
2001[3, 4]	130	345	*	15	n/a	330
2002[4]	80	80	—	5	n/a	75
2003[4]	90	120	—	*	5	115

n/a = not applicable.
[1] Figures rounded to nearest 5, with * = 1 or 2.
[2] Information is of initial decisions, excluding the outcome of appeals determinations or other subsequent decisions.
[3] Revised figures.
[4] Provisional figures.

Information on asylum applications and initial decisions, by gender, is published in the annual statistical bulletin, "Asylum Statistics United Kingdom". Copies of these publications and others relating to general immigration to the UK are available from the Library and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at: http://NAAAAw.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many citizens of the new EU accession states, previously maintained as asylum seekers, have *(a)* had that maintenance removed, *(b)* lost their housing and *(c)* applied for work registration. [173873]

Mr. Browne: On 5 and 6 April 2004, the National Asylum Support Services (NASS) sent 1,131 letters to nationals from those countries due to join the EU on 1 May (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Cyprus and Malta). The letters explained that, after 1 May, as EEA nationals, they would no longer be entitled to National Asylum Support Service (NASS) support and that they would have the options of working, and registering under the Worker Registration scheme where appropriate, becoming self sufficient or returning to their country of origin. Support can be provided if it is necessary to avoid a breach of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and a process has been set up to consider ECHR representations.

Provisional figures indicate that as at 14 May, of the 1,131 cases, 571 were remaining in NASS accommodation and a further 108 were receiving cash only support, pending an individual assessment of their circumstances. These figures are subject to change as cases find work or if they decide to leave the United Kingdom voluntarily.

Figures are not currently available for those supported by local authorities under the interim provisions but local authorities have been advised of the procedures being followed by NASS.

The Immigration and Nationality Directorate is monitoring the impact of accession and will be making information available on the Worker Registration Scheme on a regular basis, when it is meaningful and appropriate to do so.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers and their dependants in each parliamentary constituency in the City of Newcastle in December 2003 were supported by the National Asylum Support Service; and how many of those were *(a)* from the EU accession countries and *(b)* potentially covered by amnesty schemes. [170863]

Mr. Browne: The total number of asylum seekers (including dependants), and those from the EU accession countries (including dependants), in each parliamentary constituency in the City of Newcastle as at the end of December 2003 that were supported by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) are shown in the table:

Parliamentary constituency	*Number of asylum seekers supported by NASS[1] (including dependants)*	*Number of asylum seekers supported by NASS[1] from the EU accession countries (including dependants)*
Newcastle upon Tyne Central	430	20
Newcastle upon Tyne East and Wallsend	475	20
Newcastle upon Tyne North	145	10
Tyne Bridge	515	40
Total	1,565	90

[1] Number of asylum seekers supported by NASS includes those supported in NASS accommodation and those in receipt of subsistence only support.
Figures are rounded to the nearest 5.

Data about how many of the asylum seekers supported by NASS in the City of Newcastle that are potentially covered by amnesty schemes are not available.

An announcement detailing the results of the exercise announced by my right hon. Friend, the Home Secretary in October 2003, including the available statistical information, will be made when the exercise is completed. We would not wish to release figures until all those potentially qualifying applicants have had an opportunity to respond to our queries.

We have made good progress in considering the cases originally identified. The bulk of cases have been processed with the majority, where the applicants have responded to our queries, having been decided. We are reliant on the applicants we contact replying to our queries promptly. Those not doing so are being reminded.

Information on the number of asylum seekers supported by NASS is published quarterly. The next publication covering the first quarter of 2004 (January to March) will be available on 25 May on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* West Yorkshire, *(c)* Kirklees and

(d) Huddersfield have exhausted the appeals process and have been refused on asylum and human rights grounds and are unable to be returned to their own country because it is not considered safe. [171374]

Mr. Browne: I regret that the information requested on appeal rights exhausted is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost by examination of individual case files.

Where an asylum seeker has had their claim refused and has exhausted their appeal rights it is considered safe for them to return to their own country.

Statistics on initial asylum decisions, appeals and removals are published quarterly. Copies of the most recent publications are available from the Library of the House or on the Home Office

Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average time taken is for the removal of asylum seekers whose claims have been unsuccessful following judicial review. [171416]

Mr. Browne: Information on final decisions made on asylum applications, and on the interval between the final refusal of the application—including any appeal—and subsequent removal of the person concerned is not readily available. This could be obtained only by examination of individual case files to obtain information on the outcomes of initial decisions, of subsequent appeals to the Immigration Appellate Authority, the Tribunal and for Judicial Review, and of cases which have been reconsidered, which would incur disproportionate cost.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which countries' citizens can claim hard case support if their asylum claims are refused on appeal. [171887]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 12 May 2004]:* Failed asylum seekers of any nationality may seek support under section 4 of the 1999 Act if they are seeking to return but cannot do so immediately, and fulfil the other criteria set out in the National Asylum Support Service Policy Bulletin 71 which was published on 25 March.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when failed Iraqi asylum seekers are expected to return home. [171888]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 12 May 2004]:* All asylum and human rights claims are considered on their individual merits in accordance with our obligations under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Should a claim be refused and any appeal before the Independent Immigration Appellate Authority be unsuccessful, it means for that individual it is safe to return. We would expect these individuals to return home.

We have reached agreement with the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq to begin enforced returns. Work is currently under way on the practicalities of the returns programme, and returns will begin as soon as these arrangements are finalised.

We are currently facilitating the return of those who wish to go home through the International Organisation for Migration.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress he has made towards setting a target for the proportion of asylum claims, including final appeal, to be determined within six months. [173136]

Mr. Browne: The confirmed target will be published shortly.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women from Russia have sought political asylum in the United Kingdom in each of the last five years; and how many applications have been granted. [173288]

Mr. Browne: The table shows asylum application and initial decision data for Russian nationals, by gender, for those years for which data are available:

Asylum applications[1] received in the United Kingdom, excluding dependants, and initial decisions[2], on applications, 2001–03, Russian males and females

	2001[3,4]		2002[4]		2003[4]	
Applications	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
Total applications	310	140	170	125	175	110
Initial decisions						
Total initial decisions	610	285	235	120	235	135
Grants of asylum	15	5	10	5	5	5
Grants of ELR	25	10	15	5	5	*
Grants of HP/DL	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	5
Refusals	570	270	210	110	215	130

n/a Not applicable

[1] Figures rounded to nearest 5, with * = 1 or 2. Figures may not sum to totals due to rounding.

[2] Information is of initial decisions, excluding the outcome of appeals determinations or other subsequent decisions.

[3] Revised figures

[4] Provisional figures.

Information on asylum applications and initial decisions, by gender, is published in the annual statistical bulletin Asylum Statistics United Kingdom. Copies of these publications and others relating to general immigration to the UK are available from the Library and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate web site at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Sir Sydney Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many failed asylum seekers were removed from the UK in *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2002–03 and *(c)* 2003–04. [173300]

Mr. Browne: The available information is in the table.

Removals and voluntary departures of asylum applicants[1,2]

	2001–02[3]	2002–03[3]	April–December 2003[3]
Principal applicants	9,630	10,915	9,870
Dependants	1,970	4,065	3,180
Total	11,600	14,975	13,050

[1] Includes persons departing 'voluntarily' after enforcement action had been initiated against them, persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programmes run by the International Organisation for Migration, and removals on safe third country ground.

[2] Figures rounded to the nearest five, and may not sum due to rounding.

[3] Provisional figures.

Information on asylum seekers who were removed from the UK in the first quarter of 2004 will be published on 25 May on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate web site at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people in the last five years have sought asylum from *(a)* Zimbabwe and *(b)* Afghanistan; how many have been refused; and how many have been returned. [174246]

Mr. Browne: The table shows the number of asylum applications and initial decisions for nationals of Afghanistan and Zimbabwe (excluding dependants), 1999 to 2003 where available. Initial decisions do not necessarily relate to applications received in the same period.

Asylum applications[1] received in the United Kingdom, excluding dependants, and initial decisions[2], on applications, 1999 to 2003, nationals of Afghanistan

Principal applicants

	Applications[3]			Decisions: Cases considered under normal procedures[4]					Backlog clearance exercise	
	Total	Port	In Country	Total decisions	Grants of asylum	Grants of ELR	Grants of HP	Grants of DL	Total refusals	Grants of ELR under backlog criteria[5,6]	Non compliance refusals under backlog criteria[5,7]
1999	3,975	2,610	1,365	1,295	15	1,180	n/a	n/a	90	10	—
2000	5,555	2,610	2,945	2,590	375	695	n/a	n/a	1,515	10	—
2001[8]	8,920	4,560	4,360	12,365	2,320	7,500	n/a	n/a	2,545	n/a	n/a
2002[9]	7,205	1,765	5,440	8,175	115	4,765	n/a	n/a	3,300	n/a	n/a
2003[9]	2,290	700	1,590	3,920	40	205	*	350	3,320	n/a	n/a

Asylum applications[1] received in the United Kingdom, excluding dependants, and initial decisions[2] on applications, 1999 to 2003, nationals of Zimbabwe

Principal applicants

	Applications			Decisions: Cases considered under normal procedures[4]					Backlog clearance exercise	
	Total	Port	In Country	Total decisions	Grants of asylum	Grants of ELR	Grants of HP	Grants of DL	Total refusals	Grants of ELR under backlog criteria[5,6]	Non compliance refusals under backlog[5,7]
1999	230	180	50	115	—	—	n/a	n/a	105	10	*
2000	1,010	820	190	595	20	10	n/a	n/a	525	35	5
2001[8]	2,140	1,510	625	2,130	120	45	n/a	n/a	1,970	n/a	n/a
2002[9]	7,655	5,305	2,350	6,235	2,240	110	n/a	n/a	3,885	n/a	n/a
2003[9]	3,280	715	2,565	4,175	870	10	5	20	3,275	n/a	n/a

n/a = Not applicable.
[1] Figures rounded to nearest 5, with * = 1 or 2.
[2] Information is of initial determination decisions, excluding the outcome of appeals or other subsequent decisions.
[3] May exclude some cases lodged at Local Enforcement Offices between January and March 2000.
[4] Cases considered under normal procedures may include some cases decided under the backlog criteria.
[5] Cases decided under pragmatic measures aimed at reducing the pre '96 act asylum backlog.
[6] May include a small number of cases where asylum has been granted.
[7] May include a small number of cases where the application has been refused on substantive grounds.
[8] Provisional figures.
[9] Revised figures.

The table shows the available data, for outcomes of adjudicator appeals at the Immigration Appellate Authority (IAA) for nationals of Afghanistan and Zimbabwe, the latest period for which published data are available. Appeals may relate to initial decisions made in earlier periods. Corresponding information on appeals to the Immigration Appellate Tribunal (IAT) relating to Afghan and Zimbabwean nationals (including appeals made by the Secretary of State) is not available and could be produced only at disproportionate cost by examination of individual case files.

Outcome of Appeals[1,2] determined by adjudicators of the Immigration Appellate Authority, excluding dependants, nationals of Afghanistan, 2001 to 2003

Number of principal appellants

	Appeals determined by adjudicators[2]						
		Allowed		Dismissed		Withdrawn	
	Total	Total	As a percentage of Determined	Total	As a percentage of Determined	Total	As a percentage of Determined
2001	595	110	18	260	44	225	38
2002	2,040	230	11	1,235	60	580	28
2003	5,535	710	13	4,420	80	405	7

Outcome of Appeals[1,2] determined by adjudicators of the Immigration Appellate Authority, excluding dependants, nationals of Zimbabwe, 2001 to 2003

Number of principal appellants

	Appeals determined by adjudicators[2]						
		Allowed		*Dismissed*		*Withdrawn*	
	Total	*Total*	*As a percentage of Determined*	*Total*	*As a percentage of Determined*	*Total*	*As a percentage of Determined*
2001	1,115	255	23	815	73	40	4
2002	2,405	925	38	1,370	57	110	5
2003	4,080	1,165	29	2,735	67	180	4

[1] Provisional figures rounded to nearest 5 (except percentages), with * = 1 or 2. Figures may not add up due to independent rounding. Data on appeal outcomes by nationality in this table are derived from electronic sources.
[2] Figures include cases withdrawn by the Home Office, as well as the appellant.

Removal of failed asylum seekers to Zimbabwe was suspended on 15 January 2002; we did not at the time consider that it was unsafe to return them but in view of the rapidly changing circumstances it was appropriate not to enforce returns. The suspension has been maintained since that date and although we still consider it would not be unsafe to return failed asylum seekers there, enforced returns would be inappropriate in the wider context of the Government's position on Zimbabwe. An exception to the suspension policy in cases where a failed asylum seeker has a serious criminal record or their presence in the United Kingdom is not otherwise conducive to the public good was announced on 5 February 2004. In such circumstances enforced return to Zimbabwe would be considered by Ministers on a case-by-case basis.

Removals and voluntary departures[1] of asylum applicants, excluding dependants, Afghan and Zimbabwean nationals, January 1999 to September 2003[2]

Principal applicants

Nationality	*1999[3]*	*2000[3]*	*2001[3,4,5]*	*2002[3,4,5,6]*	*January to September 2003[3,4,5,6]*
Afghanistan	—	—	125	395	460
Zimbabwe	—	—	210	110	45

[1] Includes persons departing 'Voluntarily' after enforcement action had been initiated against them, persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programmes run by the International Organisation for Migration, and removals on safe third country grounds.
[2] Figures rounded to the nearest five, with * = 1 or 2, and may not sum due to rounding.
[3] Figures may include a small number of dependants leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programmes.
[4] Figures exclude dependants of asylum seekers removed. Data on dependants removed have only been collected since April 2001.
[5] Data have been estimated due to data quality issues.
[6] Provisional figures.

Information on asylum applications, initial decisions, appeals and removals are published in quarterly web pages, the next publication covering the first quarter of 2004 will be available on the 25 May 2004, and in the annual statistical bulletin Asylum Statistics United Kingdom. Copies of these publications and others relating to general immigration to the UK are available from the Library and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his latest estimate is of the number of asylum seekers who have failed the appeal process and are ineligible for National Asylum Support Service, Government or local authority financial support in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* Leeds. [174248]

Mr. Browne: The information requested is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Information on asylum appeals and the number of asylum seekers supported by NASS are published quarterly; the next publication covering the first quarter of 2004 will be available on the 25 May 2004. Copies of these publications and others relating to general immigration to the UK are available from the Library and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1 .html

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what instructions and guidance have been given to officials on the number of days asylum seekers who have failed the appeal process must spend on the streets before they qualify for hard case support; and if he will make a statement. [174249]

Mr. Browne: There is nothing to prevent the majority of failed asylum seekers from leaving the country voluntarily and there is no need for them to become homeless or destitute. They can seek assistance with return from either the Immigration Service or the International Organisation for Migration. Those unable to leave immediately who are complying with the process for return may, on application, be provided with accommodation under section 4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, as amended. There is no need for anyone in this group to become homeless or destitute. They can seek accommodation as soon as they receive the final decision on their asylum claim. In addition, letters sent to failed asylum seekers by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) notifying them of the termination of support now give advice on the availability of section 4 support. MASS has also now introduced a one-stage application process in order to reduce the time taken to process applications.

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people in the last five years have sought asylum from Iraq; and how many have been refused. [174337]

Mr. Browne: The tables show applications and initial decisions and appeal decisions for nationals of Iraq, 1999–2003 where available. Initial decisions do not necessarily relate to applications made in the same period, neither do appeal outcomes necessarily relate to decisions made in the same period.

Asylum applications[1] received in the United Kingdom, excluding dependants, and initial decisions[2] on applications, 1999–2003: Nationals of Iraq

Principal applicants

	Applications[3]			
	Total	*Port*	*In country*	*Total initial decisions*
1999	1,800	1,385	415	745
2000[4]	7,475	1,920	5,555	5,530
2001[5]	6,680	2,315	4,365	9,035
2002[6]	14,570	1,525	13,045	11,905
2003[6]	4,045	415	3,635	6,755

	Initial decisions Cases considered under normal procedures[7]					*Backlog clearance exercise*	
	Grants of asylum	*Grants of ELR*	*Grants of HP*	*Grants of DL*	*Total refusals*	*Grants of ELR under backlog criteria[4,8]*	*Non compliance refusals under backlog criteria[8,9]*
1999	315	320	n/a	n/a	100	5	[10]—
2000[4]	845	2,455	n/a	n/a	2,220	10	[10]—
2001[5]	830	1,885	n/a	n/a	6,315	n/a	n/a
2002[6]	715	8,195	n/a	n/a	2,995	n/a	n/a
2003[6]	75	2,105	[10]—	45	4,530	n/a	n/a

[1] Figures rounded to nearest 5
[2] Information is of initial determination decisions, excluding the outcome of appeals or other subsequent decisions.
[3] May exclude some cases lodged at Local Enforcement Offices between January and March 2000.
[4] May include a small number of cases where asylum has been granted.
[5] Revised figures
[6] Provisional figures
[7] Cases considered under normal procedures may include some cases decided under the backlog criteria.
[8] Cases decided under pragmatic measures aimed at reducing the pre '96 act asylum backlog.
[9] May include a small number of cases where the application has been refused on substantive grounds.
[10] Equals 1 or 2

Outcome of appeals[1,2] determined by adjudicators of the Immigration Appellate Authority, excluding dependants: Nationals of Iraq, 2001 to 2003

Number of principal appellants

	Appeals determined by adjudicators[2]						
		Allowed		*Dismissed*		*Withdrawn*	
	Total	*Total*	*As percentage of determined*	*Total*	*As percentage of determined*	*Total*	*As percentage of determined*
2001	1,655	445	27	1,065	64	145	9
2002[3]	4,570	1,130	25	2,970	65	470	10
2003[3]	5,400	495	9	4,465	8	445	8

[1] Figures rounded to nearest 5 (except percentages). Figures may not add up due to independent rounding. Data on appeal outcomes by nationality in this table are derived from electronic sources.
[2] Figures include cases withdrawn by the Home Office, as well as the appellant.
[3] Provisional figures

Information on asylum applications, initial decisions and appeals are published in quarterly web pages, the next publication covering the first quarter of 2004 will be available on the 25 May 2004, and in the annual statistical bulletin Asylum Statistics United Kingdom. Copies of these publications and others relating to general immigration to the UK are available from the Library and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate web site at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Biometric Technology

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the *(a)* cost to date and *(b)* projected cost is of developing biometric technology for inclusion in passports, broken down by financial year; and whether any portion of the expenditure is included in the identity card set-up costs cited in his statement of 11 November 2003, *Official Report*, column 178. [163325]

Mr. Browne: The cost incurred by the UK Passport Service to develop a facial biometric chip enabled passport is shown in the table.

Year	*(£)*
2003–04	850
2004–05	4,645
2005–06	525

The work being carried out to develop biometric technology for inclusion in passports is necessary to

meet current International Civil Aviation Organisation (IACO) recommended standards for passports and therefore no portion of this expenditure is included in the identity card set-up costs.

Charity Commission

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many receivers and managers were appointed by the Charity Commissioners in *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2002–03 and *(c)* 2003–04; what the total cost was to all charities of such appointments in each period; and what the (i) shortest and (ii) longest duration of receiver and manager appointments to a charity have been since April 2001. [172154]

Fiona Mactaggart: These are matters for the Charity Commission as the Government Department responsible for the regulation of charities in England and Wales. The Director of Operations of the Charity Commission will write to my hon. Friend and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Commission for Racial Equality

Mr. Alan Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what consultations his Department has undertaken with race relations bodies about the effects of the Commission for Racial Equality Getting Results programme. [174388]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* It is the responsibility of the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) to set its own criteria for grant funding under the provisions of section 44 of the Race Relations Act 1976, and then to make decisions on individual applications on the basis of how well they meet those criteria. The CRE consulted widely on its proposals to move away from its previous policy of funding posts in bodies it supports, mainly Race Equality Councils, to funding projects focused on outcomes (ie the Getting Results programme). I understand that its partners welcomed the new approach, as do the Government.

Mr. Alan Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the impact the Commission for Racial Equality's Getting Results programme on the delivery of race equality schemes. [174398]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* The publication of a race equality scheme is a specific duty placed on certain public bodies under the Race Relations Act 1976 (Statutory Duties) Order 2001. The responsibility for delivering these schemes lies with the bodies listed in the order. Section 44 funding has never been intended to fund the delivery of this particular aspect of the Race Equality Duty. However, the Commission for Racial Equality informs me that one of the specific priorities for Getting Results funding in 2004–05 has been measuring the impact of the Race Equality Duty, and that £193,200 has been awarded to organisations under this priority. This is distinct from the delivery of race equality schemes.

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 1 March, with regard to Ms N. Islam, transferred from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. [170698]

Mr. Blunkett: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 6 May 2004.

Criminal Records Bureau

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Criminal Records Bureau is permitted to access Department of Health and Department of Education and Skills List 99 records when checking the suitability of individuals for work with children. [143483]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 10 December 2003]:* Section 115(6) of the Police Act 1997 gives provision for the Secretary of State for the Home Department to access lists held by the Department of Health and the Department for Education and Skills when checking individuals for work with children.

Criminals (New Identity Costs)

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it a policy of the Government to require those convicted of crimes, who are provided with a new identity upon their release, to contribute to the costs involved where they have the means to do so. [163151]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 23 March 2004]:* Most of the very small number of convicted criminals who need new identities on release from prison do so because, at some point in the criminal proceedings, they have decided to turn Queen's Evidence and appear as witnesses for the prosecution against their former partners in crime. Since in doing this they have helped to convict other (often more serious) offenders, then it is cost-effective for the state to offer to pay for any necessary change to their identity, and any other associated costs. In other cases the state is required to take reasonable steps to fulfil its duty to protect the lives of those threatened by others. Only in the most exceptional circumstances would this include a formal change of identity and only where the threat to life is clearly evidenced and the change of identity considered appropriate by the police.

Departmental Buildings

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* renovation and *(b)* maintenance projects on buildings (i) owned and (ii) rented by his Department were undertaken in each of the last five years; and what the associated costs were of each. [163954]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Department does not maintain central records of the cost of every building refurbishment project carried out by the Department including its Executive agencies and to provide the information requested would be at disproportionate cost. However, in central London and Croydon, the approximate expenditure on such projects which includes elements of maintenance and alterations to house additional staff, over the last five years, is as follows.

	£ million
1999–2000	6.7
2000–01	[1]35.2
2001–02	11.5
2002–03	9.2
2003–04	4.0

[1] Figures for 2000–01 reflects the refurbishment of Lunar House, Croydon which had a major upgrade that year.

Departmental Contracts

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether companies that tender for his Department's contracts have to recognise the relevant trade union as a condition of winning that contract. [166592]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office does not ask companies to recognise the relevant trade union as a condition of winning Home Office contracts.

Government policy requires that all procurement must be transparent and non-discriminatory, and that contracts must be awarded on a value for money basis.

Departmental Staffing

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost to his Department of employing temporary staff through agencies was in each of the last five years. [163632]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 31 March 2003]:* The employment of temporary staff through employment agencies for the Core Home Office over the last five years is as follows:

	£
1999	6,500,408
2000	11,768,105
2001	20,669,056
2002	41,713,675
2003	54,466,279

The Stage 2 RAB Resource DEL for the Home Office over the same period was:

	£
1999–2000	7,076,102,000
2000–01	8,398,131,000
2001–02	10,261,856,000
2002–03	11,088,502,000
2003–04	11,836,009,000

Expenditure expressed as a percentage of the Home Office total DEL during the last five years was as follows:

	Percentage
1999–2000	0.09
2000–01	0.14
2001–02	0.20
2002–03	0.38
2003–04	0.46

The Immigration and Nationality Directorate accounted for around half of the cost for each financial year.

The use of temporary staff provides the Home Office with cost effective, flexible resources which can be employed at very short notice. Their employment often allows the Department to react quickly to changes in the demands that it faces by deploying appropriately skilled and experienced individuals quickly to those areas of the business where they are most needed.

Deportations/Removals

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been *(a)* removed and *(b)* deported from the United Kingdom in each of the last three years. [173289]

Mr. Browne: The available information is in the table.

Persons removed from the United Kingdom, 2000 to 2002[1,2]*: United Kingdom*

Number of persons

	2000	*2001*	*2002*
Total persons removed[3,4]	46,645	50,625	68,630
Of whom: removed as a result of Deportation action[5]	1,280	450	100

[1] Under sections 3(6), 3(7) or 33(1) of the Immigration Act 1971, or under section 10 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
[2] Including persons departing 'voluntarily' after enforcement action had been initiated against them.
[3] Includes dependants of asylum seekers removed from April 2001 onwards only. This information was not collected prior to this although figures up to March 2001 may include a small number of dependants of port principal asylum applicants removed.
[4] Includes persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programmes run by the International Organisation for Migration.
[5] Figures for 2001 and 2002 have been estimated. Deportation figures may be under-recorded in 1999 and 2000.

The substantial reduction in the number of persons deported after October 2000 is due to a change in the categories of person liable to deportation. Under section 10 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, overstayers, persons who breach their conditions of stay, and persons who gain leave to remain by deception are administratively removed and deportation is now restricted to more serious cases.

Information on all those removed from the UK in 2003, including the number of deportations, will be published in the Home Office Statistical Bulletin "Control of Immigration Statistics UK 2003" which is due to be published at the end of August, and will be available from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate web site at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Detention Centres

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the written ministerial statement of 30 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 63–64WS, on Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre, if he will ensure that the results of the investigation recommended by Mr. Shaw into two further allegations of assault are made public. [173543]

Mr. Browne: Stephen Shaw recommended that Global Solutions Ltd. (GSL) should investigate the allegations referred to and they will. GSL will report the outcome to the Immigration and Nationality Directorate and, for the sake of completeness, Stephen Shaw will be asked to review the investigation. I can confirm that the outcome will be made public.

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many complaints were made in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004 to date by those detained at Yarl's Wood about the escort service taking them to and from Yarl's Wood; how many are under investigation; and if he will make a statement. [173545]

Mr. Browne: The Monitor responsible for overseeing the contract which covers in-country escorting and holding rooms at ports received three complaints in 2003 and one so far in 2004 to date, from persons detained in Yarl's Wood. All complaints are subject to an investigation by the Monitor, none are currently under investigation.

In the same period, there were no complaints regarding the contractors responsible for escorting persons on scheduled flights overseas, from persons detained at Yarl's Wood.

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many complaints about the activities of those escorting detainees to and from detention centres and detention and removal centres he has received; how many are being investigated; and if he will make a statement. [173547]

Mr. Browne: Since January 2003, there have been over 100,000 escorted movements. In this period there have been 78 complaints to the Monitor from detainees regarding the in-country escorting contract, which is responsible for movements of detainees from any location in the UK and supervision of detainees in the holding rooms at ports. All complaints are subject to investigation by the Monitor, at present 12 complaints are under investigation.

In the same period there have been 22 complaints against the overseas escorting contractor, which has responsibility for escorting people on scheduled flights to their removal destinations.

Dirty Bombs

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what steps he is taking to inform the general public of the precautions they must take to avoid contamination by a dirty bomb explosion; and if he will make a statement; [173710]

(2) what system is in place to alert the general public that a dirty bomb has exploded in an area in which they may become contaminated; and if he will make a statement. [173711]

Mr. Blunkett: In the event of an attack, unless people are under the direction of the emergency services, they should go indoors and tune into the TV or radio for further instructions. The media is the main system through which the Government and the emergency services will alert the public. The message is 'go in, stay in, tune in'.

As part of a deliberate strategy over the last 18 months, I have made sure that we have increased the information available to the public on how to prepare for and respond to emergencies. The Government will continue to do this and we are regularly reviewing the best way to keep the public informed.

The main sources of advice for the general public and our partners are the Home Office, the MI5 and the UK Resilience websites, www.homeoffice.gov.uk/terrorism/, www.ukresilience.info/ and www.mi5.gov.uk/.

Drugs Misuse (Manchester)

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what public funds were spent on tackling drugs misuse in Manchester, Central in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* 2002–03. [174367]

Caroline Flint: Breakdown of financial allocation to local constituencies is not available in the form requested as funding is allocated to Drug Action Team (DAT) area (Manchester DAT).

The period 1997–98 pre-dates National Drug Strategy, during this time the local council and primary care trust allocated funding for tackling drug misuse. Accounting procedures mean that the 1997 figures are no longer available and that 1998 figures are not accessible by the DAT.

In 2002–03 the total drugs allocation was £5,678,000. In order to ensure consistency figures supplied are based on funding streams associated with the National Drug Strategy and are readily verifiable. These funding streams are specifically targeted at tackling the harm caused to individuals, families and communities by the misuse of drugs. Other mainstream funding is made available at a local level, this varies both in amount and origin; as a result it is not possible to provide robust financial information.

(£)

	2002–03
Partnership Capacity	77,000
Adult Pooled Treatment Budget	3,389,000
Pooled Treatment Budget (Young People element)	207,000
Young People's Substance Misuse Planning Grant	80,000
Communities against Drugs	710,000
Street Crime Initiative (Drugs funding)	1,215,000
Total	5,678,000

Early Retirement

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff in his Department took early retirement, and at what total cost, in the last financial year. [171868]

Fiona Mactaggart: Details of normal early retirements and their costs for the last financial year are shown in table 1. The table also shows the full cost to the Department to age 60.

The Home Office also ran an additional scheme in 2003–04 using funds bid from Her Majesty's Treasury. The costs for that scheme and the staff numbers involved are contained in table 2.

Table 1: Home Office early retirements 2003–04

	£
Number of staff	12
Cost for year 2003–04	116,956
Full cost to Department	621,965.98

Table 2: Home Office early retirements scheme2003–04

	£
Number of staff	67
Cost for year 2003–04	4,638,139.97
Full cost to Department	13,227,687.88

EU Enlargement

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many passports belonging to former asylum seekers, since 1 May EU citizens, are held by the Immigration and Nationality Service; when he expects that these documents will be returned to their owners; and if he will make a statement. [172928]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* Once a decision has been reached on an asylum seeker's application, their passport or identity card, where one has been submitted, is normally returned to them with the decision letter. An exception to this is when a passport or identity card is found to be a forgery or otherwise to have been tampered with.

The numbers of such documents belonging to former asylum seekers who are now EU citizens is not recorded centrally and could only be obtained, at disproportionate cost, by examination of individual cases.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what change there has been in the number of people claiming benefits since 1 May 2004. [173181]

Mr. Pond: I have been asked to reply.

The information is not available.

Information on the number of people claiming benefits is available each quarter. Data for the quarter ending February 2004 will be published in June. Data for the quarter ending May 2004 will be available later this year.

Guantanamo Bay

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 22 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 592W, on Guantanamo Bay, whether MI5 officers at Guantanamo Bay raised with *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the US authorities the interrogation methods deployed by the US. [173485]

Mr. Blunkett *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* As explained in the earlier answer, these interviews were conducted as part of the Government's responsibility to protect national security. The interviews were conducted on a voluntary basis. Officers carrying out the interviews were under an obligation to inform the relevant authorities of any complaints made by the detainees and of any concerns which they had.

Witness Protection

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of protection schemes for witnesses involved in gun crime cases. [175539]

Caroline Flint: The Home Office, in conjunction with the Scottish Executive, the Northern Ireland Office and the Association of Chief Police Officers, has appointed an independent consultant to carry out an assessment of witness protection arrangements nationally. The assessment is covering all cases where witness protection is afforded by UK law enforcement agencies including the police. It will provide us with valuable information about the circumstances in which witness protection is provided, broken down by crime type, including offences where firearms have been used.

The assessment commenced on 2 January; it was announced in the White Paper One Step Ahead—a 21st century strategy to defeat organised crime which I published on 29 March. The assessment is due to be completed over the summer, and a final report will be available in the autumn.

Hazardous Consignments

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans the Government have to give particularly hazardous consignments a police escort in the Central London area. [174678]

Caroline Flint: We have introduced, in consultation with industry and the police, a Code of Practice for the transport security of dangerous goods. The Code is a pre-cursor to formal regulations due to come into effect from July 2005. The Code is supported by a guidance document and training video. These and other helpful materials are available via the Department for Transport's website, at www.dft.gsi.gov.uk.

Decisions on whether a particular consignment should receive a police escort are a matter for chief officers of police, in central London the Metropolitan Police Commissioner. He informs me that a very limited number of particularly hazardous consignments do attract special security arrangements, such as a police escort, when being conveyed by road in the central London area.

Highly Skilled Migrants Programme

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many dentists have been accepted for entry to Britain *(a)* under the Highly Skilled Migrants Programme and *(b)* through work permits in the past year. [172597]

Mr. Browne: 28 Dentists were approved under the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme and 131 through work permits during 2003.

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many legal professionals were accepted for entry to Britain *(a)* under the Highly Skilled Migrants Programme and *(b)* through work permits in (i) 1995, (ii) 1998, (iii) 2001, (iv) 2002 and (v) 2003. [172600]

Mr. Browne: For the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme the information is not held centrally.

For work permits, the records are only held centrally for 2001 onwards.

In 2001—971 applications were approved.

In 2002—693 applications were approved

In 2003—619 applications were approved.

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average time taken to process *(a)* work permits and *(b)* highly skilled migrant applications for appointments of junior doctors to health authorities was in the last year for which figures are available; what the average time taken was for all work permits; and how many junior doctor applicants were appointed to jobs in *(a)* Bolton North East, *(b)* the Greater Manchester area and *(c)* England. [172622]

Mr. Browne: The information requested on work permits and the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme is not held centrally in relation to occupation and location in the UK.

In 2003 the processing times of work permits were 91 per cent. of all complete applications received were cleared in one day.

Home Office Documents

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what procedures are followed in relation to highly sensitive documents leaving Home Office premises; and what guidance is issued on this matter to Home Office staff. [173949]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office follows the national guidelines laid down in the Manual of Protective Security governing the protective marking of sensitive documents, as well as their storage and handling outside Home Office premises. These are set out in the Departmental Security Unit's Security Guidance, which confirms that all protectively marked documents should be carried securely in a twin-lock brief case, box or pouch and should remain at all times in the immediate possession of the officer concerned.

Identity Cards

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the members of the Identity Cards Programme Board. [173130]

Mr. Browne: The members of the Identity Cards Programme Board are John Gieve (Permanent Secretary, Home Office and Programme Board Chair), Helen Edwards (Director General of Communities Group, Home Office, and Senior Responsible Owner), Bernard Herdan (United Kingdom Passport Service), Stephen Hickey (Department for Transport), Mark Fisher (Department for Work and Pensions), Bill Jeffrey (Home Office, Immigration and Nationality Directorate), Dennis Roberts (Office for National Statistics), Peter Unwin (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister), John Middleton (Inland Revenue) and Julian Kelly (HM Treasury).

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has carried out of the prevalence in other common law countries of compulsory identity cards; and if he will list those countries that have such cards. [169912]

Mr. Browne: The Home Office carried out research into identity cards schemes in other countries. The results are in "Entitlement Cards and Identity Fraud: A Consultation Paper". Within the EU Cyprus is a common law jurisdiction which has identity cards which all Cypriot citizens over the age of 12 have to obtain.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the procedures being used to verify the identity of people taking part in the identity card pilot scheme. [170255]

Mr. Browne: The biometric enrolment pilot being run by United Kingdom Passport Service is not an identity cards pilot but rather intended to test the processes around, and user experience of biometric enrolment. Ascertaining the identities of the people taking part in the pilot is therefore much less important than ensuring that the people taking part form a representative cross-section of the UK population.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the biometric information that will be collected and stored on the *(a)* National Identity Register and *(b)* identity card. [170256]

Mr. Browne: There has been no firm decision made on the biometric data which will be collected and which biometrics will be stored on the National Identity Register and which will be stored on the identity card.

These decisions will be made in the light of work underway on the feasibility of different technologies and the processes around identity enrolment and verification.

The draft Identity Cards Bill makes provision for the recording of biometric information in the form of a head and shoulders photograph, fingerprints and data about a person's external characteristics including, in particular, the features of an iris or of any other part of the eye.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department why the iris has been selected as the basis for a biometric identifier. [170553]

Mr. Browne: Both retina and iris recognition were considered by the National Physical Laboratory in their evaluation of biometric technologies. Retina recognition was found to be effective but difficult to use by a large number of people and too physically intrusive to be widely acceptable.

It has not yet been decided that iris recognition will be used in the identity card scheme. The feasibility of using iris recognition for identity cards is under investigation.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has for the storage of health information on *(a)* blood group, *(b)* organ donor status and *(c)* HIV condition on the National Identity Register on (i) a voluntary and (ii) a compulsory basis. [171597]

Mr. Browne: Clause 1 of and Schedule 1 to the draft Identity Cards Bill published on 26 April set out what information could be held on the National Identity Register. In general the storage of medical information on the Register would not be allowed by the draft Bill as medical information does not fall within the definition of registerable facts as set out in the draft Bill. However the draft Bill does allow for the storage of voluntary information with the consent of both the person who is registered and the Secretary of State.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the subsidy for the price charged for an identity card for those on low incomes will be funded. [171598]

Mr. Browne: The expectation is that when the scheme is established, running costs will be covered by charges for the application and issue of cards and for identity verification services provided by the scheme. Any subsidy for those on low incomes will therefore be funded by fee income.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 29 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1299–300W, on identity cards, if he will list the non-arrestable criminal offences, enforced by a summons, for which the police have powers of arrest where a person refuses to provide evidence of identity. [171916]

Mr. Browne: Where a constable has reasonable grounds for suspecting that any offence which is not an arrestable offence has been committed or attempted, or is being committed or attempted, he may arrest the relevant person if it appears to him that service of a summons is impracticable or inappropriate because any of the general arrest conditions are satisfied.

Two of the general arrest conditions are:

(a) that the name of the relevant person is unknown to, and cannot be readily ascertained by, the constable; and

(b) that the constable has reasonable grounds for doubting whether a name furnished by the relevant person as his name is his real name.

Non-arrestable offences are all those not covered by the categories set out in Section 24 (1) of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) which states:

"The powers of summary arrest conferred by the following sub-sections shall apply :

(a) to offences for which the sentence is fixed by law;

(b) to offences for which a person of 21 years of age or over (not previously convicted) may be sentenced to imprisonment for a term of five years (or might be so sentenced but for the restrictions imposed by S 33 of the Magistrates' Courts Act 1980); and

(c) to the offences listed in Schedule 1A

and in this Act 'arrestable offence' means any such offence."

The offences which are not covered by this section are too numerous to list and could be identified only and listed at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 29 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1299–300W, on identity cards, whether the police have powers to require a person to verify their identity other than those set out in his answer. [171917]

Mr. Browne: The Government have made it clear that it will not be a requirement to carry an identity card or to produce a card to a police officer on demand.

Police powers in England and Wales to identify a person arrested for a recordable offence are contained in the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984. The powers will be unaffected by the introduction of an identity card however the introduction of identity cards will make it much easier and simpler for people to prove their identity when they wish to do so. As at present with existing documents, people will be free to produce an identity card on a voluntary basis (if they have one) to a police officer or to any other official as a means of establishing their identity.

The draft Identity Cards Bill published on 26 April also includes a power in clause 24 for information relating to a biometric to be disclosed if it is not reasonably practical for the person to whom this is disclosed to have obtained this information by other means. This means that if it were not possible to identify an arrested person by other means, for example by checking police records, a check could be made on the person's biometric against the National Identity Register.

In addition to powers under PACE, powers under s 41 (1) Terrorism Act 2000 allow a constable to arrest without a warrant a person whom he reasonably suspects to be a terrorist, which is defined in s 40. In this case, powers under Schedule 8, paragraph 2 permit an authorised person to take any steps which are reasonably necessary for photographing, measuring or identifying a person detained under s 41. Again, these powers will be unaffected by the introduction of an identity card but again a power is available under the draft Identity Cards Bill that would allow a check of a biometric of a person detained under this section if it were not reasonably practical for this information to be obtained by another means.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether an individual's unique learner number will be recorded in the National Identity Register under the proposal in the draft Identity Cards Bill. [171918]

Mr. Browne: Schedule 1 to the draft Identity Cards Bill published on 26 April sets out what information may be held on the National Identity Register including the personal reference numbers that may be recorded in any individual's entry. Schedule 1 does not include the unique learner number. Clause 3(4) does allow the Secretary of State to modify Schedule 1 and the information that may be held on the Register. However, any changes must be agreed by Parliament and be consistent with the statutory purposes of the scheme.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what categories of people resident in the UK for three months or more will not be eligible for the identity card proposed under the draft Identity Cards Bill. [171919]

Mr. Browne: Under Clause 2 of the draft Identity Cards Bill, all individuals over the age of 16 who are residing in the UK for longer than a prescribed period,

proposed to be three months, are eligible to be entered in the National Identity Register and thereby obtain an identity card.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information will be *(a)* printed on the face of and *(b)* held but not shown on (i) the identity card proposed under the draft Identity Cards Bill, (ii) the proposed biometric passport and (iii) the proposed biometric driving licence. [171920]

Mr. Browne: The UK Passport Service is planning to implement a facial recognition image biometric in the British passport booklet during 2005. No additional data other than the digital signature which "locks" the data on to the chip will be held but not shown on the bio-data page of the passport.

There has been no firm decision made on the information which will be printed on the face of the identity card and which will be held but not shown on the card. These decisions will be made in the light of work under way on the feasibility of different technologies and analysis with key user groups of the business requirements of the scheme. These arrangements must be approved by Parliament and no information may be held unless it is required for the statutory purposes of the scheme as set out in the primary legislation.

The passport and driving licence may be designated as identity cards under the draft Identity Cards Bill. In which case these documents may require certain additional information to be included in or on the face of the document which reflects the common standards of the identity cards family. However, as set out above no firm decisions have yet been made on what these will be.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the names of people who have not applied for identity cards will be recorded on the National Identity Register *(a)* before and *(b)* after the card becomes compulsory; and whether the names of certain categories of individuals who have not applied for identity cards will be recorded. [172298]

Mr. Browne: The National Identity Register will hold information about those people who have registered and been issued with an identity card. Entries will be created as people apply for identity cards. There is no intention to record on the Register the names of people who have not yet applied for identity cards although the final decision will be made following the detailed design phase.

Clause 2(4) of the draft Identity Cards Bill does provide that in some circumstances, a person who has not applied may be entered into the Register. For example, a failed asylum seeker who has not applied for an identity card but whose information was available may be entered on the Register so that if he applies to stay in the UK again using a different identity, his previous status as a failed asylum seeker will have been recorded.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which private sector databases will be used to check identities under proposals contained in the draft Identity Card Bill. [172299]

Mr. Browne: Identity Cards: the Next Steps (CM 6020) made clear that applications for one of the family of identity cards will require checks to be made against other databases to help establish that an application for a card is genuine. Data-sharing gateways established for this purpose will be used only when processing applications for cards or related purposes (e.g. when issuing a replacement) and do not confer any general power to share data for wider purposes.

This approach to identity verification follows proposals included in the Cabinet Office study on Identity fraud (published in July 2002) which recommended greater use of biographical checks on applicants for passports and driving licences. The most effective way of confirming this biographical information is to check some of the information provided by applicants with information held on a range of Government and private sector databases. These checks could for example confirm that a person had been known by a certain identity and lived at known addresses for a number of years.

The databases that could be checked would include public sector bodies (such as the National Insurance or Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) databases) as well as private sector organisations (such as credit reference agencies or banks) but it is at this stage too early to know precisely which databases would be checked.

Information requested would be restricted to that needed to confirm the identity of an individual who has made an application to register. Clause 11 (1) and (2) of the draft Identity Cards Bill published on 26 April places a duty on a person to provide information to the Secretary of State or a designated documents authority for the purposes of verifying an individual's entry to the Register. Clause 11 (4) sets out that the requirement may be imposed on any person specified in an order subject to the affirmative resolution procedure. This means that particular gateways could be established only with the consent of Parliament and for the limited purpose of validating information on the Register.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list his Department's services which will have access to the National Identity Register without being named on the face of the Draft Identity Cards Bill. [173009]

Mr. Browne: Proposals to permit information held on the National Identity Register to be disclosed without an individual's consent are set out in "Legislation on Identity Cards: A Consultation" [CM6178] published on 26 April.

Clause 20(5) of the draft Identity Cards Bill published on 26 April will permit disclosure of information that does not fall within paragraph 9 of Schedule 1 (access records) if it is made to a prescribed officer of the Secretary of State's department in order to carry out prescribed functions of the Secretary of State. Disclosure of information held in paragraph 9 will be permitted if it is made for purposes connected with the prevention or detection of serious crime and it is authorised under s20 (3) to (6).

Clause 20(5) will allow for disclosure of information held on the National Identity Register to other parts of Government which are the responsibility of a Secretary of State e.g. the Department of Work and Pensions, and will also include disclosure to parts of the Home Office such as the Immigration and Nationality Department (IND), subject to Parliament's consent.

At this stage, it is not possible to list the Home Department's services that may require information from the National Identity Register. In assessing whether a departmental service should be granted disclosure, we will look closely at the justification for this information. Disclosure will only be allowed to specified persons for specified purposes, Parliament's consent will be required and the disclosure arrangements will be subject to proper authorisation procedures with independent oversight.

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research he conducted on the impact of identity theft in countries where identity cards have been introduced. [173049]

Mr. Browne: Home Office officials have had detailed discussions with colleagues involved in the operation of identity card schemes in Italy, Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands and comprehensive information has been supplied by each of the EU member states on the operation of their card schemes. Home Office officials have also liaised with colleagues involved in the operation of card schemes in Singapore and Japan and with officials in countries such as Canada, USA and Australia that do not have card schemes on emerging crime trends.

Many card schemes were developed with specific aims and objectives such as population registration and not specifically implemented for countering identity fraud. As such, many identity cards are issued locally after checking available information, for example, birth certificates and information relating to an applicant's parents. In many countries it is not necessary to give biometric information when applying for an identity card.

"Identity Cards: The Next Steps" (CM 6020) states that applications for one of the family of identity cards will require checks against other databases. These checks would confirm that a person had been known by a certain identity and lived at known addresses for a number of years. This information is more difficult to forge than birth certificates or other similar documents and follows recommendations in "Identity Fraud: A Study" conducted by the Cabinet Office and published in 2002.

Many card schemes in other countries were implemented some time ago and use mainly paper cards, which do not hold biometric data. With the passage of time, there is an increasing risk that fraudsters could obtain access to modern printing technology and use it to produce forged paper cards for the purpose of committing identity fraud. The absence of a central electronic identity register in many countries increases the risks because an identity card (or biometric data) cannot be checked against a centrally held record of that information. Organisations checking a card are therefore able only to make visual checks, for example, to check that the photograph on an identity card looks like the person presenting the card and to check for obvious signs of tampering with the card itself.

In "Identity Cards: The Next Steps" the Government stated that the National Identity Register will link each individual record to a biometric. This will help to prevent multiple identities from being established and allow organisations to check a card at a level appropriate for the service they are providing.

While a modern and effective card scheme would help to combat identity fraud, it does not mean that every card scheme, especially those that have been implemented some time ago, would have a similar or significant effect on countering this type of crime unless they have been regularly updated to stay one step ahead of fraudsters. It is therefore not possible to assess the effect that other card schemes have had on identity fraud.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of adults whose details will appear on the National Identity Register by 2013. [172403]

Mr. Browne: We would expect that by 2013, 80 per cent. of the economically active population would be entered on the National Identity Register and therefore have an identity card. The latest figures (relating to December 2003 to February 2004) show that there are currently 29.756 million economically active people aged 16 and over in the United Kingdom, 80 per cent. of which is around 23.8 million people.

Immigration

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on his review into whether all immigrants should be tested for HIV upon entry into the United Kingdom; and when the review will be completed. [174039]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* I refer the hon. Member to the response given by my hon. Friend the Minister for Public Health on 8 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1334W.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals have been *(a)* refused permission to board and *(b)* arrested by UK authorities for (i) immigration offences and (ii) other offences following checks by French immigration staff on passengers boarding ferries at Dover; and if he will make a statement. [172404]

Mr. Browne: Since the implementation of the juxtaposed controls at Dover and Calais on 1 February 2004 the Police aux Frontieres (French authorities) have operated an immigration control in Dover.

The information requested is not currently published and would therefore not normally be released.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the longest unresolved immigration case being dealt with by his Department is; when the person concerned in this case first arrived in the United Kingdom; and if he will make a statement. [173538]

Mr. Browne: Information on individual decisions, up to and including the outcome of all potential appeals, is not readily available and could be obtained only by examination of individual case files. This would incur disproportionate cost.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many arrests for immigration offences there were in each of the last five years in each *(a)* police force area and *(b)* local authority, broken down by (i) month and (ii) offence. [167966]

Mr. Browne: Information collected centrally is based on persons arrested for 'notifiable' offences within main offence groups only, and as such it does not separately identify immigration offences in the "Other" offence group within which they fall.

Justice and Home Affairs Council

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the outcome was of the Justice and Home Affairs Council held on 29 to 30 April 2004; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including its voting record; and if he will make a statement. [171291]

Caroline Flint: I represented the United Kingdom at the Justice and Home Affairs Council held in Luxembourg on 29 April 2004. Good progress was made on a number of issues and the Council finished a day early.

Firstly, subject to Member States' parliamentary scrutiny reserves, including the UK's, and completion of the certificate that will accompany the Framework Decision, Ministers reached a general approach on the Framework Decision on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to confiscation orders.

The Eurojust President, Mike Kennedy, then presented the Eurojust Annual Report for 2003 noting, in particular, that there had been a 50 per cent. increase in cases referred to Eurojust compared to the previous year. The Commission indicated that it planned to publish its report on Member States' implementation of the Council Decision establishing Eurojust by the end of June. Ministers then agreed Council conclusions noting the report and requesting the Presidency to report to the Council with recommendations for further enhancing the role of Eurojust.

The Presidency reported on progress in meeting the European Council conclusions on counter terrorism, but acknowledged that much remained to be done. It was therefore preparing a comprehensive roadmap on implementation of the counter terrorism strategy, indicating the body or group responsible for each action and deadlines for completion.

The Commission said that it was preparing Communications on practical measures for the exchange of information and on the interoperability of data in the field of visas and border management. It also wanted to bring forward proposals for allowing Schengen Information System data on lost and stolen passports to be sent to Europol. In order to launch the invitation to tender in September the Commission recommended adoption of the Council Decision establishing the Visa Information System.

I presented an initiative on the retention of telecommunications traffic data and explained why the UK believes that a common EU approach to the retention of this data is essential. I outlined some of our practical experience of investigations and prosecutions which had depended on such data to establish the link between the suspects and offences in question.

The EU counter-terrorism coordinator welcomed the progress made and suggested that work now needed to focus on practical action and implementation of agreed legislation.

The Council was unable to secure the required unanimity on the decision as to who should be appointed as the new Europol Director. The Presidency therefore concluded that the Council would need to return to the issue in June. In the meantime the Europol Management Board would need to consider whether interim arrangements would need to be put in place pending a final decision.

Discussion on the draft Asylum Procedures Directive focussed on the application of the safe third (i.e. non EU) country concept (Articles 27 and 35A).

I made clear that the UK would not accept anything which would prevent us from pursuing the approach in the Asylum and Immigration (treatment of claims etc.) Bill whereby an applicant who has transited a safe third country before coming to the UK may only challenge his removal on ECHR grounds. One other Member State initially felt that consideration should be given to all aspects of an applicant's claim. However, following discussion with them, the Presidency and the Commission, a compromise strengthening the wording on individual consideration and guaranteeing as a minimum that the applicant could bring a challenge on the ECHR elements in his claim was agreed.

It was also agreed, in relation to Article 35A, which sets out what may happen when an asylum applicant enters a Member State from a bordering country designated as safe, that Member States' national lists of these safe third countries would expire once a common EU list was in place.

All other reservations, apart from four parliamentary scrutiny reservations, including the UK's, were lifted from the text and the Council reached a General Approach, pending submission of the draft Directive to the European Parliament for re-consultation. This is a good result for the UK as the draft Directive will allow us to maintain all significant elements of our domestic asylum procedures.

It was also agreed, in relation to Article 35A, which sets out what may happen when an asylum applicant enters a Member State from a bordering country designated as safe, that Member States' national lists of these safe third countries would expire once a common EU list was in place.

All other reservations, apart from four parliamentary scrutiny reservations, including the UK's, were lifted from the text and the Council reached a General Approach, pending submission of the draft Directive to the European Parliament for re-consultation. This is a good result for the UK as the draft Directive will allow us to maintain all significant elements of our domestic asylum procedures.

The Council also agreed a Minutes Statement, placing Bulgaria and Romania on a common minimum EU list of safe countries of origin and committing the Council to complete work on the definitive list of such countries prior to re-consulting the European Parliament.

Under Any Other Business the Commission confirmed that it had been in discussions with key third countries about visa requirements for the new Member States and that it would be presenting a proposal to facilitate the procedures relating to short stay visas in relation to EU and Russian citizens.

Finally, I have placed in the Libraries of both Houses a copy of the list of "A" points which, with the exception of item 25, were approved (see documents 8847/04 PTS A 19 and ADD 1). This included item 20 on the Obligation of Carriers to Communicate Passenger Data. The UK believes that this will be a useful tool in helping to tackle terrorism and organised crime and we therefore supported the European Council Declaration on Terrorism calling for its adoption. However, as a Member State initiative, it would have fallen if not agreed before 1 May 2004 and, regrettably, I therefore felt unable to block its adoption despite it being held under scrutiny in the House of Lords.

Marsham Street

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reasons additional funding is necessary for works on Marsham Street; and how this money will be used. [165877]

Fiona Mactaggart: When the contract between the Home Office and Anne's Gate Property (AGP) for 2 Marsham street was signed, it was recognised that changes to the original specification were likely to be required during the contract period—in particular for security, information communication technology (ICT) cabling and external design. It was not at the time possible to determine precisely what those changes might be, and the contract therefore made provision for a further £11 million to be raised via a Variation Bond.

The final scope of the changes, and their cost, is still being determined. They will, however, include security and business continuity enhancements to provide greater protection and resilience; enhancements to the design to support the Government's Better Public Buildings initiative; compliance with the latest standard of ICT cabling; internal changes to better meet business requirements; and some spend to save investments in energy efficiency, internal communications services and the provision of electronic rather than manual IT switching. The Home Office has made provision for a contribution of £2 million towards the cost of the additional works.

Bernice Wiarimu Kamau

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total cost was of removing Ms Bernice Wairimu Kamau to Nairobi, broken down by each itemised cost associated with the removal. [172795]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* Information held by the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) relating to individuals is confidential and it is not our policy to disclose it.

Any attempt to calculate the cost of removal on individual cases would need to take into account a large number of factors and this could only be done at disproportionate cost.

Neighbourhood Watch

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will ensure that public liability cover for local neighbourhood watch districts will be guaranteed if the National Neighbourhood Watch organisation goes into liquidation. [173421]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* Neighbourhood Watch Schemes are important partnerships between communities, the police and local authorities, and they will continue to have our support.

If the need arises we will take steps to safeguard existing arrangements for local organisations.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the question tabled by the hon. Member for Hertsmere on 23 April 2004, reference 168914. [172361]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 11 May 2004]*: I replied to the hon. Member on 10 May 2004.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will provide a substantive reply to the question tabled by the hon. Member for Faversham and Mid Kent, ref 168371, on processing of seasonal agricultural workers scheme visas from Romania and Bulgaria. [172926]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* I replied to the hon. Member on 30 April 2004. The PQ reference number relating to the processing of seasonal agricultural workers scheme visas from Romania and Bulgaria is 168377 and not 168371 as shown above.

Passports

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which *(a)* private companies and *(b)* Government Departments have taken part in the UK Passport Service's Personal Identification Project; which databases were used in the exercise; and how the scheme is being evaluated. [173175]

Mr. Browne: Two private companies have been involved in the trials. These are Experian in 2001 and Equifax from 2002 to date. The databases used are:

Electoral roll

County court data within the public domain

Linked addresses (Equifax)

Date of birth validation (Equifax)

Previous searches (Equifax)

INSIGHT for ID verification (Equifax)

Thompson Data (Business telephone directory)

Companies House data

BAGS

BT 192 Database.

Three Government Departments are working with the UK Passport Service in this project:

DVLA to verify driving licence details submitted against current records held on the drivers record;

DWP to verify national insurance numbers submitted against current DWP records;

IND to verify Naturalisation Certificates submitted against lists of valid certificates.

No data is returned from these systems, only confirmation of the accuracy of data supplied.

The current trials are assessing the potential benefits to applicants and UKPS in terms of customer service against security of identity. Statistics are being gathered to show the impact in both these areas.

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many passports have been lost or mislaid by the Immigration and Nationality Directorate since 31 January; and if he will make a statement. [173023]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* For the period 1 February 2004 to 30 April 2004, a total of 169 letters have been issued for passports reported lost or mislaid in the Immigration and Nationality Directorate. For the same period last year, 185 letters were issued. This represents a drop of 9 per cent..

People Trafficking

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions have taken place with European Union countries regarding the issue of people trafficking into Europe. [172508]

Mr. Browne: The UK is working with EU partners and countries beyond the borders of the EU to combat the trafficking of people.

The UK participated fully in the drafting of the EU framework decision on trafficking and has been involved in discussions at EU level on provisions within this and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons which supplements the United Nations Convention against Trans-National Organised Crime. We are currently involved with, and in discussion with EU partners about, the drafting of a Council of Europe Convention on trafficking.

Through Reflex, the NCS chaired multi-agency taskforce on organised immigration crime, the UK continues to discuss and work in partnership with other EU countries and organisations such as Europol and Eurojust to take effective enforcement action against trafficking.

Building relationships with international partners is an important element of the UK strategy to combat trafficking. The UK has successfully bid for a twinning project under the EU Phare scheme in the Czech Republic. The aims of the project are to strengthen the fight against trafficking into and through the Czech Republic. This will be run in partnership with the Czech Republic and the Netherlands and is due to be launched in June 2004.

Prisons

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners were held in prisons in England and Wales for drug-related offences in each of the last five years, broken down by class of drug. [163549]

Paul Goggins: On 30 November 2003 there were 11,777 persons held in Prison Service establishments in England and Wales, under sentence or on remand, for drugs offences. Equivalent figures for each of the last five years can be found in tables 1.5 and 2.8 of the publication 'Prison Statistics England and Wales'. A copy of this publication is available in the House of Commons Library.

The number of prisoners held under sentence in Prison Service establishments for drugs offences in 1999 and 2000, broken down by type of drug, is given in the table. Information for later years is not yet available.

Table 3.11 Persons under sentence in Prison Service establishments[1] for drug offences on 30 June: by principal drugs offence[2], type of controlled drug and year, England and Wales

		Estimated number of persons[3] 2000		
Type of drug	*1999*	*Male*	*Female*	*All persons*
Cocaine	1,400	1,000	300	1,350
Crack	250	300	0	350
Heroin	2,750	2,900	400	3,300
LSD	100	50	0	50
Ecstasy-type	650	800	50	900
Methadone	50	50	0	50
Amphetamines	500	300	0	300
Cannabis	1,650	1,200	100	1,300
Other drugs	950	900	50	950
All drugs	8,150	7,500	950	8,450

[1] Excluding persons committed in default of payment of a fine.

[2] In the case of offenders with two or more sentences of immediate custody the offender is shown against the longest one which is the principal drugs offence.

[3] Total number of persons under sentence in prison offences by type of drug offence and average time spent under sentence provided by Prison Statistics. Breakdown by type of drug estimated from drug offenders sentenced to immediate custody by sentence length. Figures rounded to nearest 50.

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisons were operating at greater than their certified normal accommodation rate in each of the last 10 years. [166797]

Paul Goggins: I will write to the right hon. Member.

Probation Service

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of the additional probation staff employed since December 1999 are trainee probation officers; and what their average caseload is. [168392]

Paul Goggins: There have been 3,646 trainee probation officers appointed since 1998, and there are 780 projected trainee officer appointees for 2004.

It is not possible to calculate the average caseload of a trainee because this varies significantly during the two-year programme, according to their stage of training.

Trainee probation officers are classified as supernumerary to the workforce, which means that they do not form part of the establishment for casework purposes. During their training they undertake the amount and type of cases appropriate to their experience and knowledge and identified development needs. Their casework contribution is therefore incidental to meeting their training needs.

The information previously collected and held on starters and leavers to the service is very limited in terms of the analysis that can be performed against it. With this in mind, since 1999, the number of probation staff[1] (senior probation officers, senior practitioners, probation officers, trainee probation officers and probation services officers), employed by the National Probation Service has increased by 3,089 full-time equivalents, which equates to a growth of 31.9 per cent. The proportion of this, which can be broadly attributed to growth among qualified probation staff, is 12.5 per cent. with the remainder being a growth in probation services officers.

[1] These figures exclude staff employed in family Court Welfare in 1999 and 2000, as these were subsequently transferred in 2001.

Commission for Racial Equality

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what involvement his Department has had in the allocation of Commission for Racial Equality section 44 funding for 2004–05. [172864]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* The responsibility for setting criteria for section 44 funding, assessing applications against those criteria and making final decisions lies with the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE). The Home Office role is to agree the level of funding which the CRE proposes to allocate. We welcome the CRE's policy of using the Getting Results programme to support any innovative project which makes a difference to race equality and good relations within its local community.

Road Safety

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many speeding fines were issued in Essex in *(a)* 2001 and *(b)* 2002; [174723]

(2) how many speeding fines were paid by motorists in Essex in *(a)* 2001 and *(b)* 2002; and how many speeding offences were detected in Essex in (i) 2001 and (ii) 2002. [174724]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 21 May 2004]:* Available information showing the total number of police disposals and court proceedings for speeding offences within Essex police force area for 2001 and 2002 are given in the tables.

Information on the number of fixed penalties or fines paid for speeding offences is not collected centrally.

Table A: Fines and fixed penalties data for speeding offences[1], Essex, 2001 and 2002

Number of offences

	2001	*2002*
Court proceedings fines issued	9,131	14,570
Fixed penalty notices issued	168,885	199,201

[1] Offences under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and Motor Vehicles (Speed Limits on Motorways) Regulations 1973.

Table B: Speeding offences[1] detected by type of action, Essex, 2001 and 2002

Number of offences

Type of action	*2001*	*2002*
Court proceedings total findings of guilt	9,208	14,660
Fixed penalty notices issued	168,885	199,201
Written warnings issued	49	—
Total	178,142	213,861

[1] Offences under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and Motor Vehicles (Speed Limits on Motorways) Regulations 1973.

Sexual Offences

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many foreign nationals convicted by courts in the United Kingdom of being involved in the trafficking to and within the United Kingdom of women and children for sexual purposes have been sent to prison and upon their release have been, or will be, deported from the United Kingdom in each of the last five years; [173534]

(2) how many *(a)* male and *(b)* female foreign nationals convicted by courts in the United Kingdom of sexual offences and sent to prison have been deported on their release from prison in each of the last five years. [173535]

Mr. Browne: Information on the nationality of offenders convicted in the UK and on offenders deported following their release from prison is not collected centrally and would be available only at disproportionate cost.

A person convicted of a criminal offence may be recommended for deportation by the court which has the power to sentence him. The Secretary of State also has the power to consider a person for deportation on conducive grounds. However, we would not seek to deport a person who had an outstanding claim for asylum.

Departmental Expenditure (Sittingbourne and Sheppey)

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the expenditure of his Department in the constituency of Sittingbourne and Sheppey was between *(a)* 1992 and 1997, *(b)* 1997 and 2001 and *(c)* 2001 and 2004. [159492]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information is as follows:

Funding for Kent police

Grants for policing are not hypothecated to individual areas such as Sittingbourne and Sheppey. Grants are allocated to Kent police as a whole and it is for the Chief Constable to decide how best to deploy the resources across the force area.

Police grant distribution has been formula-based since 1995–96. Prior to that, grant was based on a proportion of forces' net expenditure.

Home Office police grant is one element only of the total general police grant forces received. Revenue Support Grant and National Non Domestic Rates make up the total of the general grant. These have not been included in the answer as they are administered by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM).

In line with all forces in England and Wales, Kent police will receive a general grants increase of 3.25 per cent. next year. Their allocation is £182.6 million. Kent is one of the shire forces who benefit most from this arrangement. If the formula alone had been applied, they would have received £167.9 million. Because a floor of 3.25 per cent. on top of last year's grant was given, they will in fact receive £182.6 million, £14.7 million more.

In addition, funding is provided to forces for a number of specific programmes such as the Crime Fighting Fund, to assist the recruitment of extra police officers, and the Rural Policing Fund, to enhance policing in areas with the most widespread populations.

Active Community Unit grant

For the past three years via our mentoring programme the Home Office has been providing financial support to mentoring organisations throughout England. Home-Start Sittingbourne and Sheppey successfully bid for three years project funding under the Active Community Unit's Mentoring Fund in 2001–02. The project helps those families experiencing difficulties and breakdown. The organisation received revenue grants of £6,219 in 2001–02, £12,715 in 2002–03 and £13,034 in 2003–04. The organisation also received a one-off capital grant of £2,682 in 2002–03 to buy equipment to support the project. Home Office funding has (finished in March 2004) now ceased.

£

	Police grant (HO only)	*Capital grant*[1]	*Crime Fighting Fund*	*Rural Policing Fund*	*DNA Expansion Programme*	*Airwave*
1992–93	68,815,000	2,491,000	—	—	—	—
1993–94	71,825,000	2,404,000	—	—	—	—
1994–95	76,008,000	2,574,000	—	—	—	—
1995–96	78,591,413	3,481,000	—	—	—	—
1996–97	82,321,694	4,803,000	—	—	—	—
1997–98	84,673,351	4,476,000	—	—	—	—
1998–99	91,724,083	2,263,000	—	—	—	—
1999–2000	92,098,019	1,853,000	—	—	—	—
2000–01	96,482,918	1,503,000	1,347,740	298,863	655,232	—
2001–02	102,643,758	2,003,000	4,505,000	599,342	1,283,474	—
2002–03	102,446,510	2,680,000	6,190,000	599,700	1,533,389	—
2003–04	106,107,422	3,372,000	7,270,500	595,161	1,494,810	7,153,000
2004–05	105,806,169	2,684,000	7,633,906	594,228	1,051,206	1,483,000

£

	Basic Command Unit Fund	*Community Support Officers*	*Special Priority Payments*	*South East Allowance*	*Total*
1992–93	—	—	—	—	71,306,000
1993–94	—	—	—	—	74,229,000
1994–95	—	—	—	—	78,582,000
1995–96	—	—	—	—	82,072,413
1996–97	—	—	—	—	87,124,694
1997–98	—	—	—	—	89,149,351
1998–99	—	—	—	—	93,987,083
1999–2000	—	—	—	—	93,951,019
2000–01	—	—	—	—	100,287,753
2001–02	—	—	—	1,483,554	112,518,128
2002–03	—	264,418	—	1,719,156	115,433,173
2003–04	1,051,206	871,426	992,100	2,200,000	131,107,625
2004–05	1,051,206	[2]871,426	[2]992,100	[2]3,125,375	125,292,616

[1] Capital grant figures prior to 2000–01 include an element of grant specifically for major capital schemes under the Priority Planning List scheme. Figures include Premises Improvement Fund allocations (£500,000 in 2002–03 and £1 million in 2003–04). Figures exclude revenue support for capital provided by ODPM and Supplementary Credit Approvals/Supported Capital Expenditure.
[2] Estimated figures for 2004–05. Subject to change.

Sources of police grant data:
1. 1992–93 to 1994–95 figures—CIPFA Police Statistics.
2. 1995–96 to 2004–05 figures—Police Grant Reports.

Terrorism

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and *(b)* police authorities on a strategy to combat illegal access to fertilisers to prevent use by terrorists. [169328]

Mr. Blunkett: Policy on protective and preventative security measures to counter the threat of terrorism is directed by a ministerial group which I chair. I would also refer to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Minister for Rural Affairs and Local Environmental Quality on 27 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 857W.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Advisers/Consultants

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much his Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies spent on external consultants and advisers each year since its creation. [172397]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was created in May 2002. In the two years since then the spend on external consultants and advisers for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, its agencies and the non-departmental public bodies are as follows:

	£
The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister	
2002–03	76,000,000
2003–04	47,000,000
The Executive agencies and NDPBs	
2002–03	5,356,822
2003–04	6,305,906

The above figures do not include the Audit Commission, as its expenditure is an operational matter. I will ask the Chief Executive to write to the hon. Member.

Antisocial Behaviour

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what responsibilities housing associations have to *(a)* monitor and *(b)* control antisocial behaviour by tenants in their properties. [175405]

Keith Hill: The Government do not believe that placing a statutory duty on housing associations to act on antisocial behaviour is the best way forward. To do so would risk the danger of landlords being endlessly caught up in long and expensive court cases to establish whether any action taken by the landlord met the statutory requirement. This would not help in tackling the problem.

The Government have amended the Housing Act 1996, through the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003, to place a duty on all social landlords to publish policies and procedures on tackling antisocial behaviour. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is consulting on statutory guidance at the moment; this guidance contains a section on monitoring.

Early Retirement

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many employees in his Department took early retirement in the last financial year; and at what total cost. [171744]

Yvette Cooper: The number of employees who took early retirement from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, its agencies and the Government office network in the last financial year was 16, at a cost of £2.8 million.

East of England Regional Assembly

Alistair Burt: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* letters and *(b)* other representations he has received from individuals in support of an elected East of England Regional Assembly. [175870]

Mr. Raynsford: Between 2 December 2002 and 18 May 2004 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has received 79 e-mails and letters from individuals and organisations in connection with the White Paper "Your Region, Your Choice" relating to an elected regional assembly for the Eastern region. One individual and one parish council expressed support for an elected regional assembly for the Eastern region. 43 correspondents opposed the idea. The remainder of the inquirers either did not express a definite opinion or were merely seeking information. In the light of this response, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not proposed a referendum in the Eastern region on an Elected Regional Assembly.

Fire Service

Mr. Caton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) when he expects personnel in the fire services who respond to emergencies to be provided with insurance cover for terrorist incidents; [171857]

(2) what action he is taking to ensure that personnel in all fire services who respond to emergencies are provided with insurance cover for terrorist incidents. [171858]

Mr. Raynsford: There are provisions within the Firefighters' Pension Scheme and Conditions of Service which provide for awards in the event of death or injury either occurring in, or as a result of, the exercise of duty.

Employer liability insurance is a matter for fire and rescue authorities who have a duty as employers to ensure that the necessary cover is provided.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has had discussions with the Association of British Insurers regarding private insurance arrangements entered into by individual firefighters to determine the extent of any problem about life insurance policies. I understand that in the case of most life insurance policies there are no terrorist exclusions although individuals should check their policies.

Where occupation is a determinant of risk I understand that there should be no increase in premiums.

Housing (North East Lincolnshire)

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what residual housing costs will fall on North East Lincolnshire Council's general fund following the transfer of housing stock; and what further public consultation will take place on the effects of the changes. [174583]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is working with North East Lincolnshire Council to identify and manage the residual housing costs and the actions that the Council will take to manage this. It is usual for such costs to be finalised during the period between ballot and transfer.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister understands that the Council intends to embark on a series of newsletters, letters to tenants and probably a formal consultation process specifically around the capital improvement programme.

Local Authority Officers

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister under what circumstances councillors who have made inappropriate appointments of council officers may be surcharged for *(a)* salary costs, *(b)* legal costs and *(c)* medical costs incurred because of the appointments. [174944]

Mr. Raynsford: The Local Government Act 2000, which provided for the establishment of the Standards Board for England and the new regime for handling allegations of misconduct by councillors, repealed the powers to surcharge councillors.

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether a local authority has the power to reallocate the duties of a returning officer for local elections when the current returning officer is one of the authority's statutory officers and a designated independent person has been appointed under the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 to investigate allegations of misconduct by that statutory officer. [174973]

Mr. Raynsford: Pursuant to section 35(1) of the Representation of the People Act 1983 non- metropolitan county councils have the power to appoint a returning officer for local elections of councillors of the county, and district councils have the power to appoint a returning officer for elections of councillors of the district and a returning officer for elections of councillors of parishes within the district.

The precise terms of the returning officer's appointment are a matter for the local authority.

Local Government Finance

Chris Ruane: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total central funding for local government was in each of the last 25 years, expressed at today's prices. [175003]

Mr. Raynsford: The total central funding for local government for the period 1981–82 to 2003–04, expressed at 2003–04 prices, appears in the table.

Year	*£ million*
1981–82	26,462
1982–83	25,400
1983–84	24,906
1984–85	24,527
1985–86	22,837
1986–87	22,575
1987–88	22,762
1988–89	22,078
1989–90	21,063
1990–91	33,821
1991–92	42,364
1992–93	43,986
1993–94	42,814
1994–95	43,588
1995–96	42,755
1996–97	42,580
1997–98	41,676
1998–99	42,707
1999–2000	44,233
2000–01	47,131
2001–02	49,537
2002–03	50,654
2003–04	53,135

The data are taken from the RS (outturn) forms for all years except 2003–04, when the data are taken from the RA (budget) form. The forms are completed each year by individual local authorities.

For the period 1981–82 to 1989–90 non-domestic rates were collected and retained locally. As such, they are not regarded as a central government grant. However, from 1990–91 onwards non-domestic rates were collected locally, pooled on a national basis and redistributed by central Government to each authority from the non-domestic pool. Consequently, figures for non-domestic rates from 1990–91 have been included above. From 1993–94 onwards the non-domestic rates figure includes City offset.

The figures have been revalued for previous years at 2003–04 prices using the current Her Majesty's Treasury GDP deflators.

Planning (North Devon)

Nick Harvey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will decide whether to call in planning application no. 31760 (Anchorwood Bank, Barnstaple) to North Devon district council; and in doing so, what account he will take of the area's housing and employment needs. [175768]

Keith Hill: The application was formally referred to the Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister by North Devon district council as it represents a Departure from the Development Plan for the area. A decision will be made in due course.

The hon. Member for North Devon can rest assured that all material for planning considerations will be taken into account in the consideration of the application.

Show People

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister, (1) on what basis a site may be ruled inappropriate for locating show people by his Department; [175019]

(2) what definition his Department uses of a realistic assessment of the amount of accommodation required in relation to identifying sites for show people; [175018]

(3) what account of the rights of local residents *(a)* his Department and *(b)* local planning authorities take in identifying appropriate sites for winter quarters for show people; and what weight is attached to the (i) appropriateness of the site, (ii) suitability of the location, (iii) availability and adequacy of vehicular access and (iv) availability of existing locations in taking such decisions. [175017]

Keith Hill: All applications for planning permission are decided on their individual merits with reference to the local authority's development plan for the area and other material considerations including national planning policy guidance. The Government's advice to local planning authorities on travelling showpeople is contained in Circular 22/91 'Travelling Showpeople'.

Social Housing

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many non-decent social homes there are; how many there were in 1997; and what funds he has allocated to reducing the numbers in future years. [174843]

Keith Hill: In 1997 there were 2.13 million non-decent homes in the social sector. The estimate for March 2004 is 1.17 million.

Between April 2004 and 2006 Local Authority plans indicate that they will spend £5.7 billion on their existing stock, the majority of which is allocated by Central Government with some from Local Authorities' own resources. This includes work beyond the decent homes standard and work to prevent dwellings from becoming non-decent as well as work to the existing non-decents. Registered Social Landlords will mainly use their own resources on improving their stock.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

China (Renewable Energy)

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she is taking to encourage the development of renewable energy in China. [174020]

Mr. Timms: The Department of Trade and Industry maintains close contact with the Chinese authorities with regard to energy matters, and including renewable energy. This contact is managed day-to-day through the Commercial Sections of the British diplomatic posts in China, and export and trade promoters of UK Trade and Investment and of the DTI's New and Renewable Energy Programme.

We are currently working with the Chinese to assist with their design and drafting of regulations to increase their use of renewable energy over the coming years. In close co-operation with the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP), we received a delegation of Chinese law makers in March, for a programme of meetings when they were able to discuss the issues involved with UK Government Departments and with UK industry. In May we sent a specialist who works with our Distributed Generation Working Group, and a Trade Promoter of the DTI's New and Renewable Energy Programme, to Beijing to join a working group developing the drafting of these regulations, which are expected to come into force next year.

We will continue to support this initiative, and also to promote contact between companies and industry bodies of our two countries. We have commissioned the development of a website designed specifically to make available information on renewable energy capabilities and opportunities in each country. This website is nearing completion, and can now be viewed on www.ukchinarenewables.co.uk. We understand that a UK specialist wind energy company is once again going to engage in training Chinese companies in the development of wind energy, in June; at least partially as a result of our trade promotional activities. And we are preparing to sponsor a presence by UK industry at a wind energy conference and exhibition in Beijing at the end of October.

Accountancy Standards

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations the Government has made to the European Commission in respect of *(a)* IAS 39 and *(b)* IAS 32; what assessment she has made of their impact on British (i) insurance companies and (ii) pension schemes; and if she will make a statement. [172916]

Jacqui Smith: The Government have made it clear to the European Commission that the adoption of all standards is essential to the success of the EU's approach to accounting harmonisation. It would be difficult for Europe to maintain international credibility without key standards on financial instruments.

We accept that IAS 32 and 39 are not perfect standards, but experience from countries where similar standards are in use show that concerns about their impact are exaggerated. Discussions with the British insurance industry indicate that companies are primarily concerned now to get the finalised standards in place so they can move forward. IAS 32 and 39 are not expected to have any particular impact on pension schemes.

Fuel Prices

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total tax payable on the average pump price of a litre of unleaded petrol was on *(a)* 1 May 2003, *(b)* 1 January, *(c)* 17 March and *(d)* 17 May 2004. [174573]

Mr. Timms: Pump prices are not available for the specified dates. The table below gives the average prices for ultra low sulphur petrol on the Monday closest to the date.

Date	*Amount of Duty per litre*	*Amount of VAT per litre*	*Pump Price per litre*
28 April 2003	45.82	11.53	77.42
29 December 2003	47.10	11.31	75.94
15 March 2004	47.10	11.53	77.39
17 May 2004	47.10	12.14	81.49

Source:
DTI

Bribery/Corruption

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many allegations of overseas bribery and corruption were received by her Department since the date that would not incur disproportionate costs. [174004]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The DTI has received one allegation of overseas bribery. Under the terms of the published memorandum of understanding copy in Libraries of the House, this was passed on to NCIS for investigation.

Civil Servants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list for each civil service grade within her *(a)* Department and *(b)* Department's executive agencies, the total number of staff employed, broken down by (i) gender, (ii) ethnic group and (iii) age group; and how many are registered disabled. [166396]

Ms Hewitt: Data on staffing levels in the Civil Service is collected by the Cabinet Office and published in Civil Service Statistics. A copy of Civil Service Statistics, 2002 is available in the Libraries of the House and at http://www/civil-service.gov.uk/statistics. The 2003 edition will be published in summer 2004.

Company Liquidations

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many redundancies have been made by *(a)* companies and *(b)* administrators in each of the last 10 years. [173827]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The following table shows the available statistics. Estimates of the total number of employees made redundant each year are from the Office for National Statistics' Labour Force Survey which is based on a sample of over 61,000 households. The estimates are subject to sampling variability. The statistics of employees made redundant because their employer has become insolvent are from records of claims made to Redundancy Payments Offices. Employees of insolvent employers may claim redundancy payments and other contractual debts such as unpaid wages, notice pay and outstanding holiday pay. Though some qualifying employees may not make a claim, it is thought that almost all do.

Estimates of employees made redundant each year in Great Britain

Thousand

	Total number of employees made redundant: Estimates from the Labour Force Survey	*Number of employees making a claim to a Redundancy Payments Office because of the insolvency of their employer*
1994	[1]	[1]
1995	680	[1]
1996	623	[1]
1997	610	[1]
1998	697	75
1999	686	82
2000	639	91
2001	722	106
2002	700	99
2003	580	91

[1] Not available.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will take steps to ensure that the administration of a company following its liquidation is used as an effective tool to safeguard the interests of shareholders and stakeholders, including employees. [173853]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Enterprise Act 2002 introduced changes that allow a liquidator to apply to court for an administration order. The court would have to be satisfied that the company would achieve the purpose of administration, the primary objective of which is to rescue the company as a going concern and failing that to achieve a better result for the creditors than on a winding up. If companies and their businesses can be rescued rather than wound up, then the outcome will be better for the company itself, its employees, its creditors, its shareholders and the economy as a whole.

Corporate Identity Theft

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what action is being taken to deal with the problems of industrial sabotage as a result of corporate identity theft; [174691]

(2) what action is being taken to encourage UK firms to take precautions against corporate identity theft. [174692]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Companies House is considering what steps it can actively take within the scope of the present law to reduce the risk of corporate identity theft. In particular it is considering further enhancing its electronic filing services to provide greater security for companies that feel at risk. Companies House is also an active member of the North East Fraud Forum, which is a unique partnership between the public and private sectors to share knowledge and experience with a view to defeating economic crime.

However, this is also a matter for companies themselves to consider how best to protect themselves against the risk of corporate identity theft. Companies House also offers a service known as "Monitor" which companies can subscribe to which will alert them to the filing of any documents on their public record. Companies can also easily make regular checks of their public record on the Companies House Website (companieshouse.gov.uk) to make sure their records reflect the true position.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many cases of corporate identity theft have been reported in each of the last five years. [174693]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Companies House began to record figures for corporate identity theft as a particular statistic in May 2004. It would be of disproportionate cost to isolate allegations of corporate identity theft from the previous records of all complaints about the false filing of documents.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment has been made of the costs to *(a)* UK consumers and *(b)* UK companies of corporate identity theft in each of the last five years. [174694]

Mr. Sutcliffe: No such assessments have been made.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether her Department is investigating allegations of breaches of OECD

guidelines by British-based companies and individuals made by the UN Panel of Experts in respect of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. [175511]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: A formal complaint was never lodged against De Beers. However following the final UN Expert Panel report and discussions between De Beers and the U.K. National Contact Point (NCP) for the OECD Guidelines, an NCP Statement was published on 5 May 2004 and is available on the U.K. OECD Guidelines webpage (http://164.36.164.37/ewt/debeers.doc)

The NCP is not an investigatory body. Its role, as defined in the Guidelines, is one of facilitation and mediation between the parties. This presupposes the existence of a complainant.

If the NCP is in receipt of information (e.g. from the UN expert panel) this can be put to the company, but without a complainant the NCP cannot engage in the dialogue process envisaged by the Guidelines.

Following repeated requests for evidence over a six month period, the UN has now agreed to provide copies of their background documentation. This arrived on 17 May 2004 and is currently being examined in detail to see what it adds to the report. A decision can then be taken as to the appropriate way forward on each company concerned.

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what information her Department has received from the UN and the panel of experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo in support of allegations against British-based companies or individuals made by the panel of experts; and what steps her Department has taken to investigate such allegations; [175553]

(2) whether her Department requires a complaint to be made in order for an investigation to be pursued in respect of an alleged breach of OECD guidelines; [175554]

(3) whether a complaint was received against De Beers in respect of an alleged breach of OECD guidelines as referred to in the initial UN expert panel report on the illegal exploitation of natural resources in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. [175555]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: A formal complaint was never lodged against De Beers. However following the final UN Expert Panel report and discussions between De Beers and the U.K. National Contact Point (NCP) for the OECD Guidelines, an NCP Statement was published on 5 May 2004 and is available on the U.K. OECD Guidelines webpage (http://164.36.164.37/ewt/debeers.doc)

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Following repeated requests for evidence over a six month period, the UN has now agreed to provide copies of their background documentation. This arrived on 17 May 2004 and is currently being examined in detail to see what it adds to the report. A decision can then be taken as to the appropriate way forward on each company concerned.

Departmental Staff

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many staff were employed in the Department to work in the communications field, and what the total expenditure on communications for the Department was, broken down by *(a)* Government Information and Communication Service staff and *(b)* other staff, broken down by (i) press officers, (ii) special advisers and (iii) others, in (A) 1994–95, (B) 1996–97, (C) 1997–98 and (D) 2001–02. [168682]

Ms Hewitt: The detailed information requested is not held in the form requested and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. However, I refer the hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 4 February 2003, *Official Report*, column 180W, giving details of the number of press officers and press office costs for 1996–97 and 2001–02.

DVDs/Videos

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what regulations are in place on the sale by *(a)* national supermarket chains and *(b)* small independent retailers of DVDs and videos at below-dealer wholesale prices. [174598]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* There are no regulations governing the prices at which goods may be sold by retailers relative to the prices at which they were purchased from wholesalers. The main legislation relating to commercial practices and fair competition is the Competition Act 1998 and the Enterprise Act 2002.

Elderly People

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry for what *(a)* initiatives, *(b)* campaigns and *(c)* advisory bodies relating to older people her Department (i) is responsible and (ii) has provided funding since 2001; and what the cost in each year was for each one. [166243]

Ms Hewitt: As part of our commitment to protecting the rights of all consumers, employees and employers, the Department of Trade and Industry is responsible for numerous activities that have particular relevance for older people. Examples include: introducing legislation under the European Employment Directive that will outlaw age discrimination in employment and vocational training from October 2006; the Age Advisory Group, set up in 2001, and Taskforce, set up in 2004, have been advising the Government on matters to do with implementation of the Directive; and establishment of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHRs), which will provide, for the first time, institutional support for the proposed provisions on age discrimination. In its first few years of operation particular attention will need to be paid to age

issues, including awareness raising among, and support for, those with rights and responsibilities under the age legislation. In addition, the CEHR will be able to act in a broad range of areas and not just those where there is specific legislative protection—for example, encouraging good practice in the provision of goods and services to help prevent unfair treatment of older people.

Further examples include funding for the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux and Citizens Advice Scotland to provide support and training to the Citizens Advice Service across the UK. The service deals with in excess of 6 million cases annually, of which over 50 per cent. involve older people; and joint support with DEFRA in 2001 (500,000) for a three-year pilot programme of Warm Zones to assess the merits of a systematic local approach to client identification and assistance: the formal evaluation of this work is expected by the end of 2004.

In April 1999, DTI launched a three-year campaign specifically targeted at older people entitled "Avoiding Slips, Trips and Broken Hips" working with Help the Aged and others. This campaign ended in 2002. However, DTI provided a grant of £50,000 directly to Help the Aged to continue to deliver the existing resources, and at present materials continue to be available for free distribution.

Energy Efficiency

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she is taking to promote the use of more energy efficient electrical motors within industry. [174763]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Proposals to develop more efficient engines and vehicles through the design and application of electric power drives and systems, where they are used in the development of environmentally friendly transport, are being considered under the collaborative research and development arm of the DTI Technology Programme. The Technology Programme seeks to promote innovative technologies to help companies bring products to market. Calls for outline proposals from industry are requested by 21 June.

A further call for proposals is planned for later this year and ideas for new priority areas to be covered are welcomed from business and should be submitted to the, industry led, Technology Strategy Board through the DTI.

Additionally the Enhanced Capital Allowance (EGA) Scheme allows businesses investing in designated energy saving products published in the approved Energy Technology List (ETL) to claim 100 per cent. first-year capital allowances on their investment. Motors and Variable Speed drives were included in the first wave of technologies published in 2001. Currently there are over 2,800 products listed under Motors and Drives section of the approved ETL Product List. The full list of energy saving products eligible for Enhanced Capital Allowances can be found at www.eca.gov.uk.

Fireworks

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what progress has been made in tackling the issue of noisy night-time fireworks. [174848]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Department launched a formal consultation on 23 April 2004, which details proposed regulations to be made under the provisions of the Fireworks Act 2003. One of the proposed measures is to create a curfew on the use of fireworks between the hours of 11 pm and 7 am, with the exception of November 5, New Years Eve, Chinese New Year and Diwali.

We expect that the police will enforce this measure—and that the police will have the power to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for infractions of the curfew.

National Minimum Wage

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many young people in Hull, North have benefited from the introduction of the minimum wage for 16 and 17 year olds. [174795]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to provide an estimate specifically for the constituency of Hull, North because of small sample size. However, the number of people in the UK who stand to benefit from the new rate for 16 and 17 year olds is likely to be in the low tens of thousands.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many people have legitimately not been paid the minimum wage in each year since its introduction; what the reason was in each case; what estimate she has made of the number of people not being paid the minimum wage for illegitimate reasons; and she will make a statement; [170311]

(2) how many employees have been affected by employers not complying with the National Minimum Wage in each year since its introduction. [170464]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answers 4 May 2004]:* The Office for National Statistics publishes an estimate of the number of jobs paying below the National Minimum Wage—See table 1, which reproduces this estimate for the years since the National Minimum Wage was introduced).

Table 1: Number and proportion of jobs paying below the National Minimum Wage

As at spring each year	*Number*	*Percentage*
2000[1]	240,000	1.0
2001[2]	250,000	1.0
2002[3]	330,000	1.3
2003[4]	260,000	1.0

[1] Rate was £3.00 per hour (aged 18–21) or £3.60 per hour (aged 22 and over).
[2] Rate was £3.20 per hour (aged 18–21) or £3.70 per hour (aged 22 and over).
[3] Rate was £3.50 per hour (aged 18–21) or £4.10 per hour (aged 22 and over).
[4] Rate was £3.60 per hour (aged 18–21) or £4.20 per hour (aged 22 and over).
Source:
Office for National Statistics' central estimates of low pay.

However, these figures do not constitute an estimate of non-compliance since there are certain circumstances where the usual minimum wage rates do not apply, in which case it may be legitimate for an employer to pay below National Minimum Wage rates.

There are two main instances when individuals may legitimately earn less than the appropriate minimum wage for their age. Firstly, individuals may be on certain Government training programmes or apprenticeships, in which they are exempt for the first year up to the age of 26. Also, employees aged over 21 who receive accredited training (such as those doing NVQs) may be exempted from receiving the full adult national minimum wage for the first six months of training in a new job with a new employer. Secondly, employees may be exempted if they are receiving accommodation that is tied to their employment. Such employees do not have to be paid all of their minimum wage entitlement in cash terms because employers can legitimately reduce rates to take into account the cost of accommodation provided; from October 2003 this has amounted to a daily offset of £3.50, leading to a maximum weekly offset of £24.50.

Using the Labour Force Survey, the DTI estimates the maximum number of workers whose job characteristics mean they can be paid less than the National Minimum Wage.

Table 2: Maximum number of workers whose job characteristics mean they can legitimately be paid less than the National Minimum Wage

As at spring each year	*Number*
2000	320,000
2001	250,000
2002	260,000
2003	220,000

Source:
Labour Force Survey.

In practice, the number of workers who can legitimately be paid below minimum wage rates is likely to be substantially lower than these figures. This is because a significant proportion of people receiving free accommodation as part of the job, holding apprenticeships or taking part in Government training programmes are likely to be earning in excess of the minimum wage.

Maternity Leave

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many and what percentage of women in Oldham, West and Royton have taken 26 weeks' maternity leave since 1997. [170938]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Data on maternity leave is not available by constituency. However, a DTI survey of working parents in Autumn 2000 showed that of mothers who had taken maternity leave in the previous five years, 51 per cent. had taken 18 weeks or less and 79 per cent. had taken 19 to 29 weeks or less.

Regional Development Agencies

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of the budget of each of the nine regional development agencies has been spent on administration in each year since their inception. [174697]

Jacqui Smith: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Cotswold (Mr. Clifton-Brown) on 11 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 247W.

Regulations

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry for what reasons she rejects the British Chambers of Commerce estimation of the costs to businesses of regulations introduced since 1997. [173260]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The British Chambers of Commerce estimation of the burden does not appear to offset the benefits accrued. Objective measurement of regulation must consider the total impact, taking account of associated benefits.

Scottish Power

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to her answer of 12 May to question reference 171781, if she will list the issues discussed at the meeting with representatives of Scottish Power on 11 March. [173696]

Ms Hewitt: The specific issue relating to electricity supply discussed at the meeting was wind farms and their interaction with radar. Also discussed was security of supply.

Software Patents

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the Council of Ministers has received the report from the Council Working Group on Intellectual Property on the draft Directive on the patentability of computer-implemented inventions. [174745]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 20 May 2004]*: The Council of Ministers discussed the report of the Working Group at the meeting of the Competitiveness Council on 17 and 18 May 2004, and reached political agreement on a Common Position on the proposed Directive on the patentability of computer-implemented inventions.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the latest position is regarding the opt-out from the 48-hour limit on the working week under the Working Time Directive; and if she will make a statement. [174871]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations 1998 (WTR) which implement the provisions of the Working Time Directive in UK law came into force on 1 October 1998. The Regulations currently include an opt-out provision to the weekly working time limit. Under the opt-out, an individual worker may agree to work more than 48 hours a week.

The opt-out was initially granted for a period of 15 years but has since been extended. A review has been carried out and the European Commission have decided to consult more widely over working time changes. The Commission published a consultation communication on 5 January 2004.

The UK response to the Communication (31 March 2004) argued strongly for the retention of the opt-out. While the Government are in favour of providing fair minimum standards of employment protection, they are

also keen to maintain the flexibility our individual labour market requires, and, which many individual workers prefer.

The second stage consultation paper from the European Commission was recently published on 19 May. It presented the following options:

Option 1—Keep the individual opt out with tighter conditions of application.

Option 2—Opt-out only available through collective agreement.

Option 3—Opt out available through collective agreement, but retain the possibility of individual opt out in the absence of such an agreement and for undertakings without worker representation.

Option 4—Phase out the opt out.

Option 1 is the only one to ensure workers have real choice and ensure working hours are tailored to what individual workers want.

The UK and the Commission agree that extending the reference period for working hours, so that these can be averaged over a period of up to 12 months without the need for a collective agreement would increase the flexibility of both employers and workers. This is of particular value in the UK because, as the Commission's Communication notes, collective or workforce agreements are not widespread here.

There is now in a 6-week period of negotiation with the social partners: UNICE, the European employers' federation; ETUC, the European employees organisation; and CEEP, the public sector employers organisation. If the social partners do not agree to negotiate on a workable solution during this time, the Commission will propose legislation by co-decision by the summer 2004.

TREASURY

Conceptions

Ann Winterton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many conceptions in women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in the Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000; [174950]

(2) what the rate of conceptions in women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years in the Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority was in each year since 2000; [174951]

(3) how many conceptions resulted in abortions in women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years in the Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000. [174953]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Ann Winterton, dated 24 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions on conceptions and abortions. (174950,174951 & 174953)

The information you requested on conceptions, and conception rates was given in answer to a recent question from David Amess MP, which appears in the Official Report of Monday 24 May, No. 91, Column 120JW-1208W.

Information on conceptions resulting in abortions was given in answer to another question from David Amess MP, which appears in the same Official Report at Column 1197W-1200W.

Overseas Charity Workers

Alistair Burt: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many United Kingdom citizens working overseas for charities in the field of overseas development have lived overseas for more than five years; [175830]

(2) how many United Kingdom citizens are employed overseas by United Kingdom based charities involved in international development. [175832]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Alistair Burt, dated 24 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to reply to your request for information on *(a)* how many United Kingdom citizens are employed overseas by UK-based charities involved in international development and; *(b)* how many UK citizens working overseas for charities in the field of overseas development have lived overseas for more than five years. I am replying in his absence. (175830,175832)

The information you requested is not available. Migration data are not collected by specific sectors, or specific types, of employment.

Psepho-analysis

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which 20 United Kingdom mainland constituencies experienced the greatest fall in electorate between 1997 and 2004 in *(a)* numerical and *(b)* percentage terms, listed in descending order. [175125]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Chris Ruane, dated 24 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning the 20 United Kingdom mainland constituencies that have experienced the greatest fall in electorate between 1997 and 2004.I am replying in his absence. (175125)

For the purposes of this question, the United Kingdom mainland excludes Northern Ireland. The effect of the introduction of a new system for registering electors in Northern Ireland is explained in an answer to an earlier Parliamentary Question on this subject (*Official Report*, 9 March 2004, Column 1416W).

Two tables are attached. Table 1 shows the 20 constituencies that experienced the greatest decrease in parliamentary electors between 16 February 1997 and 1 December 2003, the latest date for which data are available. Table 2 shows the 20 constituencies who experienced the greatest percentage decrease in parliamentary electors over the same period.

Constituencies experiencing the greatest decrease in electorate between 1997 and 2003, Great Britain.

Constituency	1997 figures	2003 figures	Electorate decrease
Portsmouth South	80,907	66,162	14,745
Brentford and Isleworth	79,644	67,934	11,710
Sheffield Central	68,976	58,708	10,268
Rhondda	57,487	48,332	9,155
Sheffield, Brightside	59,287	51,031	8,256
Edinburgh Central	63,969	55,714	8,255
Bradford West	72,671	64,663	8,008
Tyne Bridge	61,602	53,971	7,631
Sheffield, Heeley	67,011	59,428	7,583
Leeds Central	67,911	60,398	7,513
Newcastle upon Tyne East and Wallsend	63,799	56,340	7,459
Newcastle upon Tyne Central	70,271	63,408	6,863
Paisley North	50,261	43,590	6,671
Aberdeen Central	54,548	47,903	6,645
Sunderland South	68,477	61,872	6,605
Salford	58,961	52,443	6,518
Dulwich and West Norwood	69,994	63,489	6,505
Paisley South	54,573	48,248	6,325
Halifax	72,384	66,126	6,258
Edmonton	64,184	57,988	6,196

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Constituencies experiencing the greatest percentage decrease in electorate between 1997 and 2003, Great Britain.

Constituency	1997 figures	2003 figures	Percentage decrease
Portsmouth South	80,907	66,162	18.22
Rhondda	57,487	48,332	15.93
Sheffield Central	68,976	58,708	14.89
Brentford and Isleworth	79,644	67,934	14.70
Sheffield, Brightside	59,287	51,031	13.93
Paisley North	50,261	43,590	13.27
Edinburgh Central	63,969	55,714	12.90
Tyne Bridge	61,602	53,971	12.39
Aberdeen Central	54,548	47,903	12.18
Newcastle upon Tyne East and Wallsend	63,799	56,340	11.69
Paisley South	54,573	48,248	11.59
Glasgow Baillieston	51,589	45,738	11.34
Sheffield, Heeley	67,011	59,428	11.32
Cynon Valley	48,713	43,260	11.19
Leeds Central	67,911	60,398	11.06
Salford	58,961	52,443	11.05
Bradford West	72,671	64,663	11.02
Glasgow Maryhill	52,854	47,525	10.08
Newcastle upon Tyne Central	70,271	63,408	9.77
Dundee West	57,809	52,196	9.71

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Stamp Duty

Mr. Watson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much has been saved by housebuyers in stamp duty exempt areas as a result of not having to pay the duty, broken down by local authorities in England. [174463]

Ruth Kelly: The available information cannot be given at this level of detail.

Suicides

Tom Cox: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many suicides there were in England and Wales in 2002. [174486]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Tom Cox, dated 24 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question how many suicides there were in England and Wales in 2002. (174486)

There were 4,665 deaths with a verdict of suicide or an open verdict[1] in England and Wales in 2002[2].

[1] Data for England and Wales are for deaths occurring in the calendar year.

[2] Causes of death were defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes X60-X84 (suicide verdict) and Y10-Y34 (open verdict) excluding Y33.9 where the Coroner's verdict was pending.

Abortion

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many conceptions resulted in abortion among those aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 in each year since 2000; [174459]

(2) what the rate of conceptions for females aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years was in each year since 2000; [174466]

(3) what the rate of conceptions in women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years was in the Essex Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000; and how many conceptions there were in each age group. [174578]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Bob Spink, dated 24 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions on conceptions and abortions. (174459,174466 & 174578)

The information you requested on conceptions, and conception rates was given in answer to a recent question from David Amess MP, which appears in the Official Report of Monday 24 May, No. 91, Column 1201W-1208W.

Information on conceptions resulting in abortions was given in answer to another question from David Amess MP, which appears in the same Official Report at Column 1197W-1200W.

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many conceptions in women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in the Essex Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000. [174510]

(2) what the rate of conceptions in women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in the Essex Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000; [174511]

(3) how many conceptions resulted in abortions in women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years in the Essex Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000; [174513]

(4) what the rate of conceptions for women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years was in each year since 2000; [174504]

(5) how many conceptions resulted in abortion among women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years in each year since 2000. [174506]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Sir Teddy Taylor, dated 24 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions on conceptions and abortions. (174510,174511, 174513, 174504 & 174506)

The information you requested on conceptions, and conception rates was given in answer to a recent question from David Amess MP, which appears in the Official Report of Monday 24 May, No. 91, Column 1201W-1208W.

Information on conceptions resulting in abortions was given in answer to another question from David Amess MP, which appears in the same Official Report at Column 1197W-1200W.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the rate of conceptions was for women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 in England and Wales in each year since 2000; and if he will make a statement. [174521]

Ruth Kelly: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer my hon. Friend the Economic Secretary gave to him on 20 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1197–200W.

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the rate of conceptions for women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years was in each year since 2000; [175395]

(2) how many conceptions in women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 there were in West Cumbria in each year since 2000; [175420]

(3) what the rate of conceptions in women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 was in West Cumbria Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000; [175421]

(4) how many conceptions resulted in abortions in women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years in West Cumbria Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000; [175425]

(5) how many conceptions resulted in abortion among women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years in each year since 2000. [175516]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Tony Cunningham, dated 24 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions on conceptions and abortions. (175395, 175420, 175421, 175517 & 175516)

The information you requested on conceptions, and conception rates was given in answer to a recent question from David Amess MP, which appears in the Official Report of Monday 24 May, No. 9.1, Column 1201W-1208W.

Information on conceptions resulting in abortions was given in answer to another question from David Amess MP, which appears in the same Official Report at Column 1197W-1200W.

Please note that information for the West Cumbria area is not available. However, information for the Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority area is given at both the above references.

Information on conceptions resulting in abortions, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex is not available.

Mr. Flook: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the rate of conceptions in women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years was in the Dorset and Somerset Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000; [175619]

(2) how many conceptions in women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in the Dorset and Somerset Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000; [175620]

(3) how many conceptions resulted in pregnancy terminations among women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years in the Dorset and Somerset Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000. [175625]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Adrian Flook, dated 24 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions on conceptions and abortions. (175619,175620 & 175625)

The information you requested on conceptions, and conception rates was given in answer to a recent question from David Amess MP, which appears in the Official Report of Monday 24 May, No. 91, Column 1201W-1208W.

Information on conceptions resulting in abortions was given in answer to another question from David Amess MP, which appears in the same Official Report at Column 1197W-1200W.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many conceptions in women of 19 years and under there were in Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by age; [175782]

(2) what the rate of conceptions in women of 19 years and under was in Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority since 2000, broken down by age; [175783]

(3) what the rate of conceptions for women of 19 years and under was in each year since 2000, broken down by age; [175786]

(4) how many conceptions resulted in abortion among women of 19 years and under in each year since 2000, broken down by age; [175787]

(5) how many conceptions resulted in abortions in women of 19 years and under in Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by age. [175763]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Jim Dobbin, dated 24 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions on conceptions and abortions. (175763, 175782, 175783, 175786 & 175787)

The information you requested on conceptions, and conception rates was given in answer to a recent question from David Amess MP, which appears in the Official Report of Monday 24 May, No. 91, Column 1201W-1208W.

Information on conceptions resulting in abortions was given in answer to another question from David Amess MP, which appears in the same Official Report at Column 1197W-1200W.

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the rate of conceptions in women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years was in the Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000; [175388]

(2) how many conceptions in women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in the Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000; [175391]

(3) how many conceptions resulted in abortions among women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in the Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000. [175386]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Paul Goodman, dated 24 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions on conceptions and abortions. (175386,175388 & 175391)

The information you requested on conceptions, and conception rates was given in answer to a recent question from David Amess MP, which appears in the Official Report of Monday 24 May, No. 91, Column 1201W-1208W.

Information on conceptions resulting in abortions was given in answer to another question from David Amess MP, which appears in the same Official Report at Column 1197W-1200W.

Child Tax Credit

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in Hull North are eligible for the child tax credit; and what the take-up rate is. [174793]

Dawn Primarolo: For the number of recipient families, I refer my hon. Friend to my answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Burton (Mrs. Dean) on 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 98W.

Council Tax

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will update the information set out in the answer of 17 November 2003, *Official Report*, columns 520–22W, on council tax, to take account of the effects of taxes and benefits on household income in 2002–03. [174862]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Edward Davey, dated 24 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking for an update of the information set out in the answer of 17 November 2003, *Official Report*, columns 520–22W, giving how much council tax was paid as a proportion of gross income for households in each income quintile group in each English region. (174862)

Estimates have been produced from the Office for National Statistics' analysis "The effects of taxes and benefits on household income" published on the National Statistics website on 6 May 2004 at http://www.statistics.gov.uk/taxesbenefits. The analysis includes measures of income inequality for the United Kingdom as a whole based on data from the Expenditure and Food Survey. This is a sample survey covering about 7,000 households in the UK and sample sizes for each region are only sufficient to give approximate estimates.

The current analysis presents data for the category 'Council tax and Northern Ireland rates', as opposed to the category 'Local taxes' used in previous analyses. This is because, from this year, charges made by water authorities for water, environmental and sewerage services have been excluded. This treatment conforms to the National Accounts classification and definition of taxes where water rates and related charges are considered a charge for services rather than a tax. They have therefore been excluded from the calculation of disposable income. This reply is based on the new methodology and includes updated 2001–02 figures on this basis for comparison.

The table shows, for 2001–02 and 2002–03, the average net council tax paid for all households in each Government Office Region and for each income quintile group within each region where households are ranked by equivalised disposable income. Equivalisation is a standard methodology that takes into account the size and composition of households and adjusts their incomes to recognise differing demands on resources. The net council tax figures are gross council tax less reported council tax benefits and discounts. The table also shows the boundaries between equivalised disposable income quintiles, which have been calculated separately for households in each Government Office Region. For example, the 1st quintile boundary is the income level below which one fifth of those households are estimated to lie.

Net council tax paid by households within each Government Office Region by equivalised disposable income quintile, 2001–02-England

	North East			North West and Merseyside			Yorkshire and the Humber		
	Income boundary[1] (£)	Net council tax (£)	Net council tax as percentage of gross income	Income boundary[1] (£)	Net council tax (£)	Net council tax as percentage of gross income	Income boundary[1] (£)	Net council tax (£)	Net council tax as percentage of gross income
Quintile									
Bottom	—	242	3.1	—	396	4.7	—	370	4.0
	9,112	—	—	9,995	—	—	10,245	—	—
2nd	—	420	3.3	—	430	3.4	—	375	3.0
	12,790	—	—	13,483	—	—	13,622	—	—
3rd	—	500	2.6	—	664	3.4	—	524	2.7
	17,972	—	—	17,937	—	—	17,920	—	—

Net council tax paid by households within each Government Office Region by equivalised disposable income quintile, 2001–02-England

	North East			North West and Merseyside			Yorkshire and the Humber		
	Income boundary[1] (£)	Net council tax (£)	Net council tax as percentage of gross income	Income boundary[1] (£)	Net council tax (£)	Net council tax as percentage of gross income	Income boundary[1] (£)	Net council tax (£)	Net council tax as percentage of gross income
4th	—	707	2.3	—	750	2.6	—	647	2.4
	26,154	—	—	24,290	—	—	23,907	—	—
Top	—	872	15	—	936	1.8	—	846	1.7
All households in region	—	548	2.2	—	635	2.6	—	553	2.3

	East Midlands			West Midlands			Eastern		
	Income boundary[1] (£)	Net council tax (£)	Net council tax as percentage of gross income	Income boundary[1] (£)	Net council tax (£)	Net council tax as percentage of gross income	Income boundary[1] (£)	Net council tax (£)	Net council tax as percentage of gross income
Quintile									
Bottom	—	484	5.1	—	426	4.8	—	468	5.3
	10,517	—	—	10,071	—	—	11,116	—	—
2nd	—	549	3.5	—	429	3.5	—	527	3.4
	14,894	—	—	13,958	—	—	16,206	—	—
3rd	—	679	2.8	—	598	2.6	—	722	2.7
	19,777	—	—	18,032	—	—	22,332	—	—
4th	—	725	2.3	—	782	2.3	—	786	2.1
	26,917	—	—	25,358	—	—	30,455	—	—
Top	—	785	1.4	—	781	1.5	—	885	1.4
All households in region	—	644	2.4	—	603	2.3	—	678	2.2

	London			South East			South West		
	Income boundary[1] (£)	Net council tax (£)	Net council tax as percentage of gross income	Income broundary[1] (£)	Net council tax (£)	Net council tax as percentage of gross income	Income boundary[1] (£)	Net council tax (£)	Net council tax as percentage of gross income
Quintile									
Bottom	—	444	4.6	—	473	4.8	—	474	5.4
	11,647	—	—	12,758	—	—	10,955	—	—
2nd	—	559	3.1	—	643	3.3	—	570	3.8
	17,770	—	—	18,203	—	—	14,643	—	—
3rd	—	753	2.2	—	746	2.6	—	674	3.0
	25,855	—	—	24,832	—	—	19,555	—	—
4th	—	789	1.7	—	831	1.9	—	746	2.5
	38,166	—	—	35,472	—	—	26,542	—	—
Top	—	886	1.0	—	981	1.3	—	897	15
All households in region	—	686	1.7	—	735	2.0	—	672	2.5

Note:

[1] Boundary point between equivalised disposable income quintiles.

Source:

Office for National Statistics, based on the analysis 'The effects of taxes and benefits on household income'.

Net council tax paid by households within each Government Office Region by equivalised disposable income quintile, 2002–2003-England

	North East			North West and Merseyside			Yorkshire and the Humber		
	Income boundary[1] (£)	Net council tax (£)	Net council tax as percentage of gross income	Income broundary[1] (£)	Net council tax (£)	Net council tax as percentage of gross income	Income boundary[1] (£)	Net council tax (£)	Net council tax as percentage of gross income
Quintile									
Bottom	—	395	4.1	—	378	4.0	—	368	4.0
	10,600	—	—	10,952	—	—	10,378	—	—
2nd	—	474	3.5	—	487	3.3	—	490	3.4
	14,052	—	—	14,832	—	—	14,181	—	—
3rd	—	541	2.6	—	597	2.7	—	556	2.7
	18,501	—	—	19,287	—	—	19,533	—	—
4th	—	697	2.5	—	753	2.4	—	670	2.3
	24,518	—	—	26,993	—	—	25,829	—	—
Top	—	883	1.8	—	979	1.9	—	847	1.6
All households in region	—	598	2.4	—	639	2.4	—	586	2.4

	East Midlands			West Midlands			Eastern		
	Income boundary[1] (£)	Net council tax (£)	Net council tax as percentage of gross income	Income broundary[1] (£)	Net council tax (£)	Net council tax as percentage of gross income	Income boundary[1] (£)	Net council tax (£)	Net council tax as percentage of gross income
Quintile									
Bottom	—	513	5.1	—	406	4.3	—	591	5.4
	10,992	—	—	10,865	—	—	12,113	—	—
2nd	—	558	3.4	—	497	3.3	—	580	3.3
	15,238	—	—	14,259	—	—	16,944	—	—
3rd	—	691	2.9	—	656	2.9	—	784	2.9
	20,734	—	—	19,323	—	—	22,195	—	—
4th	—	835	2.3	—	802	2.4	—	855	2.3
	28,150	—	—	26,717	—	—	33,990	—	—
Top	—	956	1.6	—	883	1.7	—	958	1.5
All households in region	—	711	2.4	—	649	2.5	—	753	2.4

	London			South East			South West		
	Income boundary[1] (£)	Net council tax (£)	Net council tax as percentage of gross income	Income broundary[1] (£)	Net council tax (£)	Net council tax as percentage of gross income	Income boundary[1] (£)	Net council tax (£)	Net council tax as percentage of gross income
Quintile									
Bottom	—	395	3.7	—	553	5.3	—	480	5.6
	11,904	—	—	12,545	—	—	11,576	—	—
2nd	—	507	3.1	—	660	3.6	—	602	4.0
	17,009	—	—	18,310	—	—	16,173	—	—
3rd	—	714	2.3	—	851	2.9	—	769	3.0
	26,286	—	—	24,805	—	—	21,231	—	—
4th	—	918	1.9	—	938	2.3	—	844	2.5
	37,876	—	—	33,743	—	—	29,152	—	—
Top		928	1.0	—	1050	1.5	—	988	1.8
All households in region	—	693	1.8	—	811	2.4	—	737	2.7

Note:
[1] Boundary point between equivalised disposable income quintiles.
Source:
Office for National Statistics, based on the analysis 'The effects of taxes and benefits on household income'.

Labour Statistics (Eastern Region)

Alistair Burt: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the change in the number of jobs in the manufacturing sector in the Eastern Region has been in *(a)* the last 12 months for which figures are available and *(b)* in the 24 months prior to this; [174544]

(2) how many people are employed in engineering and engineering related industries in the Eastern region; and how many were employed in these industries in *(a)* 2003, *(b)* 2002 and *(c)* 2001. [174545]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Alistair Burt dated 24 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions about employment in the manufacturing industry and engineering sectors in the eastern region. (174544, 174545)

The latest year for which figures are available is 2002. The attached table shows the information requested for the years 2000–2002.

Employee[1] jobs in manufacturing, and in engineering and related industries—Eastern region: 2000–2002

£000

Year[2]	Manufacturing	Change year on year	Engineering	Change year on year
2000	333	—	120	—
2001	328	-5	118	-2
2002	307	-21	109	-9

[1] Employee jobs only, does not include self-employed.
[2] The Annual Business Inquiry is released in December of each year.
Source:
Annual Business Inquiry (ABI).

Financial Statistics

Mr. Flight: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list *(a)* the Government consumption expenditure deflator and *(b)* the level of public sector inflation for each year since 1997. [174980]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Howard Flight, dated 24 May 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning *(a)* the Government consumption expenditure deflator and *(b)* the level of public sector inflation for each year since 1997. (174980)

The implied annual deflator for general government consumption derived from the national accounts estimates published in March 2004 is presented in the attached table.

Please note that these estimates do not present price measures directly, since with a few exceptions (e.g. passport fees), there are no directly observable prices for the services provided by government. The estimates are therefore derived by comparing the spending on producing government services with measures of the output of those services. As derived statistics, they should not be confused with measures of the price of the inputs such as public sector earnings or prices paid for other purchases.

In calculating the deflator, the quality and reliability of the output measures are crucial. However, public service delivery and management mechanisms have developed and become more complex in recent years, and there is an increasing emphasis on the quality of service for the customer. As a result there are greater demands on, and expectations of, measures of government output. In order to ensure that output measures can respond to these demands, in December 2003 I announced an independent review, led by Sir Tony Atkinson, of the future development of government output and productivity measures, and the associated price indices.

General Government consumption—implied deflator[1] UK, 1997–2003

Year	*Index*
1997	88.8
1998	91.1
1999	95.4
2000	100.0
2001	105.7
2002	113.3
2003	122.7

[1] Indexed, with value of 100 in year 2000

Source:
UK National Accounts, 26 March 2004

Gershon Review

Brian White: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to publish the results of the Gershon review. [175431]

Mr. Boateng: Sir Peter Gershon continues to work closely with all Departments to prepare detailed efficiency proposals for consideration in the 2004 Spending Review. A further announcement will be made at the Spending Review.

Holiday Bond Schemes

Mr. Salter: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans the Government have to ensure that companies promoting holiday bond schemes make potential investors aware of the financial risks involved. [174533]

Ruth Kelly: Where firms carry on regulated activities relating to specified investments, including holiday bond schemes, firms must be authorised by the Financial Services Authority (FSA). The FSA also regulates promotions of holiday bonds involving controlled investments and activities, which includes checking that promotions are clear, fair and not misleading.

Large Business Office

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the operating costs have been for the Large Business Office for each year since 1997. [174937]

Dawn Primarolo: The Large Business Office developed during 1997–98 so 1998–99 was the first full year of operation.

The operating costs of the LBO for each year, together with those of the prior year, are set out in their Annual Report. Copies of those for 2000–01 and 2002–03 are held in the House of Commons Library.

Low Sulphur Petrol

John Thurso: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps he has taken to ensure the availability of low sulphur petrol after 1 September in the North East of Scotland and the Highlands and Islands; and if he will make a statement. [174481]

John Healey: Following the announcement by the Chancellor that a duty differential of 0.5p/l in favour of sulphur free petrol will apply from 1 September 2004, we anticipate that this will rapidly replace low sulphur petrol. The marketing of sulphur free fuels is a matter for the oil industry, however we do expect that the duty differential will be sufficient to ensure widespread availability across the UK generally. Certainly, early indications from the oil industry are that Scotland will be among the first areas to see the introduction of sulphur-free fuels.

Northern Ireland

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much public money has been spent in Northern Ireland in each of the last seven years, broken down by main budget heading; and what the general receipts were in each year, broken down by revenue source. [175232]

Mr. Boateng: Identifiable public spending by function, region and country is published annually in Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses. The latest data for Northern Ireland is shown in the tables 8.5,8.6,8.7,8.8 and 8.9 of Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2004 (Cm 6201). Information on current receipts is published in Table C8 of the Financial Statement and Budget Report (HC 301). No Northern Ireland-specific figures are available for current receipts.

Public Sector Inflation

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list *(a)* the Government consumption expenditure deflator and *(b)* the level of public sector inflation for each year since 1979. [175243]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Chris Ruane, dated 24 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent question concerning *(a)* the Government consumption expenditure deflator and *(b)* the level of public sector inflation for each year since 1979.1 am replying in his absence. (175243)

The implied annual deflator for general government consumption derived from the national accounts estimates published in March 2004 is presented in the attached table.

Please note that these estimates do not present price measures directly, since with a few exceptions (e.g. passport fees), there are no directly observable prices for the services provided by government. The estimates are therefore derived by comparing the spending on producing government services with measures of the output of those services. As derived statistics, they should not be confused with measures of the price of the inputs such as public sector earnings or prices paid for other purchases.

The methodology used in calculation the volume measure of Government consumption was changed from the mid-1990s, therefore comparisons should be made with care.

In calculating the implied deflator, the quality and reliability of the output measures are crucial. However, public service delivery and management mechanisms have developed and become more complex in recent years, and there is an increasing emphasis on the quality of service for the customer. As a result there are greater demands on, and expectations of, measures of government output. In order to ensure that output measures can respond to these demands, in December 2003 the National Statistician announced a review of the future development of government output and productivity measures, and the associated price indices.

General Government consumption—implied deflator[1] UK, 1979–2003

Year	*Index*
1979	27.8
1980	34.4
1981	38.8
1982	42.0
1983	44.7
1984	46.8
1985	49.5
1986	52.4
1987	56.2
1988	60.4
1989	64.8
1990	70.0
1991	74.9
1992	79.1
1993	81.1
1994	83.1
1995	84.9
1996	87.4
1997	88.8
1998	91.1
1999	95.4
2000	100.0
2001	105.7
2002	113.3
2003	122.7

Source:
UK National Accounts, 26 March 2004

Travellers

Andrew Selous: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many visits income tax and VAT inspectors have made to unauthorised traveller developments to ensure the proper collection of income tax and VAT in the year to 5 April 2004 in *(a)* England and Wales and *(b)* South Bedfordshire. [171777]

John Healey: Both HM Customs and Excise and the Inland Revenue are committed to treating all taxpayers fairly and equally and do not target or classify businesses by demographic or racial group. An approach to managing non-compliance is taken which deploys resources on the basis of risk assessment. It is not therefore possible to quantify the number of visits made to unauthorised traveller developments.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Child Poverty

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the Government's aim to eradicate child poverty in this country by 2020. [172912]

Mr. Pond: I refer the hon. Member to the oral answer given by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State to my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Redcar (Vera Baird) on 26 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 625–26.

Phil Sawford: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions using the 1999 Millennium Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey, how many children he estimates lived in families with below 70 per cent. of the before housing costs national median income who also lacked *(a)* one or more and *(b)* two or more of the necessities proposed in the annex of the document Measuring Child Poverty; and how many of those categorised as missing out on (i) one or more and (ii) two or more of the list of necessities did not have before housing cost incomes below 60 per cent. of median income in 1999. [173450]

Mr. Pond: We have not made any estimates using the 1999 Millennium Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey.

The official Government estimates of low income are derived from the Family Resources Survey-based Households Below Average Income dataset. Data for the material deprivation element of the measure outlined in the document Measuring Child Poverty will be collected on the Family Resources Survey from 2004–05, and will be published in 2006.

Copies of the 'Measuring Child Poverty' document are available in the Library.

Council Tax Benefit (Hampshire)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have claimed council tax benefit in *(a)* Portsmouth, *(b)* Southampton and *(c)* the rest of Hampshire in each of the last three years. [174195]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the table.

Council tax benefit recipients in Portsmouth, Southampton, and Hampshire local authorities

Thousand

Local authority	*Council tax benefit recipients*		
	August 2001	*August 2002*	*August 2003*
Portsmouth	14.2	12.8	13.8
Southampton	17.9	18.0	17.3
Basingstoke and Deane	6.3	6.5	6.6
East Hampshire	4.1	4.1	4.2
Eastleigh	4.7	4.8	4.9
Fareham	3.7	3.7	3.6
Gosport	4.7	4.4	4.7
Hart	2.0	1.9	2.1
Havant	8.7	8.0	8.2
New Forest	8.9	8.5	8.5
Rushmoor	3.5	3.4	3.7
Test Valley	4.3	4.3	4.5
Winchester	4.5	4.3	4.4

Notes:

1. The data refers to benefit units, which may be a single person or a couple.
2. The figures have been rounded to the nearest hundred and expressed in thousands.
3. Figures for any non-responding authorities have been estimated.
4. Council tax benefit totals exclude any Second Adult Rebate cases.
5. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Source:

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System Quarterly 100 per cent. caseload stock-count taken in August 2001, 2002 and 2003.

National Insurance

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many national insurance numbers have been issued in each year since 1992. [172917]

Mr. Pond: The number of National Insurance Numbers (NINOs) created each year since 1992 on the Departmental Central Index (DCI) is in the table.

Year January to December	*NINOs created on DCI*
1992	9,765,000
1993	3,292,000
1994	1,057,000
1995	1,008,000
1996	979,000
1997	1,018,000
1998	1,027,000
1999	1,023,000
2000	996,000
2001	928,000
2002	1,082,000
2003	1,142,000

Advertising and Publicity

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the expenditure of his Department on advertising and publicity was in each of the last six years, broken down by campaign; and what the projected expenditure is for 2003–04. [152855]

Maria Eagle: 2003–04 was a major year for advertising and publicity in the Department for Work and Pensions, with a number of big campaigns rising to a peak of activity.

During 2003–04, estimated expenditure on alerting people to their rights, responsibilities and entitlements through information campaigns was £58,179,000. Of this sum, an estimated £40,894,000 was spent on advertising using television, radio, cinema, internet and press media.

Some campaigns, such as pension credit and new deal, have expenditure falling into more than one financial year, depending on requirements and final billing dates. Estimated total expenditure for 2003–04, broken down by campaign, is in the table.

£

2003–04 campaign	*Advertising expenditure*	*Total publicity expenditure*[1]
Future Pensioners/Informed Choice	—	2,700,000
Pensioners' Guide	—	1,250,000
Pension Credit	11,100,000	15,580,000
The Pension Service	570,000	2,650,000
Direct Payment	11,044,000	12,474,000
Direct Payment road show	51,000	480,000
Fraud	8,383,000	9,362,000
Winter Fuel	637,000	938,000
Council Tax Benefit	500,000	652,000
New Deal	5,800,000	7,600,000
Jobcentre Plus awareness	—	531,000
Jobseeker Direct help-line	1,700,000	1,700,000
Jobcentre Plus employer marketing	1,016,000	1,016,000
Age Positive	46,000	946,000
DDA Awareness and Disability Rights	47,000	300,000
Total	40,894,000	58,179,000

[1] The total publicity expenditure column includes the advertising costs shown in the centre column. Final expenditure April 2003–March 2004 may differ from these figures depending on actual activity and billing dates.

Notes:

1. All costs exclude VAT.
2. Figures have been rounded to the nearest £1,000
3. Advertising costs are total media costs excluding all production costs.
4. Information campaigns costing under £250,000 and the details of highly localised publicity activity by the Department's customer-facing businesses have generally not been included as a disproportionate cost would be incurred in compiling these figures.

The Department for Work and Pensions was formed in June 2001. I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 27 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 342W, detailing expenditure for 2001–02 and 2002–03. Information on total advertising and publicity costs by campaign for these years can be found in the Department's annual reports, copies of which are in the Library.

A more detailed breakdown, distinguishing between advertising and other publicity costs, could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Benefits

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Scotland were in receipt of *(a)* housing benefit and *(b)* council tax benefit in (i) 2000–01 and (ii) 2001–02. [174022]

Mr. Pond: The available information is in the table.

Housing benefit and council tax benefit recipients aged 60 and over in Scotland

As at May	*Housing benefit*	*Council tax benefit*
2000	203,000	275,000
2001	203,000	281,000

Notes:

1. The figures are based on a 1 per cent. sample and are therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.
2. The data refers to benefit units, which may be a single person or a couple.
3. The figures have been rounded to the nearest thousand.
4. Council tax benefit totals exclude any Second Adult Rebate cases.
5. Housing benefit figures exclude any Extended Payment cases.
6. "Aged 60 and over" refers to cases where the claimant and/or partner are aged 60 or over.

Source:

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System, Annual 1 per cent. sample, taken in May 2000 and 2001.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* state pensioners and *(b)* non-pensioner benefit recipients within the Tamworth constituency receive (i) pensions and (ii) other benefits (A) through an order book, (B) through a Post Office Card Account and (C) paid directly into a bank or building society account. [160057]

Mr. Pond: Information in the following table gives the number of customers in the Tamworth constituency, by benefit, broken down by their method of payment (order book, Post Office Card Account or direct payment) as at 23 January 2004. Child benefit and war pensions information is not included as these are the responsibility of the Inland Revenue and Ministry of Defence respectively.

	Payment by order book	*Payment by Post Office card account*	*Payment direct into a bank or building society account*
(a) State pensioners (women over 60 and men over 65)			
State pension (retirement pension)	5,235	250	6,720
Other benefits[1]	2,835	(1)	1,850
(b) Non-pensioner benefit recipients			
Total of benefits	3,700	455	5,415

[1]Other benefits are attendance allowance, disability living allowance, incapacity benefit, carers' allowance, industrial injuries, pensions credit, severe disablement allowance and widows' benefit.

Notes:

The following special points should be noted :

1. For confidentiality reasons, all figures are rounded to the nearest 50.
2. Figures relate to payload and not caseload therefore if a claimant is receiving more than one benefit e.g. pension credit (PC) and state pension (SP) but only receives one combined payment through the PC system they will only be shown as having a pension credit account and not a state pension account.
3. Payments made into some bank/building society accounts will still allow customers to access their cash at Post Office branches if the account provider has an arrangement with Post Office Limited.
4. Benefits are bereavement benefit, disability living allowance, incapacity benefit, carers' allowance, industrial injuries, income support, jobseekers allowance, pension credit, severe disablement allowance and widows' benefit.

Source:

DWP Information Centre, Information & Analysis Directorate (100 per cent. data).

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Battersea are receiving at least one benefit that can be collected at the post office. [168855]

Mr. Pond: Based on information available at 21 February 2004, the number of pensioners in Battersea receiving at least one benefit that can be collected at the post office is 5,555.

This figure includes payments made into post office card accounts. It also includes girocheques, which are encashable at either a post office or through a bank or building society account.

There are no data available on the number of benefit payments collected at post offices through the wider range of banking services now available.

This figure does not include child benefit or war pensions accounts, as these are the responsibility of Inland Revenue and the Ministry of Defence respectively.

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the measures introduced to improve the working conditions of disabled workers in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood over the last seven years. [175892]

Maria Eagle: We have a number of measures in place nationally to help improve conditions for disabled people at work, as well as measures to improve their access to services generally. None of these are specific to Blackpool, North and Fleetwood, but all are available to disabled people who live and work there.

From 1996, the employment provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act required most employers of 20 or more staff not to discriminate against, and to make reasonable adjustments for, disabled job applicants or employees; in December 1998, we reduced this threshold to 15 employees. From October this year, the small employer exemption will be removed and most currently excluded occupations, such as police officers, fire-fighters, and partners in business partnerships will be brought within the scope of the Disability Discrimination Act employment provisions.

Jobcentre Plus runs a number of specialist programmes providing help for disabled people, including New Deal for Disabled People, WORKSTEP, Access to Work, the Job Introduction Scheme, and Work Preparation. All these programmes provide practical advice and support to disabled people and their employers to help overcome work related obstacles resulting from disability. Since 1997–98 there have been year on year increases in both numbers helped and programme spend.

To help people access appropriate help, Jobcentre Plus has established a network of disability service teams. The teams are made up of disability employment

advisers, access to work advisers and occupational psychologists; their services are accessed through local Jobcentres.

Since April 2003, disabled people in work have been receiving financial support through the working tax credit. This is available if a person is working an average of at least 16 hours per week (self-employed or for an employer); and have a disability which puts them at a disadvantage in getting a job. 70,000 families (including over 32,000 adults without children) are benefiting from the disability element within the working tax credit, compared to 38,000 who benefited from the old disabled person's tax credit.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in the Havant constituency have migrated from over the counter benefit payments to automated credit transfer in each of the last 12 months. [167330]

Mr. Pond: The number of pensioner accounts (men over 65 women over 60) in the parliamentary constituency of Havant that have migrated from over the counter benefit payments to Direct Payment in the past 12 months is in the table.

Figures refer to accounts migrating. An individual pensioner paid two benefits separately will be counted as two pensioner accounts.

Statistics are taken from individual scans of benefit databases at a point in time each month. New accounts opened and closed in between scans are not included in the figures. Similarly, if a person changes their method of payment and then reverts back to the old method of payment this change will not be included.

Time period	*Number of accounts migrating*
24 January 2004 to 21 February 2004	285
27 December 2003 to 24 January 2004	305
29 November 2003 to 27December 2003	35
1 November 2003 to 29 November 2003	170
4 October 2003 to 1 November 2003	225
6 September 2003 to 4 October 2003	20
9 August 2003 to 6 September 2003	120
12 July 2003 to 9August 2003	70
14 June 2003 to 12 July 2003	20
17 May 2003 to 14 Jun 2003	65
19 April 2003 to 17 May 2003	45
22 March 2003 to 19 April 2003	5
22 February 2003 to 22 March 2003	30
25 January 2003 to 22 February 2003	40
28 December 2002 to 25 January 2003	5

Carers Allowance

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* claims and *(b)* successful claims for carers allowance were made in each of the last three years for which figures are available to (i) claimants under 65 years and (ii) claimants over 65 years. [173073]

Maria Eagle: The available information is in the table.

	1 December 2001 to 30 November 2002	*1 December 2002 to 31 May 2003*
Claims received		
65 and over	16,695	24,400
Under 65	136,545	68,690
Claims decided		
Successful with entitlement		
65 and over	11,725	22,570
Under 65	120,250	63,675
Successful In Payment		
65and over	840	1,390
Under 65	100,305	51,890

Notes:
Figures are rounded to the nearest 5.
Data on new claims are not currently available for August 2003 and November 2003.
Figures for the number of claims received refer to the number of people making claims and a person may have made more than one claim but they will only be counted once.
Source:
ICA Unit, 100 per cent. sample

Chagossians (Resettlement)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will meet delegates from West Sussex county council in order to discuss the resettlement of Chagossians in West Sussex. [165573]

Mr. Pond: My right hon. Friend has no plans to do so.

Chagossians arriving in the Great Britain and who are not subject to immigration control, have the same rights as anyone else to seek assistance from the social security system. Generally anyone claiming benefits has to establish a habitual residence in the UK.

Child Benefits/Support

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions under what powers the child element of jobseeker's allowance and income support will continue to be paid after 1 April 2004. [172892]

Mr. Pond: For families not yet migrated to tax credits, child and family allowances in income support continue to be paid under regulation 17(1)*(b)* and *(c)* of the Income Support (General) Regulations 1987 and child and family allowances in jobseeker's allowance continue to be paid under regulation 83*(b)* and *(c)* of the Jobseeker's Allowance Regulations 1996. The relevant primary powers are sections 124, 135 and 136 of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992 and sections 4, 12 and 13 of the Jobseekers Act 1995.

Subsequently, once tax credits have been awarded and put into payment, child and family allowances will be removed from income support and jobseeker's allowance under the provisions in The Social Security (Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit) (Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2003 S.I. 2003 No. 455.

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many parents have been found guilty of avoiding paying the right amount of child support in *(a)* Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* the North East and *(d)* the UK, in each year since 1997. [173245]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to my hon. Friend with the information requested.

Letter from Mr. Doug Smith to Mr. Stephen Hepburn, dated 24 May 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many parents have been found guilty of avoiding paying the rightful amount of child support in *(a)* Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* the North East and *(d)* the UK, in each year since 1997.

I do not have the information in precisely the form requested. I can however indicate the number of liability orders by the Child Support Agency in each year from 1997. Obtaining these orders is a pre-requisite for subsequent enforcement action leading ultimately to potential committal to prison. The figures are:

	Number
1996–97	1,125
1997–98	1,374
1998–99	2,033
1999–2000	2,523
2000–01	1,755
2001–02	1,427
2002–03	2,383
2003–04	3,885

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what action he will take to provide further support to single parents whose former partners are avoiding paying the right contribution to their child's upbringing. [173246]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to my hon. Friend with the information requested.

Letter form Mr. Doug Smith to Mr. Stephen Hepburn, dated 24 May 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what action he will take to provide further support to single parents whose former partners are avoiding paying their rightful contribution to their child's upbringing.

The Agency has taken a number of steps to improve its enforcement work. It has taken action to identify and examine barriers to effective enforcement, has benchmarked its services and simplified the process by which debt is referred for enforcement. Additional staff have been deployed in this area. The Agency's Business Plan for the current year identifies enforcement activity as one of its six key priorities.

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to introduce further measures to give the Child Support Agency power to take action against parents not paying the right amount of alimony. [173247]

Mr. Pond: None.

The Child Support Agency already has a wide range of powers.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his statement on CSA Performance, Departmental Report 2004, page 19, what his forecasts were for new scheme *(a)* cases with maintenance calculations, and *(b)* compliance; and what the performance was against those forecasts. [172954]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Mr. Doug Smith to Mr. Steve Webb, dated 24 May 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to his statement on CSA Performance, Departmental Report 2004, page 19, what his forecasts were for new scheme *(a)* cases with maintenance calculations, and *(b)* compliance; and what the performance was against those forecasts.

The Agency will be publishing its annual report for the year to 31 March 2004 in July. This will indicate the Agency's actual performance in the year against targets set by Ministers.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his statement on the CSA Delivery Strategy, Departmental Report 2004, page 18, on how many occasions *(a)* cases have stuck in the system, *(b)* cases have disappeared from caseworker screens and *(c)* telephone calls have been routed inappropriately. [172955]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Mr. Doug Smith to Mr. Steve Webb, dated 24 May 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to his statement on the CSA Delivery Strategy, Departmental Report 2004, page 18, on how many occasions *(a)* cases have stuck in the system, *(b)* cases have disappeared from caseworker screens and *(c)* telephone calls have been routed inappropriately.

I am unable to provide robust information in the form requested. Ministers have however made regular reports to Parliament on the operation of the new arrangements and these were placed in the library of the House of Commons on 16 July 2003, 18 November 2003, 12 February 2004, and 21 April 2004.

Civil Service Travel

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost to his Department of Civil Service travel expenses has been in each of the last seven years. [172919]

Maria Eagle: The available information is in the table. DWP was formed in June 2001 from the former Department of Social Security (DSS) and parts of the former Department for Education and Employment (DfEE). Travel expenditure information is not available for the former DfEE. Expenditure figures up to and including 2000–01 are for the former DSS only.

£

	Travel Expenditure
1997–98	26,443,081
1998–99	27,427,728
1999–2000	29,164,243
2000–01	30,621,828
2001–02	34,431,759
2002–03	30,813,140
2003–04	33,383,959

Source:
Former DSS and DWP payroll systems.

Computer File Formats

Mr. Allan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his Department's policy is in respect of the computer file formats used for the *(a)* distribution and *(b)* archiving of publicly available documents. [173362]

Jane Kennedy: The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) publishes material available on its website www.dwp.gov.uk in HTML (hyper text mark-up language) generated via "active server pages" (ASP) or Adobe Acrobat (PDF). The PDF format is mainly used for longer documents that members of the public might want to print out rather than view on screen. Images, where they are used, are provided in standard graphic file formats GIF and JPEG. Information about accessibility, to help users with visual impairments or other disabilities, is given at: www.dwp.gov.uk/accessibility/.

When leaflets, guides, forms and other documents are updated older versions are removed from the website so that members of the public get the most up-to-date information. Electronic copies of archived documents are available via e-mail on request from: www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/orderolditems/orderoldpubs.asp. These documents are provided in Adobe Acrobat (PDF) format.

Further information about the full range of material published by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) can be found in our publication scheme at: www.dwp.gov.uk/pub_scheme/.

Departmental Communications

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many staff were employed in the Department to work in the communications field, and what the total expenditure on communications for the Department was, broken down by *(a)* Government Information and Communication Service staff and *(b)* other staff, broken down by (i) press officers, (ii) special advisers and (iii) others, in (A) 1994–95, (B) 1996–97, (C) 1997–98 and (D) 2001–02. [168681]

Maria Eagle: The Department for Work and Pensions was formed in June 2001 from the former Department of Social Security and parts of the former Department for Education and Employment. Information on costs from 1994 to 2000–01 is not held centrally, and for the year 2001–02, is only available for the Department's Communications Directorate. The available information is in the table.

Total expenditure on DWP Communications Directorate staff for the Department for 2001–02

Total staff cost(£)	5,023,218
Of which	
Cost of press office staff (£)	816,725

Total of staff employed in DWP Communications Directorate broken down by (a) Government Information and Communication Service (GICS) staff and (b) other staff, broken down by (i) Press Officers (ii) special advisers and (ii) others in 2001–02

(i) GICS	[1]47
(ii) Other staff	154
Of which	
(iii) Press Officers (numbers)	18
(iv) Special Advisers (numbers)	Nil
(v) Others (numbers)	136

[1] Includes 21 Press Officers

Notes:
1. All costs exclude VAT.
2. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 1,000.
3. Advertising costs are total media costs excluding all production costs.
4. Information campaigns costing under £250,000 and the details of highly localised publicity activity by the Department's customer-facing businesses have generally not been included as a disproportionate cost would be incurred in compiling these figures. Non GIGS Press Officers are Regional Press Officers.
The total publicity expenditure column includes the advertising costs shown. Final expenditure April 2003 to March 2004 may differ from these figures depending on actual activity and billing dates.

The Department for Work and Pensions was formed in June 2001. I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 27 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 342W, detailing expenditure for 2001–02 and 2002–03. Information on total advertising and publicity costs by campaign for these years can be found in the Department's annual reports, copies of which are in the Library.

A more detailed breakdown, distinguishing between advertising and other publicity costs, could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Ethnic Monitoring

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what ethnic monitoring is carried out of staff in his Department including staff on short-term contracts. [175506]

Maria Eagle: The Department for Work and Pensions monitors ethnicity to assess the effectiveness of its policies and procedures in creating a diverse workforce that is representative of the communities that we serve. This includes those staff on fixed-term contracts of employment. We hold ethnicity data on 88 per cent. of the Department's workforce which enables us to obtain robust data for our monitoring activities.

The ethnic profile of our workforce compares favourably with that of the general population and in the labour market. This information is made available within the Department by region and by grade.

The Department collects a wide range of information about the human resources activity of staff and aims, as a minimum, to meet the mandatory requirements in respect of employment duties stipulated in the Race Relations Act 1976, as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

Monitoring is undertaken in relation to: job application rates; selection success rates; representation of different ethnic groups in the workforce; training application rates; promotion application and success rates; and performance and development appraisal mark distribution.

In addition we are developing systems to monitor disciplinary action, grievances and unsatisfactory work performance by ethnicity.

Incapacity Benefit

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of incapacity benefit claimants aged between 50 years and state pension age worked immediately prior to their claim in each year since 1997 *(a)* in the UK and *(b)* broken down by region; and if he will make a statement. [175283]

Maria Eagle: The information is in the table.

Proportion of those aged 50 to state pension age who were in employment prior to claiming incapacity benefits, broken down by region

Percentage

Region	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*
North East	52	46	42	50	56
North west	53	51	56	55	53
Yorkshire and the Humber	58	54	46	58	57
East Midlands	55	58	60	56	55
West Midlands	50	48	49	51	55
East of England	53	63	62	65	64
London	54	53	58	55	63
South East	43	39	46	44	45
South West	56	51	53	58	57
Wales	52	47	49	52	48
Scotland	54	49	56	55	58
All GB	53	51	53	55	55

Notes:

1. Includes incapacity benefit/severe disablement allowance payments and 'credits only' cases.
2. Figures include those previously in employment and self-employment.
3. Figures include those aged 50 and excludes women aged 60 and men aged 65.
4. Figures are for in-flows in year to April.

Source:

DWP administrative data (1 per cent. sample)

Jobcentre Plus

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps Jobcentre Plus is taking to match the skills development of the unemployed to employer demands in the workplace. [172631]

Jane Kennedy: Through initiatives like the New Deal and Ambition, Jobcentre Plus provides a range of help to people needing to improve their skills in order to find work and fill vacancies.

Employers have been involved from the start in the design of New Deal to ensure it meets business needs. New Deal is delivered by local partnerships, including training organisations and employers, and is tailored to meet the needs of local economies. Training is procured locally and linked to employer need.

The Ambition initiatives aim to help unemployed and disadvantaged people gain the right skills to meet employer needs in key sectors. The sectors targeted are those with skills shortages and employers are closely involved in the development and design of training.

Jobcentre Plus also works with key economic partners at local and regional level to ensure our activities meet with business and economic priorities for the area. Since October 2002, each English region has had in place a Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action (FRESAs). FRESAs aim to maintain and improve regional labour markets by co-ordinating a strategy for employment and skills in each region, and ensuring a more efficient and co-ordinated service.

The publication of the 2003 Skills Strategy, "21st Century Skills—Realising Our Potential", has increased the momentum for the skills agenda for those in and out of work. Jobcentre Plus will continue to work with partners at a national, regional and local level to ensure the ambitions of the skills strategy are developed in a way that makes a real difference to individuals and employers, ensuring that employers get employees with the skills they need for their business.

ME

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many ME sufferers appealed after their initial claims for disability living allowance were rejected in the last 12 months; and how many of these were *(a)* successful and *(b)* unsuccessful in their appeals. [171341]

Maria Eagle: This is a matter for Christina Townsend, Chief Executive of the Appeals Service. She will reply to my hon. Friend.

Letter from Christina Townsend to John Robertson, dated 24 May 2004:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question regarding the number of ME sufferers that appealed after their initial claims for disability living allowance were rejected in the last 12 months; and how many were successful or unsuccessful in their appeals.

The information is not available in the format requested.

I am sorry that I cannot be more helpful.

Leroy Keen

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will investigate why it took two years to conclude that Mr. Leroy Keen of Paignton had been overpaid by £119.55 in income support. [173431]

Mr. Pond *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* Details of benefit claims are confidential and I will write to the hon. Member.

This is in line with Part 2, paragraph 12 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

New Deal

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many young people in the East Riding of Yorkshire he estimates have gained sustained employment through the New Deal who would not otherwise have done so; [171789]

(2) what the cost of the New Deal in the East Riding of Yorkshire has been since its inception. [171790]

Jane Kennedy: The New Deal for Young People has been successful in helping 2,570 young people in the East Riding Local Authority area into work, 2,090 of which have gained sustained employment.

Information on how many of these young people would not have gained sustained employment without New Deal intervention is not available. However, research by the National Institute for Economic and Social Research (NIESR) found that long term unemployment would have been twice as high without New Deal for Young People and that a large number of young people left unemployment quicker than they would have done without New Deal.

Information on the cost of New Deal in the East Riding of Yorkshire is not available.

State Pension

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of the average wage the state pension is in the UK; and what the figure is for each member state of the European Union. [155467]

Mr. Pond: The average State Pension payment to all recently retired pensioners is 20 per cent. of average earnings.

The comparable figure is not available for EU member states because most EU countries have earnings related State Pensions schemes. The amount of State Pension will therefore vary according to the individual earnings during their working life.

Notes:
1. State Pension is the maximum rate of basic State Pension plus the average amount of additional pension in payment based on March 2003 data for recently retired pensioners (men 65, women 60).
2. Average earnings is the mean weekly earnings at April 2003 of £475.80.
3. The 20 per cent. figure has been rounded to the nearest percentage point.

Pension Credit

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Hull, North are eligible for pension credit; and what the take-up rate is. [174792]

Malcolm Wicks: The minimum income guarantee (MIG) was replaced by pension credit on 6 October 2003. Those who were receiving MIG immediately prior to that date were transferred automatically to pension credit. Information on the number of people who are eligible for pension credit is not available in respect of individual constituencies. However, we estimate that approximately 350,000 pensioner households in the Yorkshire and Humberside Government office region (rounded to the nearest 50,000) are eligible for pension credit. This estimate is based on data from the Family Resources Survey for 2001–02. A revised estimate, based on data from the Family Resources Survey for 2002–03, will be available early in June.

The number of recipients of MIG and pension credit in Hull, North in October 2003 and April 2004 respectively is shown in the table.

Minimum income guarantee and pension credit recipients, Hull, North, October 2003

	Number
Minimum income guarantee (3 October 2003)	
Households	3,425
Individuals	4,100
Pension credit (30 April 2004)	
Households	4,485
Individuals	5,565

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest five.
2. Figures for individuals include a small number of partners under age 60.

Vulnerable Customers (Cheque Payment)

Mr. Berry: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his written statement of 11 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 6–7WS, on vulnerable customers (payments by cheque), at what point the *(a)* Pension Service, *(b)* Jobcentre and *(c)* Disability Benefits Office will accept that a vulnerable customer's payment by cheque is late or lost; and whether a vulnerable customer, if they have not received any post on the day payment is due, will be able to contact their Pension Office and receive an emergency payment that day. [174245]

Mr. Pond: We will ensure that people get the money they are entitled to. Where a cheque payment does not arrive by the due payday, the customer should initially contact the office which normally pays their benefit or pension. Arrangements for replacement payments will vary depending upon the individual circumstances and needs of each customer.

Paying by cheque is a well-established method of payment that the Department has used successfully since 1968. We already have procedures in place for dealing with missing payments. We will ensure they continue to meet the needs of those customers paid by cheque.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 25 May 2004

ADVOCATE-GENERAL

Devolution

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Advocate General what devolution issues have been raised with her since 27 April. [174429]

The Advocate-General for Scotland: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave earlier today to the hon. Member for Vale of York (Miss McIntosh).

SCOTLAND

Energy Supplies

8. **Miss McIntosh:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement on the security of energy supplies in Scotland. [174435]

Mrs. McGuire: The Government are committed to maintaining the security and reliability of energy supplies in the UK.

Asylum Seekers

9. **Mr. Sarwar:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Scottish Executive and *(b)* Glasgow city council with regard to support for asylum seekers. [174436]

Mrs. McGuire: Scotland Office officials and I have regular contact with the Home Office, the Scottish Executive and also Glasgow city council regarding the support of asylum seekers and refugees in Scotland.

Ferry Subsidies

10. **Mr. Andrew Turner:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland when he last discussed with *(a)* representatives of the Scottish Executive and *(b)* ministerial colleagues subsidies to ferry services. [174437]

Mrs. McGuire: Regular discussions are undertaken on a wide range of issues with the Scottish Executive and ministerial colleagues.

Postal Services

12. **Andrew Selous:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many Post Offices have closed in Scotland over the last three years. [174439]

Mrs. McGuire: I understand from Post Office Ltd. that closure numbers in Scotland, over the last three years for which data are available, are:

	Number
Year ending March 2001	63
Year ending March 2002	26
Year ending March 2003	20

Economic Performance

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement on the performance of the Scottish economy. [174438]

Mr. Darling: The recent performance of the Scottish economy offers grounds for encouragement. The labour market continues to improve, with employment at its highest level since records began in 1992[1] and unemployment around its lowest level since the 1970s. Interest rates and inflation are historically low. The Scottish Executive's GDP index, recently revised to better reflect real changes in the economy, shows that growth in Scotland has closely matched that of the UK in recent years. Business surveys are pointing to a continued strengthening of business activity in Scotland in both services and manufacturing and independent forecasters predict that growth will continue to be above-trend in 2004 and 2005. But there is no room for complacency. The Government and Scottish Executive recognise that Scotland's growth has been lower over the long-term than the UK average. They have each taken steps to promote productivity and build a more enterprising, innovative and highly skilled economy.

[1] Data prior to 1992 are not yet consistent with this series, though are scheduled to be available in revised form later this year.

Electoral Systems

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland when he expects the independent commission on electoral systems in Scotland *(a)* to begin and *(b)* to report on its work. [174426]

Mr. Darling: I am pleased to announce that Professor Sir John Arbuthnott has agreed to be chairman of the Commission on Boundary Differences and Voting Systems. Sir John was Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Strathclyde for nine years until 2000, and is currently chairman of the Greater Glasgow NHS Board. Membership of the Commission will be announced shortly.

The Commission will start work as soon as possible, and will be expected to complete its work in around 18 months.

Public Expenditure

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement on levels of public spending per capita in Scotland. [174432]

Mrs. McGuire: The Treasury published "Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses (PESA) 2004" on 19 April, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House. Tables 8.2 and 8.4 detail total identifiable public expenditure per head for each country and region of the UK.

Regional Air Services

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland when he last met the Scottish Executive to discuss the provision of public service obligations on regional air services. [174431]

Mr. Darling: I discuss a wide range of issues with Scottish Executive Ministers. Following on from the White Paper, discussions between the Scottish Executive and the Department for Transport are on-going and have contributed to a consultation paper on interpreting the criteria required for imposing PSOs. This will be published shortly.

Transport

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what recent representations he has received regarding transport issues in Scotland. [174433]

Mr. Darling: I receive representations on a wide range of Scottish issues.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Draft Bills

34. **Hugh Bayley:** To ask the Leader of the House how many Bills have been introduced as draft Bills. [175293]

Mr. Woolas: In the current Session, six draft Bills have been published so far.

Figures for draft Bills for previous Sessions since 1997 are as follows:

	Draft bills	*Sets of draft clauses*
1997–98	3	
1998–99	6	
1999–2000	6	
2000–01	2	
2001–02	6	
2002–03	9	1

Visitors

35. **Mr. Pike:** To ask the Leader of the House what proposals he is putting to the Select Committee on the Modernisation of the House of Commons to help schools outside of London and the South East of England with the costs of parliamentary visits. [175294]

Mr. Woolas: My right hon. Friend's view is that, while assistance with the cost of school visits is an option that the House of Commons Commission might wish to consider, the priority is to make a substantial improvement to the learning resources we provide via the parliamentary website. We have some 7,500 educational visitors a year—a figure which I hope we can increase significantly and a further 36,000 schoolchildren visit on constituency tours; but it will always be a minority of schoolchildren who are able to visit in person.

In contrast to the number of visitors to Parliament, during the 2002–03 financial year the Parliament website had 14.6 million hits. This shows that the number of people who might make use of the website is limitless.

Participation (Debates)

36. **Julie Morgan:** To ask the Leader of the House what plans he has to make proposals to enable more hon. Members to participate in debates. [175295]

Mr. Woolas: In its response to the Procedure Committee's report on Procedures for Debates, Private Members' Bills and the Powers of the Speaker (published last week in the Committee's Second Special Report of this Session, HC 610), the Government has indicated that it supports the Committee's recommendation that, on an experimental basis, there should be an opportunity for an hour, or half-hour, of shorter Back Bench speeches before the wind-up speeches on occasions when the Speaker thinks it appropriate. My right hon. Friend the Leader of the House will table a motion that allows the House to decide, when it debates the Committee's report, whether this experiment should go forward.

Sitting Hours

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Leader of the House what recent representations he has received on the working hours of the House of Commons. [175288]

Mr. Hain: In addition to the representations I described to the House on 27 April, *Official Report, 27 April 2004, column 749*, Members continue to raise this matter with me, from time to time—and, of course, I have read with interest the results of the Procedure Committee's Sitting Hours Questionnaire which is to be considered by the Modernisation Committee.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Supreme Court

21. **Mr. George Osborne:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what progress the Secretary of State has made in identifying a site for the proposed Supreme Court. [175301]

Mr. Leslie: Good progress is being made in evaluating a shortlist of potential locations for a new Supreme Court, but at this stage, in order to protect the procurement interests of the taxpayer, it would be unwise to disclose publicly which sites are under consideration.

Legal Services

22. **Dr. Cable:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on proposals for reform of the legal professions. [175302]

Mr. Lammy: The Government have commissioned an independent review of the regulatory framework for legal services, aimed at promoting transparency and

competition in the legal services sector. Sir David Clementi is due to present his report by the end of this year.

Courthouse (Colchester)

23. **Bob Russell:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if the Lord Chancellor will attend the official start of building of the new courthouse in Colchester. [175303]

Mr. Leslie: A new magistrates' courthouse in Colchester is planned to open in 2008. Any decisions on who might attend the start of building works will be made nearer the time, which we expect to be mid 2006.

Justices of the Peace

24. **Mr. Llwyd**: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary Department of Constitutional Affairs how many justices of the peace there are in England and Wales; and what the corresponding figure was for 1990. [175305]

Mr. Leslie: Our records show that, at the beginning of this financial year, there were 28,705 Justices of the Peace in England and Wales. In 1990, there were 28,677 Justices of the Peace in post.

Legal Aid

25. **Hugh Bayley**: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary of State Department for Constitutional Affairs how much was spent on legal aid for immigration and nationality cases in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* 2003–04. [175306]

Mr. Lammy: Immigration and nationality legal help cases cost £35 million in 1997–98 and £203 million in 2003–04. The figure for 2003–04 is still subject to end of year adjustment.

26. **Mr. Jim Cunningham**: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State Department for Constitutional Affairs how many people have received legal aid in Greater London in the last seven years; and what the criteria are for eligibility for legal aid. [175307]

Mr. Lammy: It is estimated that the number of acts of assistance, in thousands, in the London region, over the last seven years, was as follows:

	Number
1997–1998	638
1998–1999	614
1999–2000	622
2000–2001	578
2001–2002	507
2002–2003	486
2002–2004	462

Those figures are for acts of assistance and are indicative though not necessarily the same as the number of people receiving legal aid.

Since April 2000 civil cases receive funding on the basis of meeting the financial means and legal merits criteria contained in the Legal Services Commission's Funding Code.

Representation is granted in criminal cases where the court considers it is in the interests of justice. Generally speaking that is where the offence is so serious that the accused could go to prison.

29. **Vera Baird**: To ask the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on the availability of legal aid in domestic violence cases. [175310]

Mr. Lammy: Domestic violence proceedings are a priority area for legal aid funding. The Legal Services Commission's Funding Code criteria for funding domestic violence cases are wider than for most other family and non-family areas. At present those who need financial assistance are able to obtain legal aid to go to court.

Freedom of Information Act

Simon Hughes: To ask the Parliamentary under Secretary of State Department for Constitutional Affairs by what date all the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 will be in force; and if he will make a statement. [175308]

Mr. Lammy: The Act will be fully implemented by January 2005, 11 months before the deadline set out in the Act itself.

House of Lords Reform

28. **Tony Wright**: To ask the Parliamentary under Secretary of State Department for Constitutional Affairs when he expects to bring forward further proposals to reform the second Chamber. [175309]

Mr. Leslie: The Government are determined to proceed with further reform of the House of Lords and intends to develop proposals for its party manifesto.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Bribery

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Solicitor-General pursuant to her answer of 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1W, which were the other two countries referred to in her answer of 2 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 613W, to the hon. Member for Ceredigion (Mr. Thomas). [174241]

The Solicitor-General: The originating countries of these requests were Bosnia and Norway.

Criminal Cases Review (Angela Cannings Judgment)

Vera Baird: To ask the Solicitor-General what arrangements for expedition have been made with the Criminal Cases Review Commission in respect of convictions reviewed following the Angela Cannings case and forwarded to it with a view to a reference to the court of appeal. [172611]

The Solicitor-General: The Attorney-General and the Chairman of the Criminal Cases Review Commission met at an early stage in the review of infant homicide convictions following the Angela Cannings appeal to

discuss the expedition of cases referred to the CCRC. The CCRC has agreed to expedite any cases referred to it as part of the review process.

In those cases where the convicted person is notified that there may be features in the case which warrant further consideration by the Court of Appeal or CCRC a copy of the letter is sent to each of the above bodies so that arrangement can be made for an early consideration of the case. The letter also offers to speed the process of referral by bringing the case to the attention of the CCRC in appropriate cases by forwarding the case papers where the convicted offender is in agreement to that.

Vera Baird: To ask the Solicitor-General how many defendants whose cases are yet to be reviewed following the Angela Cannings case are serving custodial sentences. [172612]

The Solicitor-General: As at 19 May 2004, 176 cases remain to be reviewed. Of those, 16 are shown to be cases where the offender is still serving a custodial sentence, according to Home Office lists. Those cases are being accorded the highest priority in the review process.

Vera Baird: To ask the Solicitor-General when she expects the review process following the Angela Cannings case to be completed. [172616]

The Solicitor-General: I refer the hon. and learned Member to the Attorney-General's statement on 5 May 2004.

Illegal Arms Trade (Nuclear Weapons)

Harry Cohen: To ask the Solicitor-General what progress has been made towards the prosecution of individuals and companies for the offence of assisting or inducing weapons-related acts overseas, in particular for developing, producing or participating in the development or production of a nuclear weapon; and if she will make a statement. [174626]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

Investigation and prosecution of offences involving assisting or inducing weapons-related acts overseas is the responsibility of HM Customs and Excise. However, Customs cannot comment on whether a matter is under current investigation; Exemption 4 (Law enforcement and legal proceedings) of the Open Government Code applies.

Customs have an important role in countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. They work closely with other Government Departments and agencies, in the UK and overseas, to ensure that effective action is taken against proliferators.

Any prosecution for such offences require the consent of the Attorney-General.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Energy Efficiency

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with local authorities on improving energy efficiency measures pursuant to the Sustainable Energy Act 2003. [173048]

Mr. Morley: No discussions have taken place with local authorities pursuant to the Sustainable Energy Act 2003.

"Energy Efficiency The Government's Plan for Action", published in April 2004, sets out the steps the Government intend to take at the local level. (http://www.official-documents.co.uk/document/cm61/6168/6168.pdf)

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reason the target for energy efficiency savings to 2010 from households has been lowered in the energy efficiency saving plan. [171778]

Mr. Morley: In "Energy Efficiency: The Government's Plan for Action" the Government set out their aim to deliver savings in households of 4.2 million tonnes of carbon per annum by 2010. The figure of 5 million tonnes of carbon in the Energy White Paper was an initial indication of what might be delivered. This projection has been revised as the Government have obtained more up-to-date information and completed more detailed analysis on the cost-effectiveness of energy efficiency policies and measures in this sector. The change in carbon savings in households reflects the fact that:

- growth in demand for insulation may be slower than originally envisaged;
- 'comfort taking' (after the installation of measures) may be higher in 2010 than previously thought, and
- future savings from more efficient lighting are expected come more from lower wattage lamps in lower-use fittings.

Latest revisions of projected carbon savings from other sectors more than offset this recalculation. The Action Plan sets out how the Government aim to cut carbon emissions by 12 million tonnes of carbon per annum by 2010 through energy efficiency over the next six years. This is 20 per cent. more than the 10 million tonnes of carbon per annum by 2010 we said we expected to achieve in the Energy White Paper a year ago.

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in Manchester have benefited from the Home Energy Efficiency and Warm Front Schemes. [172888]

Mr. Morley: The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme is now marketed as Warm Front. Between the launch of the scheme in June 2000 and the end of March 2004, approximately 10,540 households in Manchester received assistance from the scheme. For each constituency in Manchester, the approximate breakdown of households assisted was:

Constituency	*Number*
Manchester, Blackley	3,400
Manchester, Central	2,900
Manchester, Gorton	3,180
Manchester, Withington	1,060

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in Blackpool, South have benefited from the Home Energy Efficiency and Warm Front Schemes. [173069]

Mr. Morley: The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme is now marketed as Warm Front. Between the launch of the scheme in June 2000 and the end of March 2004, approximately 5,900 households in Blackpool, South received assistance from the scheme.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in the constituency of Huntingdon have benefited from the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme. [172639]

Mr. Morley: The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme is now marketed as Warm Front. Between the launch of the scheme in June 2000 and the end of March 2004, approximately 550 households in Huntingdon received assistance from the Scheme.

Bovine TB

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what predictive modelling has been applied to the possible application of the Bovigam gamma interferon test to control bovine TB under different bovine TB scenarios in the UK, using Bovigam's known levels of specificity and sensitivity. [172564]

Mr. Bradshaw: Since 1997, DEFRA has commissioned two studies to evaluate the costs and benefits of using the Bovigam gamma interferon test to control bovine TB under different bovine TB scenarios in Great Britain. In carrying out the two economic assessments, predictive modelling was used to determine the likely outcomes under different bovine TB scenarios. The models used values for the specificity and sensitivity of the gamma interferon test published in the scientific literature from overseas field trials.

Project SE3018 investigated whether it would be cost-effective to use the gamma interferon test in herds with multiple tuberculin reactor animals. As the gamma interferon test is considered more sensitive than the skin test, its use in infected herds could improve the detection of tuberculous cattle. This would hasten the elimination of infection from herds and reduce the spread of infection among herds. However, this benefit has to be weighed against the extra cost that would result from the unnecessary slaughter of more non-tuberculous cattle due to the lower specificity of the gamma interferon test.

Project TD0604 investigated whether it would be cost-effective to use the gamma interferon test to resolve the tuberculosis status of herds in which only inconclusive reactor animals are detected at a routine herd test.

Final reports on these projects were submitted to Defra in April 2002 and November 1998, respectively.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what protocol her Department is using to examine post mortem cattle that are slaughtered in the Bovigam gamma interferon trial; and whether the protocol is the same as those used in other countries. [172566]

Mr. Bradshaw: All animals (including those slaughtered from herds included in the gamma interferon (g-IFN) field trial) undergo standard post-mortem inspection in the slaughterhouse or other suitable facility, by Meat Hygiene Service and/or State Veterinary Service officials, depending upon local arrangements.

I am unaware of the particular post-mortem protocols applied in other countries, but assume standard meat inspections will be carried out on any g-IFN positive animals slaughtered as part of TB control programmes.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what response her Department made to the proposal of the Independent Scientific Group on Cattle TB to undertake a field trial of the Bovigam gamma-interferon test. [172567]

Mr. Bradshaw: We sympathise with the desire of the Independent Scientific Group on Cattle TB (ISG) to maximise the science return of the gamma-interferon field pilot. However, implementing the ISG's proposals would present logistical difficulties, as well as raising complicated ethical and legal issues around identifying disease but not informing the herd owner, and taking samples from animals for experimental purposes rather than for the diagnosis of disease. It would also call for considerable additional resource.

Cattle

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what cost there will be to farmers from the cattle passports scheme; and if she will make a statement. [173679]

Alun Michael: The direct cost of running the cattle tracing system in Great Britain will be in the region of £23 million in 2005–6.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on *(a)* the effectiveness of the British Cattle Movement Service and *(b)* delays in processing records from farmers. [173680]

Alun Michael: The British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS) operates against published service targets and reports against these both to the Bovine Industry Group (made up of farmers' representatives and others in the cattle business) and to the BCMS Management Board (made up of Government Stakeholders).

In the first quarter of this year BCMS issued 100 per cent. of passports followingreceipt of a valid and complete application within five working days.

Recently, the BCMS issued its first transaction statement to keepers that brought in over 68,000 returns allowing over 500,000 queries raised by the BCMS to be resolved.

Climate Change Levy

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the renegotiation of agreed energy saving

targets contained in the climate change levy; and what assessment she has made of the effects on the future competitiveness of UK salt manufacturers. [172941]

Mr. Morley: The Climate Change Agreements are agreements with energy intensive industry through which participants pay a reduced rate of climate change levy in return for meeting challenging energy efficiency targets between 2002 and 2010. The agreements require that DEFRA review the sector targets in both 2004 and 2008 to ensure that all future milestone targets continue to represent the potential for cost effective energy savings, taking account of any changes in technical or market circumstances.

Targets are to be renegotiated with DEFRA at sector level and each sector association is then responsible for proposing how that sector target variation will be applied to underlying agreements. Negotiations with sector associations are now under way. There has been no assessment of the effects on UK salt manufacturers. Sector associations are able to put forward any information regarding changes to market circumstances in the course of these negotiations, and to take into account issues of competitiveness in proposing the variations to be made to underlying targets.

Coastal Erosion

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had in the last six months with *(a)* the National Farmers Union, *(b)* the Country Land and Business Association and *(c)* the Tenant Farmers' Association on coastal erosion and coastal protection. [163750]

Margaret Beckett: None.

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had in the last six months with *(a)* English Heritage, *(b)* the National Trust and *(c)* the Council for the Care of Churches on the threat to historic buildings from coastal erosion. [163751]

Margaret Beckett: None.

Common Agricultural Policy

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to ensure that the new schemes set up under Common Agricultural Policy reform will be simpler to administer; and if she will make a statement. [173692]

Alun Michael: Under the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, which the Secretary of State announced on 6 June 2003, some 10 direct support schemes will cease and decoupled payment to farmers will be made under one integrated Single Payment Scheme. This is a significant simplification for farmers and administrators.At the same time, the Rural Payments Agency is implementing a modernisation of its working practices, including replacement of IT systems as part of a co-ordinated Change Programme. This will allow significant benefits to farmers and to the taxpayers as part of a simpler process for handling, validating and paying customers and in streamlining application procedures.

Dredging (Essex)

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much sediment has been dredged as a result of licences issued for *(a)* foreshore dredging and *(b)* estuary dredging from the Essex coast and estuaries in each of the last 30 years. [175022]

Mr. Jamieson: This information is not available centrally.

Emissions

Jane Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received on behalf of the UK motor industry regarding the energy costs of Government policy on reducing carbon dioxide emissions. [173806]

Mr. Morley: Responses to the 2002 Energy White Paper consultation were received from a broad range of transport sector stakeholders, including vehicle manufacturers and trade associations covering most modes of transport.

More recently, the UK motor industry have been constructively involved in consultation on the National Allocation Plan and in regular contact with the Department throughout the implementation of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme.

Jane Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate her Department has made of greenhouse gas emissions from aviation in *(a)* 2008, *(b)* 2012, *(c)* 2020, *(d)* 2030 and *(e)* 2050, assuming no fiscal or emissions policy changes; and what proportion of total UK greenhouse gas emissions it is estimated that these figures would represent. [173807]

Mr. Morley: The following table shows carbon dioxide from aviation for the years 2010 to 2050 as million tonnes carbon per year (MtC/yr) and as a percentage of UK emissions.

Table 1

	MtC/yr	*Percentage*
2010	11	7.5
2020	15	11.5
2030	17.5	15
2050	17.5	21.5

The entries in the table are consistent with the White Paper, "The Future of Air Transport", published in December 2003. They are rounded to the nearest 0.5 MtC/yr and 0.5 per cent. The percentage is expressed relative to the sum of *(i)* UK emissions projected to meet a 60 per cent. reduction in UK carbon dioxide emissions as described in the Energy White Paper published in February 2003 (which includes domestic aviation emissions), and *(ii)* emissions from international aviation associated with departures from UK airports. Aviation emissions are projected to stop rising between 2030 and 2050 due to fuel efficiency improvements anticipated by the Advisory Council for Aeronautical Research in Europe (ACARE) and the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

The projections do not make assumptions about fiscal or emissions policy changes. Data are not available for the years 2008 and 2012.

The total effect of aviation on greenhouse gas emissions is likely to be greater than values projected for CO_2 only, mainly because the majority of emissions take place at altitude, which could increase the impact of aviation emissions by 2.5 times the impact of CO_2 alone. This radiative forcing factor is subject to uncertainty and could be between two and four times. Taking this into account yields the following estimates for aviation as a proportion of total greenhouse gas emissions:

Table 2

	MtCequiv/yr	*Percentage*
2010	27	14.5
2020	37.5	21
2030	44.5	26
2050	43.5	32.5

The figures in the second table are expressed in million tonnes of carbon equivalent per year and are rounded as before. The percentage is expressed in terms of total UK greenhouse gas emissions to 2050 assuming CO_2 meets the Energy White Paper target plus aviation CO_2 emissions from Table 2 multiplied by 2.5.

Environmental Liability Directive

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the steps necessary to comply with the EU Environmental Liability Directive. [174765]

Alun Michael: The directive is required to be implemented by May 2007. It will be necessary to transpose its requirements into UK law, and appropriate administrative and enforcement measures put in place. As part of this process, the Department will consult with stakeholders to assist identification of the critical issues and to ensure that they have an opportunity to influence decisions that will affect them.

Farming

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the farm income levels for farmers in Cambridgeshire in the last five years. [170854]

Alun Michael: Net farm income for farms in Cambridgeshire, the EU East Region and for England over the last five years are show in the table below.

The fall in incomes for 2002/03 in Cambridgeshire is a reflection of the high proportion of output accounted for by the potato crop on farms in that county compared to the East region in general. In 2002/03 the price of potatoes was low.

Net Farm Income

	1998–99	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Cambridgeshire	29,964	17,207	24,827	25,758	13,794
EU East Region	13,190	9,604	11,367	11,997	16,894
England	10,359	7,981	9,886	13,558	16,435

Source:
Farm Business Survey

Net farm income is the return to the principal farmer and spouse for their manual and managerial labour and to the tenant-type capital of the business.

Mr. Blizzard: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research she has commissioned to examine alternatives to the use of plastic sheeting used to cover fields and crops in farm production. [174469]

Alun Michael: A DEFRA-funded research project is under way to examine the feasibility of using innovative types of physical barriers to assist in crop protection against insect pests. If successful this research will allow for a reduction in the use of plastic mulches and sheeting in vegetable crop production.

An exercise has also been recently commissioned to look at types of polythene crop covers and mulches used in horticultural production. This will examine the scope for re-use or replacement with sustainable alternatives such as paper, starch or cellulose, which offer easier routes for disposal.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much was given in farm subsidies to each region of the United Kingdom in each of the last 10 years. [166677]

Alun Michael: The figures given below are based on the European Agriculture Guidance & Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) financial years, i.e. 16 October to 15 October. Earlier figures are not available.

£

Region	*EAGGF 2000*	*EAGGF 2001*	*EAGGF 2002*	*EAGGF 2003*
North East	40,050,129.43	37,370,886.64	35,483,680.86	64,980,655.45
North West	92,344,812.66	87,942,065.88	82,485,021.47	64,408,879.73
Yorkshire and Humberside	141,359,755.7 0	132,426,384.6 8	121,302,982.7 4	156,415,335.2 3
East Midlands	76,726,571.39	73,270,305.99	70,939,947.40	201,269,620.0 3
West Midlands	144,171,286.3 5	136,276,269.0 4	126,245,295.9 3	118,328,138.8 0
East of England	295,741,837.7 7	322,832,075.2 6	156,649,435.5 5	247,015,083.5 7
London	3,576,189.62	3,475,194.34	2,045,673.95	2,933,818.91
South East	117,465,773.7 4	110,603,194.3 4	98,589,082.77	163,282,273.0 2
South West	466,686,008.3 2	447,496,249.9 4	127,052,633.5 1	204,787,183.3 1

North East

The increased expenditure in EAGGF year 2003 was mainly due to the Cereals, Suckler Cow and Beef Special Premium schemes.

North West

The downturn of expenditure in EAGGF year 2003 relates to the Cereals and Set Aside food schemes.

Yorkshire and The Humber

The upturn in costs for EAGGF year 2003 was mainly in Cereals.

East Midlands

The sizeable increase in EAGGF year 2003 occurred in the Cereals, Oilseeds, Proteins, Set Aside Food and Slaughter Premium schemes.

East of England

For EAGGF year 2003 the increase is in the Cereals scheme.

South East

The increased expenditure in EAGGF year 2003 is in the Cereals, Oilseeds, Proteins and Set Aside Food schemes.

South West

In the EAGGF year 2002 the decrease in expenditure was mainly in Cereals, Oilseeds, Proteins, Set Aside Food, Suckler Cow and Beef Special Premium schemes.

In the EAGGF year 2003 there are increases in Cereals, Set Aside Food,

Suckler Cow, Beef Special Premium and Slaughter Premium schemes.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the rate of take-up of training of farmers at entry level under the modulation scheme. [173877]

Alun Michael: The pilot Entry Level Scheme is an agri-environment scheme that provides payment for good land management. The scheme is being piloted in four areas in England and has proved popular with farmers with a total of 271 agreements that started in August 2003. The Government has announced its intention to roll out the Entry Level Environmental Stewardship Scheme across England, as part of the England Rural Development Programme, using funding generated through modulation.

There is a separate Vocational Training Scheme, which is also part of the England Rural Development Programme. Under current ED rules, it does not involve modulation funding. Under that scheme, DEFRA has funded over 12,500 farmers to undertake training courses, involving over 30,000 training days, up to 31 March 2004. For the whole of the period of the programme (to the end of 2006), DEFRA has so far committed funding to over 7,500 courses, covering 73,000 training days, for participants in the farming and forestry sectors.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what initial consideration the Government are giving to agricultural support and subsidies for farmers beyond 2012; and if she will make a statement. [174081]

Alun Michael: The UK played a pivotal role in securing agreement to major reforms to the EU's Common Agricultural Policy over the past year, which will help farmers focus their production on market demand, reduce environmental damage and reduce the damaging impact of EU subsidies on developing countries.

Over the longer term we want to see this progress towards a sustainable subsidy system completed in line with the objectives set out in our Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy. That means addressing remaining barriers to a market driven industry, such as those that still exist in the dairy sector, seeing a greater proportion of expenditure directed towards environmental and rural development measures, which provide real public benefits, and, at an international level, reducing further the damaging impact of trade-distorting agricultural subsidies, through the World Trade Organisation's Doha Development Agenda.

We also want to see CAP expenditure contained within limits that are consistent with our objectives for controlled EU expenditure as a whole.

David Maclean: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farms in Cumbria will be classified as being in a severely disadvantaged area when the single farm payment is introduced. [169076]

Alun Michael: It is not possible to give a precise answer at the present time as entitlements to subsidy under the new single payment scheme will be allocated on the basis of claims made by farmers in 2005. However based on Integrated Administration and Control System scheme applications in 2003, the latest information currently available, 40 per cent. of holdings registered for IACS in Cumbria, 1,705 out of 4,235 farmers, have the majority of their land within the severely disadvantaged area.

David Maclean: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what she estimates the difference in average payment in Cumbria would be if the lower rate of subsidy for land currently classed as a severely disadvantaged area (SDA) were applied only to those farms currently in the hill farm allowance scheme instead of the whole SDA. [169094]

Alun Michael: It is not possible to give definitive answers at the present time as entitlements under the new single payment scheme will be allocated on the basis of claims made by farmers in 2005. However from previous claim data, the majority of land claimed in the severely disadvantaged area in Cumbria, also receive hill farm allowance payment.

David Maclean: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of livestock in Cumbria will be classed as being in a severely disadvantaged area from 2005. [169100]

Alun Michael: The proportion of livestock in a severely disadvantaged area in Cumbria in 2005 will depend upon decisions made by farmers in that year. For single payment scheme purposes, the Department will not seek to class animals as being in a particular area in 2005 as that is not relevant to the number or value of entitlements that farmers are allocated. It will be

necessary to determine the value of payments made to farmers under existing CAP livestock schemes in the 2000–02 reference period. But, the allocation of this 'historical' element to entitlements held by farmers in one region or another will not affect the total value of subsidy that those farmers receive.

Fertilisers

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what plans she has to make the regulations for *(a)* the manufacture and *(b)* the supply of ammonium nitrate fertiliser more stringent; [172742]

(2) what measures her Department and its predecessors have taken to control the manufacture, storage and use of ammonium nitrate fertiliser; [172745]

(3) how many tonnes of ammonium nitrate fertiliser was manufactured in the United Kingdom in each year since 2000. [172747]

Alun Michael: The Government have taken a number of measures to control the manufacture, storage and use of Ammonium Nitrate fertiliser in the general climate of heightened security. We need to balance the risks of potential misuse associated with AN against its clear and proven benefits in supporting food output in this country.

The Government have been working with the fertiliser industry to improve controls in the storage and supply chain of AN. We have endorsed industry guidelines which advise producers and sellers of AN fertiliser to:

sell only to known, bone fide customers, in particular those who have a credit account;

refrain from making cash sales;

ask questions to potential buyers of AN fertiliser to establish their knowledge of agriculture;

in the case of suspicious inquiries, to record and notify the police of the purchaser's name and address (verified by documentary proof such as details from a driving licence) and full details of the inquirer's vehicle, including the registration number.

We are continuing our dialogue with industry and have asked them to produce a code of practice to encourage direct deliveries from manufacturers to farmers to shorten supply chains and ensure better traceability. We have also endorsed industry guidance, produced in collaboration with farmers unions and the police, on "Security of Fertiliser Storage on Farm".

To supplement the voluntary measures, DEFRA has introduced regulations to control the supply of both home produced and imported AN. The regulations require AN fertiliser, with a high nitrogen content, including mixtures, to have satisfied a Detonation Resistance Test and all sellers have to maintain records of sales.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has issued a self-help checklist to all those known to be handling or storing significant quantities of AN. The checklist has been distributed widely. It is aimed at spreading good practice and offering HSE as a source of further advice. Additionally, HSE has lowered the notification threshold under the Notification of Installations Handling Hazardous Substances Regulations 1982 from 500 to 150 tonnes and widened the range of products to be included in the notifications.

The regulations governing the manufacture and supply of AN fertilisers are kept under continuous review and further measures will be taken if necessary.

There are only two companies manufacturing AN fertiliser in the UK. It would not be appropriate to release production figures as it would enable each company to identify the manufacturing output of their competitor and would therefore breach commercial confidentiality.

Landfill Tax

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the revenue from landfill tax as a result of the diversion of catering waste from pig swill to landfill since the ban on swill feed was implemented. [172684]

Mr. Morley: No estimates have been made of the revenue from landfill tax resulting from the diversion of catering waste from pig swill to landfill.

Water Quality Standards

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment the Environment Agency has made of the impact on water quality in Aylesbury of the draft Milton Keynes and South Midlands sub-regional strategy. [172161]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency is working with Thames Water to ensure that water quality standards are maintained in Aylesbury in the light of development planned in the draft Milton Keynes and South Midlands sub-regional strategy.

Orchards

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department has taken *(a)* to protect orchards and *(b)* to ensure that fruit varieties do not become extinct. [173316]

Alun Michael: The conservation of traditional orchards is funded through the Countryside Stewardship Scheme and fruit varieties are protected in the National Fruit Collection.

Parliamentary Answers

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make it her policy not to despatch one page parliamentary answers in large heavy-duty envelopes. [174766]

Alun Michael: I was not aware that officials were despatching one page parliamentary answers in large heavy duty envelopes. I have today asked officials to ensure that the hon. Members one page parliamentary answers are placed in an appropriately sized envelope.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to her answer of 19 April, *Official Report*, column 152W, on secondees from outside organisations working in her

Department, in which Answers to Parliamentary Questions *(a)* Joanna Enright of Ashursts and *(b)* Nader Bahri of Powergen were involved in the drafting process. [174087]

Alun Michael: The Department has been careful not to involve either Joanna Enright or Dr Nader Bahri in the preparation of PQ answers where there is the potential for a conflict of interest.

Pesticides

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on what date she expects to make her announcement of pesticide buffer zones. [174764]

Alun Michael: Officials have reported to Ministers and the evidence and the implications of any decision are currently being considered. Our priority is to ensure that the right decision is made and I will make a statement as soon as possible.

PFI Projects

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what role her Department has played in ensuring that private finance initiative projects create the minimum of environmental damage; [173113]

(2) what assessment her Department has made of *(a)* the (i) sustainability and (ii) environmental impacts of private finance initiative (PFI) projects and *(b)* the effectiveness of the PFI process in delivering environmentally sustainable projects; [173114]

(3) what role her Department *(a)* has and *(b)* plans to take to make the private finance initiative process more accountable and transparent in terms of environmental sustainability; [173115]

(4) what action her Department has taken to ensure other Government Departments deliver sustainability within private finance initiative projects. [173116]

Mr. Morley: In line with the Government's overarching commitment, Departments need to consider all aspects of sustainable development when entering into new PFI/PPP contracts. By taking a long term view, PFI/PPPs require an assessment of whole life costs and can promote a more efficient use of resources.

In July 2002, the Department together with ODPM, OGC and DfT jointly issued a guidance note, Green Public Private Partnerships, on how to include environmental considerations within PFI and PPP projects. This added to guidance on PFI projects issued by the Treasury and supports commitments being developed under the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate.

The biodiversity and energy sections of the Framework, published in August 2003 and February 2004 respectively, commit all Government Departments to include clauses relating to sustainable development issues in relevant contracts, including PPPs and PFIs. It is anticipated that future sections of the framework on waste, estates management and construction, and procurement will include similar provisions. The Framework will be reviewed in 2004–05 and further consideration will be given to how best Departments can take account of sustainable development in future PPPs/PFIs contracts. The Department's officials are working closely with officials from OGC in order to ensure that the Framework is fully coordinated with OGC's Achieving Excellence construction procurement guidance, in particular with Achieving Excellence Guide 11: Sustainability, which is currently under development.

Furthermore, from 1 April 2004 Departments must now explicitly identify any significant environmental and social costs and benefits, as well as economic costs and benefits when carrying out a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA). This will cover RIAs carried out on new PFI/PPP projects.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the contracts awarded to W.S. Atkins by *(a)* her Department, *(b)* its agencies and *(c)* its non-departmental public bodies since June 2001, broken down by (i) value of the contract and (ii) nature of the work. [173117]

Alun Michael: Over the three financial years 2001/02; 2002/03 and 2003/04 core-Defra spent £6,679,742 with W.S. Atkins on facilities management, technical and professional services. Information on the nature of individual contracts cannot be provided as it is not held centrally. The Department is in the process of compiling a central list for the future but this will take some time to complete.

Information on the value and nature of individual contracts awarded to W.S. Atkins by the Department's agencies and non-departmental public bodies is not held centrally and can only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Product Recalls

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with EU Ministers on compulsory insurance for product recall costs; and if she will make a statement. [173678]

Alun Michael: The decision to recall a product is usually taken by individual companies in conjunction with advice from the Food Standards Agency (FSA). It is for the companies themselves to decide whether to insure against such an eventuality. I have not been involved in any discussions with EU Ministers on compulsory insurance for such product recall costs.

In relation to animal feed, the Council of Agriculture Ministers has recently adopted an EC Regulation. One of the Articles of this Regulation requires that the European Commission shall prepare a report on the viability of feed business operators having financial guarantees, such as insurance. This would be to provide cover for the total costs for which such operators could

be held liable as a direct consequence of the withdrawal, treatment and/or destruction of feed from the market, or animals and food produced therefrom.

The FSA led the negotiations, so as such, I did not correspond with EU Ministers directly. However, DEFRA was kept fully informed by the FSA of their progress and Defra contributed views to the FSA, including on the issues of financial guarantees.

Rat Control

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs further to her answer of 5 May 2004, to the hon. Member for Romford (Mr. Rosindell), *Official Report*, column 1497W, on rats, whether a local authority using the enforcement and monitoring powers she refers to may *(a)* require a water authority to (i) carry out a programme of sewer baiting and (ii) improve the sewer infrastructure in its area and *(b)* require a railway authority to (A) maintain embankments to a reasonable standard and (B) clear dumped rubbish and litter on their land on a regular basis, in its area; and if she will make a statement. [173239]

Mr. Morley: In answer to the first part of the question, under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949, a local authority cannot require a sewerage undertaker to carry out a programme of sewer baiting or improve the sewer infrastructure in its area.

The Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 is used by local authorities to require Network Rail, the owner of operational railway land, to maintain lineside and rail property. Local authorities also have powers under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 Code of Practice on litter and fly tipping to serve litter abatement notices requiring litter or refuse to be cleared and/or prohibiting land from becoming defaced by litter or refuse. Network Rail clears litter in accordance with the timescales and zones given in the Code of Practice.

In both cases, local authorities have powers to enforce the duties of the owner or occupier and can use default powers to take those steps specified in a notice and recover any expenses reasonably incurred in doing so.

Recycling

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of *(a)* domestic, *(b)* commercial and *(c)* industrial refuse was recycled in (i) Brent, (ii) London and (iii) England in the latest year for which figures are available. [172814]

Mr. Morley: The information is as follows.

(a) The most recent year's figures for household waste are found in the Municipal Waste Management Survey for 2002–03.

	Percentage
London Borough of Brent	6.6
London	10.8
England	14.5

(b) and *(c)* . The most recent year's figures for commercial waste and for industrial waste are found in the Strategic Waste Management Assessment 2000, published by the Environment Agency, relating to figures for 1998–99. The survey collected data from a sample of 20,000 businesses across England and Wales.

	Percentage
Commercial waste	
London Borough of Brent	Not collected
West London (including Brent)	25.5
Greater London	30.6
England	22.5
Industrial waste	
London Borough of Brent	Not collected
West London (including Brent)	29.5
Greater London	37.6
England	34

Salt Manufacturers

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the proposed abolition of the product mix output algorithms in 2008; and what assessment she has made of the effects on the future competitiveness of UK salt manufacturers. [172942]

Mr. Morley: The Climate Change Agreements are agreements with energy intensive industry through which participants pay a reduced rate of climate change levy in return for meeting challenging energy efficiency targets between 2002 and 2010. The agreements provide for an adjustment to the targets up to 2006 to take account of changes in product mix and output which can increase the energy used per unit of output. The concession lasts only until 2006 because we enter into the Kyoto period in 2008, the date of the next target assessment. The Government must deliver on their commitment to make absolute reductions on CO_2 emissions in the Kyoto period, and there must be increased certainty of the contribution to be made from each of the UK's Climate Change Programme policies. Parties to Climate Change Agreements should take the energy use implications of changes in products, and how this will affect their ability to meet their targets, into account when making commercial decisions. The UK Emissions Trading Scheme is available for companies to buy allowances to meet their targets if they wish to produce more energy intensive products. There has been no assessment of the effects on UK salt manufacturers.

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the publication of the National Allocation Plan in respect of the European Union Emissions

Trading Scheme; and what assessment she has made of its effects on the future competitiveness of UK salt manufacturers. [172943]

Mr. Morley: The UK submitted its National Allocation Plan (NAP) to the European Commission on 30 April and published it for public consultation on 6 May 2004.

There are two salt manufactures listed in the UK NAP and they are covered by the EU Emissions Trading Scheme as a result of the combustion facilities on site. Both are classified in the Food and Drink sector, and one is a member of the Chemicals Industry Association.

The UK NAP acknowledges industry concerns about competitiveness and bases allocations on projected need for sectors open to international competition, including the Food and Drink and Chemicals sectors. Government have involved industry in every stage of the implementation process and have taken concerns over competitiveness on board.

Scottish Power

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she last met representatives of Scottish Power plc; who was present; and what was on the agenda for discussion. [171783]

Mr. Morley: The Secretary of State last met a representative of Scottish Power plc on Thursday 13 May 2004 at a meeting of the Sustainable Development Task Force, of which Scottish Power is a member.

Scottish Power's representative at this meeting was Fred Dinning, who was attending in the place of Ian Russell, the Chief Executive. Other Task Force members present were from a range of UK Government Departments, the devolved Administration, and external stakeholder bodies. The full membership list is available on the Government's sustainable development website (www.sustainable-development.gov.uk).

The agenda for discussion included an update on the sustainable development strategy consultation; education for sustainable development; an update on the outcomes of the Twelfth Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development; and papers on breaking down the barriers for renewable energy. Full details and papers will shortly be available on the website, as well as the note of the meeting in due course.

Severely Disadvantaged Areas

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 28 April 2004, to the hon. Member for Salisbury (Mr. Key), *Official Report*, column 1025W, on severely disadvantaged areas, whether she has made representations to the European Commission to ensure that British farmers are not penalised if they are unable to meet the 17 May 2004 deadline. [174781]

Alun Michael: The Rural Payments Agency has not made representation to the European Commission in respect of the 17 May 2004 Integrated Administration and Control System deadline as the circumstances do not justify a derogation to the regulation on this occasion.

Single Farm Payments

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the future profitability of farms following the introduction of the single farm payments scheme. [173691]

Alun Michael: The Single Payment will decouple direct subsidies from the type or level of production. This will encourage farmers to respond to market signals rather than produce according to individual subsidy regimes. Decoupling payments from production is expected to lead to higher farm prices and consequently higher farm incomes. Defra economists estimate that overall, UK farm incomes will increase by around 5 per cent. of the forecast Total Income from Farming for 2003. This is an aggregate figure and the change in farm profitability will vary between different farm types and sizes. Further information can be found in the Economic Position of the Farming Industry report published on the Defra website at http://statistics.defra.gov.uk/esg/reports/repfi.pdf.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to provide more assistance to *(a)* owner-occupiers and *(b)* tenants of small intensive livestock farms after the introduction of single farm payments. [169740]

Alun Michael: We have no plans to differentiate payments to reflect the numbers of livestock kept on individual farms. Basing payments on stocking densities would create an incentive to increase production. By freeing up payments from the volume of production, producers will in future be free to meet market needs.

Supermarkets

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to ensure that the Office of Fair Trading continues to monitor the economic relationships between food producers and supermarkets; and if she will make a statement. [174201]

Alun Michael: We maintain close contact with the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) on issues that have a bearing on the relationship between supermarkets and their suppliers, and in particular on the supermarkets' Code of Practice. As part of the Government's Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food, the OFT has undertaken to continuously monitor the practices of the supermarkets to which the Code applies.

UK Produce

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of honey produced in the UK was for the UK market in the last year for which figures are available. [173764]

Alun Michael: UK production and supply of honey in 2003 is given in the following table.

UK honey production and supply 2003

	Thousand tonnes
Production	7.5
Imports[1]	22.0
Exports[1]	1.1
Total supply[2]	28.4
UK production for the UK market as percentage[3]	85.9
UK production as percentage of total supply	26.3

[1] Includes artificial honey.
[2] Production plus imports less exports.
[3] Production less exports as a percentage of production.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of *(a)* apples, *(b)* pears, *(c)* strawberries and *(d)* raspberries grown in the UK was for the UK market in the last year for which figures are available. [173765]

Alun Michael: UK production and supply of apples, pears, strawberries and raspberries are given in the following table:

UK production and supplies of selected fruit 2003

Thousand tonnes

	Apples	*Pears*	*Strawberries*	*Raspberries*
Production	123.6	29.6	41.8	8.0
Imports	473.4	116.6	35.9	4.7
Exports	12.5	3.0	0.2	0.0
Total supply[1]	584.5	143.2	77.5	12.7
UK production for the UK market as percentage[2]	89.9	89.9	99.5	99.8
UK production as percentage of total supply	21.1	20.7	53.9	63.1

[1] Production plus imports less exports.
[2] Production lese exports as a percentage of production.

Underground Fuel Storage

Jane Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what action has been taken to reduce the *(a)* number and *(b)* severity of pollution incidents from underground tanks at petrol stations; [173802]

(2) what recent risk assessments have been undertaken of potential oil leakage from underground tanks at petrol stations; [173804]

(3) what estimate she has made of the proportion of underground oil tanks at petrol stations which have *(a)* double-skinned tanks and *(b)* remote wetstock monitoring. [173805]

Mr. Morley: The "Groundwater Protection Code: Petrol Stations and Fuel Dispensing Underground Storage Tanks", was published by DEFRA in 2002. It sets out a framework of good practice to help petrol station operators to avoid groundwater pollution and comply with the Groundwater Regulations. The Environment Agency has also developed operating agreements with individual petroleum companies that aim to prioritise capital investment based on a common understanding of environmental risk. The Agency will be reviewing the effectiveness of operating agreements piloted with a number of petroleum licensing authorities, in order to improve notification of spills, with a view to extending their use.

Environmental risk assessments are the responsibility of the operators of petrol stations. The Environment Agency has worked with the UK Petroleum Industry Association to develop a suitable risk assessment technique that is widely available to operators. The Environment Agency has also undertaken a number of pollution prevention visits to high risk petrol stations for the purposes of the Groundwater Regulations.

Information on double-skinned oil tanks, or remote wetstock monitoring, at petrol stations is not collected and held centrally. However, the Environment Agency, in carrying out its duties to prevent pollution from petrol stations, will consider pollution problems on an individual basis according to the particular risk posed.

Water Metering

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the number of pensioners who would reduce their water bills if they switched to a metered supply. [172781]

Mr. Morley: Research was undertaken by Maxwell Stamp consultancy for the Department for Environment, Transport and the Regions and published in July 1998 ("Incidence Effects of Charging for Domestic Water and Sewerage Services").

This research showed that, using the standing charges and volumetric charges at that time, 55 per cent. of pensioners would pay less on measured charges, but 45 per cent. would pay more.

The existence and extent of savings depends on both the quantity of water used and on the alternative unmeasured basis of charging from which the household might change.

The research informed the Government's decision to introduce the free meter option, which has been of benefit, especially to those in small properties and making least use of water services.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the number of pensioners who would reduce their water bills if they switched to a metered supply in *(a)* Lancashire and *(b)* Chorley. [173856]

Mr. Morley: Research was undertaken by Maxwell Stamp consultancy for the Department for Environment, Transport and the Regions and published in July 1998 ("Incidence Effects of Charging for Domestic Water and Sewerage Services").

This research showed that, using the standing charges and volumetric charges at that time, 55 per cent. of pensioners in England and Wales would pay less on measured charges, but 45 per cent. would pay more.

Information broken down by county or town is not available.

The existence and extent of savings depends on both the quantity of water used and on the alternative unmeasured basis of charging from which the household might change.

The research informed the Government's decision to introduce the free meter option, which has been of benefit, especially to those in small properties and making least use of water services.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

CBRN Substances

Llew Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the costs that may arise from carrying out the decontamination procedures set out in the Strategic National Guidance for the decontamination of buildings and infrastructure exposed to chemical, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) substances or material, issued this month. [175374]

Mr. Raynsford: The cost of carrying out the procedures set out in the guidance would depend upon the circumstances of the incident. Factors involved would include the nature and extent of contamination; the characteristics of the building or infrastructure affected and the systems, equipment and other contents; the CBRN material involved; the type of surfaces affected; and the particular objectives of the decontamination plan drawn up for the premises concerned.

In order to provide help and advice to those dealing with decontamination the Government have set up a team to consider the establishment of a national decontamination and recovery service.

Council Tax

Alistair Burt: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations he has received from *(a)* clergy and *(b)* others whose jobs require them to maintain more than one property in relation to (i) exemption from council tax on second homes and (ii) the amelioration of the effects of council tax; and if he will make a statement. [175871]

Mr. Raynsford: The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) Regulations 2003 (S.I. 2003/3011), as amended by the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2004 S.I. (2004/926), set out the circumstances in which the 50 per cent. council tax discount on the second home is retained where a person is required to live in job related accommodation. Records of correspondence received by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister do not differentiate between the topics requested and other council tax matters. A precise figure could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Planning

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister for what valid reason local councils may reject proposals made by Government inspectors, under PPG10 for major housing development sites; and if he will make a statement. [175592]

Keith Hill: Regional Planning Guidance for the south west (RPG10) provides a regional spatial strategy within which development plans, including those in Gloucestershire, should be prepared; it sets out a broad development strategy for the period up to 2016 and beyond; and provides the spatial framework for other strategies and programmes. RPG10 should be taken into account by local authorities preparing Local Plans.

Following a Local Plan Inquiry the inspector makes his/her recommendations to the Local Planning Authority (LPA). It is for the LPA to consider in the first instance whether to make modifications to the plan based on the inspector's recommendations. The LPA is required to prepare a statement of its decision on each recommendation and to give its full reasons if it does not accept any recommendation made by the inspector. Currently, most local authorities accept the majority of an inspector's recommendations, but they are not obliged to do so.

This statement of reasons and any proposed modifications to the Local Plan are published and objections and representations may be made to the council for a period of six weeks.

There is no criterion against which the reasons for rejecting any recommendation are measured. The Government office for the south west, on behalf of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, will have the opportunity to consider any modifications to identify whether they are consistent with national and regional policies, and whether there are conflicts which do not appear to be justified by local circumstances.

The general approach of Government is that responsibility for deciding planning matters should be left, as far as possible, to locally accountable planning authorities. This is because local authority councillors are elected to represent the views of local people and, in the main, it is these councillors who are in the best position to make the necessary decisions in respect of their Local Plan.

In the light of this, while powers have been reserved to direct modifications to the plan or to call-in all, or part, of a plan for determination by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, these powers are used sparingly and as a last resort.

Mr. Sayeed: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to make developers liable for a greater share of the costs of planning inquiries and tribunals. [175879]

Keith Hill: There are no plans to change the existing longstanding practice where each party is responsible for their own costs at planning inquiries.

Local Government Finance

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much *(a)* in revenue support grant and *(b)* in specific grants was provided to City of York in each year since 1997–98. [175274]

Mr. Raynsford: Grants provided to City of York in each year since 1997–98 are tabled as follows:

£ million

	General grants[1]	Specific grants[2]
1997–98	78.0	3.1
1998–99	80.5	4.1
1999–2000	84.5	6.2
2000–01	88.0	11.0
2001–02	90.3	15.0
2002–03	91.1	21.2
2003–04[3]	100.3	16.3
2004–05[3]	102.7	28.2

[1] Includes Revenue Support Grant, Redistributed Non-Domestic Rates, SSA Reduction Grant (1997–98 to 2001–02), Central Support Protection Grant (1999–2000 to 2001–02).

[2] Specific and special grants inside Aggregate External Finance (AEF).

[3] Budgeted figures.

Source:

1997–98 to 2002–03 Revenue Summary forms and 2003–04 to 2004–05 Budget Estimate returns

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the value is of each of the specific grants received by City of York in 2004–05. [175275]

Mr. Raynsford: The specific grants[1] that City of York have budgeted to receive in 2004–05[2] are tabled as follows:

	£000
Civil Defence	72
Adoption Support and Special Guardianship	51
Choice Protects	67
Leadership Incentive	364
Safeguarding Children	200
School Standards	2,678
Standards Fund	3,705
Teachers Pay Reform	2,571
Teenage Pregnancy Local Implementation	101
Detrunking	355
Rural Bus Subsidy	123
Access and Systems Capacity	1,463
AIDS Support	19
Carers	363
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services	167
Delayed Discharges	297
Human Resources Development Strategy	63
Mental Health	493
National Training Strategy	83
Preserved Rights	2,564
Residential Allowance	1,113
Training Support Programme	159
Council Tax Benefit (CTB) Administration	344
Housing Benefit (HB) Administration	390
Additional HB and CTB administration due to Pension Credit	36
Additional HB and CTB administration due to Tax Credits	27
Workstep	224
Asylum Seekers	29
Homelessness Strategies	250
Planning Development	143
Supporting People Administration	236
Supporting People Programme—Housing	8,585
Supporting People Programme—Social Services	664
Other Grants inside AEF	233

[1] Specific and special grants inside Aggregate External Finance (AEF).

[2] Budgeted figures.

Source:

2004–05 Budget Estimate RA (SG) form.

TREASURY

Abortion

Mrs. Roe: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many conceptions in women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000; [174877]

(2) what the rate of conceptions in women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years was in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000; [174879]

(3) how many conceptions resulting in abortions in women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000. [174887]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mrs. Marion Roe, dated 25 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions on conceptions and abortions. (174877, 174879, 174887)

The information you requested on conceptions, and conception rates was given in answer to a recent question from David Amess MP, which appears in the Official Report of Monday 24 May, No. 91, Column 1201W-1208W.

Information on conceptions resulting in abortions was given in answer to another question from David Amess MP, which appears in the same Official Report at Column 1197-1200W.

EU Budget

Tom Cox: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which of the present member states of the European Union are expected to be *(a)* net contributors to and *(b)* net beneficiaries of the European Union budget in 2004–05. [175155]

Ruth Kelly: As shown in the footnote to Table C11 of the FSBR (HC 301), the Government forecasts that the United Kingdom will continue to be a net contributor to the EC Budget in 2004–05. Publishing forecasts of the net positions of other Member States is a matter for their respective Governments.

Aggregates Tax

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much has been raised in tax and licence revenue from the dredging of aggregates off the East Anglian coast in each of the last 10 years. [175029]

John Healey: The information on the amount of tax raised from the dredging of aggregates off the East Anglian coast is not available. Revenue from this source and region is not separately identified in either aggregates levy or VAT payments.

The royalty income over the period 1993 to 2003 from aggregate dredging licences off the East Anglian coast (east coast region comprising Great Yarmouth/Cross Sands block and Southwold) is given in the following table:

	Royalty income (£ million)
2003	5.06
2002	5.29
2001	5.36
2000	6.16
1999	4.77
1998	4.44
1997	4.71
1996	5.21
1995	4.67
1994	4.18
1993	3.67

Child Tax Credit

Colin Burgon: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in the Elmet constituency are receiving child tax credit. [174876]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to my answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Burton (Mrs. Dean) on 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 98W.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in *(a)* Cambridgeshire and *(b)* the constituency of Huntingdon have received child tax credit. [175252]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to my answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Burton (Mrs. Dean) on 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 98W. Estimates for each local authority also appear in the publication referred to in that answer.

Departmental Buildings

Mr. Flight: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many buildings in England owned by his Department are used at less than 25 per cent. capacity for more than three months of the year. [175980]

Ruth Kelly: None.

E-Government

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer from what date staff were employed by the Inland Revenue's e-Government programme; how many staff are assigned to the programme; and when planning began for the programme. [174019]

Dawn Primarolo: Staff have been employed on the planning and implementation of the Inland Revenue's e-Government programme from 1999. Currently there are 328 Full-time Equivalents (FTEs) assigned permanently to the programme. This includes 253 FTEs that provide support to customers who use the "e" services. (Self Assessment, PAYE, Corporation Tax, New Tax Credits and Stamps.)

Farming

Nick Harvey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will revise the tax treatment of losses made by farmers on holdings of production quotas so as to allow losses to be written off against trading profits rather than capital transaction profits; and if he will make a statement. [173913]

Dawn Primarolo: Production quotas held by unincorporated farmers are treated for tax purposes as chargeable assets and as such any losses are set against current or future chargeable gains. There are no current plans to revise this treatment.

Illegal Meat Imports

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of x-ray technology in detecting illegal meat imports; [175636]

(2) what use Customs and Excise make of x-ray technology to detect illegal meat imports; and if he will make a statement. [175749]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Brent, North (Mr. Gardiner) on 23 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 116W. HM Customs and Excise use x-ray technology to detect illegal meat and other prohibited and restricted goods being imported into the UK both by passengers and in freight. The effectiveness of current equipment is continually assessed.

Customs continue to work with manufacturers to identify improved technology that would further enhance their detection capabilities.

Large Business Office

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many hours' training each Large Business Office caseworker has received in tax compliance performance in each year since 1997. [174939]

Dawn Primarolo: These figures are not available. Large Business Office caseworkers all have a Performance Development Plan according to their personal needs and experience. They receive continuous technical training on a variety of topics through formal courses and in-house awareness seminars. These include specific tax compliance knowledge and skills.

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which IT software systems have been procured by the Large Business Office since 1997; and how many hours' training each Large Business Office caseworker has had on those systems in each year since 1997. [174940]

Dawn Primarolo: The Large Business Office main IT system to manage case handling was introduced in April 1998. Training in the use of this system is provided by local support on induction to the LBO.

The main desktop support services are provided departmentally. The LBO has one designated officer in each location to support staff familiarisation with these as required.

Data analysis software products, Win Idea and SPACE, were introduced in 2003–04 for Employer Compliance staff. 20 officers are having 18 days training in their full use, to become local experts, and a further 20 in 2003–04 and 2004–05 will receive support training.

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost has been in each year since 1997 of IT software systems procured by the Large Business Office. [174941]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for North Wiltshire (Mr. Gray) on 12 February 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1555–56W.

The main support IT, such as standard desktop services, audit tools etc. are provided nationally, and not procured by the LBO. The LBO has its own small budget for minor IT software packages and other incidentals, currently £13,000 per annum.

Lone Parents

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many lone parents were employed in each of the last 25 years, broken down by constituency within each region. [175129]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Chris Ruane, dated 25 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about lone parents in employment. (175129)

The attached table gives the estimates of the number of lone parents in employment for each region covering the three months ending May each year from 1992 to 2003. Comparable information is not available for earlier or later years. The LFS sample size is too small to give reliable information in each Parliamentary Constituency.

Estimates are taken from the Office for National Statistics's Labour Force Survey (LFS). As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

Lone parents[1] with dependent children in employment by regions—three months ending May, each year from 1992 to 2003

£000

	United Kingdom	*North East*	*North West*	*Yorkshire and Humberside*	*East Midlands*	*West Midlands*	*Eastern*
1992	569	30	72	53	43	47	42
1993	615	29	82	51	34	53	47
1994	669	30	79	54	46	55	61
1995	725	36	81	60	47	59	62
1996	703	33	94	69	44	52	51
1997	695	34	97	68	50	61	59
1998	763	32	104	66	47	74	60
1999	795	43	106	66	47	72	60
2000	822	42	109	76	50	69	66
2001	836	33	109	79	51	71	67
2002	893	47	136	72	63	71	76
2003	894	44	132	71	59	67	74

	London	*South East*	*South West*	*Wales*	*Scotland*	*Northern Ireland*
1992	76	74	42	22	55	12
1993	84	73	45	37	61	17
1994	92	86	48	38	62	18
1995	100	99	54	38	69	20
1996	96	87	56	42	63	16
1997	83	84	47	39	55	18
1998	97	92	61	45	64	21
1999	111	93	62	46	70	19
2000	108	97	58	48	72	27
2001	116	98	66	42	82	22
2002	110	111	68	40	79	20
2003	111	113	69	48	81	25

[1] Refers to people who have dependent children and who are neither married nor cohabiting. Dependent children include all children aged under 16, and 16 to 18 year olds in full-time education.

Source:

ONS: Labour Force Survey, household data.

Pensions

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of mis-sold pensions in each of the last 25 years. [175071]

Ruth Kelly: Neither we nor the Financial Services Authority (the FSA) hold data in this form. The FSA do hold data on the Pensions Review, which covers pensions that were sold between 29 April 1988 and 30 June 1994.

1,618,686 cases of mis-selling were identified under the review, of which 1,118,885 cases involved consumers suffering loss as a result.

The Financial Services Compensation Scheme (the FSCS) have informed the FSA that they have, in addition, offered compensation in 18,746 further cases. The FSCS has also rejected 10,117 claims.

These rejections may include cases where pensions were mis-sold but where claims for compensation were rejected on the grounds that an advisor was solvent and

able to meet a claim directly. Some, but very few, of these rejections will be included already in the figures above.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of the value of the Exchequer's liabilities to *(a)* the basic state pension, *(b)* SERPS and *(c)* the state second pension; and if he will make a statement. [171583]

Malcolm Wicks: I have been asked to reply.

The future cost of basic state pensions and SERFS/State Second Pension over the next 50 years, as a proportion of GDP, is published on the DWP website at: http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/Table3_Long_Term_Projections.xls and shows that expenditure in the United Kingdom on these elements of pension provision is expected to remain in the range 4.1 per cent. to 4.5 per cent. of GDP during the period.

Scrap Aluminium

Mr. Page: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to tax export of scrap aluminium to sources outside the EU. [174979]

Dawn Primarolo: None. The legality of an export tax to protect a domestic industry is extremely doubtful under the terms of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (1947).

Transport Taxes

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the paper, "Reforming Transport Taxes", published by the European Conference of Ministers of Transport. [150883]

John Healey: The Chancellor notes the contents of this report, which looks at the options for transport taxation in general, and more specifically at the tax treatment of the road haulage industry.

The report will be considered along with other evidence and analysis as the Government takes forward their agenda on lorry road-user charging, and national road-user charging, as outlined in Budget 2004.

Labour Statistics (East Riding)

David Davis: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many young people in the East Riding of Yorkshire were not working, studying or in training in 2003. [171788]

Ruth Kelly: The Office of National Statistics estimate from the Labour Force Survey, for the twelve months ending in February 2003, that 4,000 young people aged 16 to 24 resident in East Riding of Yorkshire were networking and were not in full-time education or in Government-supported training schemes. This compares to around 4800 young people in 1997.

Since 1997 the Government have introduced a wide range of support for young people who are not working, studying or training. Most young people leave unemployment in under six months. The New Deal for Young People and other support is in place for those aged 18–24 who do not. In Budget 2004 the Chancellor announced reforms to the financial support system for 16–19 year olds to improve the support and incentives available to young people to remain in education and training. These reforms build on the introduction of Education Maintenance Allowances from September 2004 to improve the financial support available to the hardest to reach to stay in education. Young people can also access advice and support on education and training through either the Connexions Service or Job Centre Plus.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Administration Costs

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what targets exist for the achievement of savings in administration costs within his Department; and if he will make a statement. [175769]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID is committed to tight control of Administration Costs. For 2004–05 to 2005–06, the main administration costs target is to hold back office costs to the same cash level as in 2003–04. Between 2002–03 and 2005–06, total administration costs will have fallen from 5.8 per cent. of programme costs to 5.1 per cent. Targets for both back-office costs and total administration costs for 2006–07 and 2007–08 will be agreed as part of the 2004 Spending Review, along with an implementation plan to ensure projected efficiencies are realised.

Chad

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the programmes aimed at institution building in Chad *(a)* run by his Department, *(b)* fully financed by his Department, *(c)* partially financed by his Department within the framework of EU initiatives, *(d)* partially financed by his Department within the framework of UN initiatives and *(e)* partially financed by his Department within the framework of the World Bank initiatives; when they were initiated; for how long they are planned to continue; and what aspect of institution building is being addressed by each. [175116]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID does not have a direct development assistance programme in Chad and is not involved in running or providing either full or partial funding for any institution building programmes there. DFID's assistance to Chad is mainly channelled through it's contributions to multilateral agencies, including the EC, World Bank and UN Agencies, of which the UK's imputed share was estimated at £7.3 million in 2001.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of the *(a)* scale and *(b)* nature of corruption within the public institutions of Chad; what measures to fight this problem his Department proposes to provide as part of its development aid to Chad; and if he will make a statement. [175184]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID does not have a direct development assistance programme in Chad. DFID's assistance is mainly channelled through our contributions

to multilateral agencies, including the EC, World Bank and UN Agencies, of which the UK's imputed share was estimated at £7.3 million in 2001.

DFID has not conducted its own assessment of public sector corruption in Chad and is not directly involved in any measures to deal with this problem. However, DFID does support the efforts of the World Bank and the European Commission in helping to tackle corruption, in particular through the monitoring of the revenues from the Chad-Cameroon Petroleum Development and Pipeline project to ensure they are mainly used for poverty reduction.

Far East

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what aid projects his Department plans to develop in the Far East during the next three years; and if he will make a statement. [173540]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The breakdown for our project spend on bilateral programmes in Far East Asia is as follows:

DFID allocation by programme

£000

	2003–04 Estimated Outturns	*2004–05 Plans*	*2005–06 Plans*
China	31,000	45,000	35,000
Vietnam	26,000	40,000	60,000
Total: Far East	57,000	85,000	95,000

For details of our projected spend in the rest of Asia I refer the hon. Member to the written answer of 7 May 2004 to his question on DFID's development plans in Asia, *Official Report*, 10 May 2004, column 57W.

In addition to this bilateral spend, FCO posts administer a DFID funded Small Grants Scheme for poverty reduction, which covers some countries of the Far East. This is allocated on an annual basis. The total grant values for 2002–03 in the Far East were as follows:

Asia: Far East (Small Grant Scheme) 2002–03

£000

China	124
Vietnam	121
Mongolia	97
Total Asia: Far East	342

DFID also provides humanitarian assistance to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, focusing on water and sanitation and disaster preparedness. This is allocated in response to humanitarian need. In 2003–04, DFID channelled a total of £1,223,000 through the United Nationals Children Fund (UNICEF) and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

Iran

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much aid his Department has *(a)* pledged and *(b)* delivered to help in the ongoing humanitarian and reconstruction work in Bam, Iran; and if he will make a statement. [175118]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID has committed £3.7 million, including the UK share of the European community contribution, in response to humanitarian needs following the Bam earthquake.

DFID contributed some £950,000 towards immediate support to the emergency phase of the Bam Earthquake. The details of the UK response were provided in my Statement to the House on 5 January 2004, *Official Report*, columns 2–4WS. Thereafter, DFID made an additional commitment of £2 million in support of rehabilitation. This was focused on the restoration of primary health care services in partnership with the World Health Organisation (£0.5 million); the implementation of a mid-term sanitation programme in partnership with the United Nations Children's agency, UNICEF (£0.5 million); the restoration of agricultural based livelihoods, focusing on the rehabilitation of wells and procurement of pumps, livestock restocking and the replacement of agricultural tools in a joint United Nations Development Programme—Food and Agricultural Organisation partnership (£0.25 million) and also through the non-governmental organisation Action Contre La Faim (£0.25 million); and further support (£0.45 million) to the International Federation of the Red Cross's appeal.

All of this support to rehabilitation has been programmed through the agencies mentioned except the £0.45 million committed to the International Federation of the Red Cross. These funds were originally intended for the restocking of relief items, continued provision of emergency medical services and capacity building of the Iranian Red Crescent Society but we have been informed that these elements of the appeal have been sufficiently covered by other contributions. With the aid of the British Red Cross Society an assessment is planned to consider how this allocation might best be utilised in meeting gaps in provision.

DFID Officials will be visiting Bam in July to monitor how effectively the UK contribution has been spent.

Liberia

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when *(a)* he and *(b)* members of his Department last met the UN Secretary-General's special representative for Liberia to discuss (i) the security situation in Liberia, (ii) the humanitarian situation in Liberia and (iii) future plans for the reconstruction of Liberia; and if he will make a statement. [175183]

Hilary Benn: I met the Special Representative, Jacques Klein, on 10 May 2004. We discussed the Disarmament, Demobilisation, Resettlement and Reintegration (DDRR) programme, security and security sector reform, arrangements for next year's elections, and Liberia's future prospects. I confirmed our continued support for humanitarian programmes, to which DFID have committed a total of £10.6m, and for DDRR, for which DFID have provided £6m. DFID officials have also recently met representatives of the National Transitional Government of Liberia,

including Chairman Bryant, and a range of UN and other agencies, to discuss possible support to governance reform, as part of the process of reconstruction.

Nigeria

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assurances his Department has *(a)* sought and *(b)* received from the Government of Nigeria concerning the effect of unrest in the Plateau region on the announced resumption of polio vaccinations in Kano state; and if he will make a statement. [175117]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The unrest in Plateau State, which unfortunately spilled over into neighbouring states, especially Kano, is not related to the ongoing polio controversy. It is the view of DFID Nigeria and of the Nigerian Government that this unrest will not have any significant impact on the resumption of polio vaccinations in Kano State. This resumption depends entirely on whether the Kano State scientists are satisfied that there are no contaminants in the vaccines currently being procured from Indonesia.

The DFID team in Nigeria is in regular dialogue with the Government of Nigeria and with other international partners in Nigeria regarding the polio crisis. DFID is one of the principal financiers of the World Health Organization's "Polio Eradication Initiative". DFID is working actively with key stakeholders across northern Nigeria to ensure that immunization programmes, including polio, are implemented effectively in a way that is acceptable to the general public and to their political and religious leaders.

Resource Allocation

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the switching of resources from corporate service divisions to frontline operational divisions, stating the amounts of resources in each case. [175747]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID recognises the importance of maximising the share of administration resources available for front-line activities. From 2002–03 to 2005–06, the percentage of DFID's administration budget used by corporate service divisions will have fallen from 7.7 per cent. to 6.8 per cent. This will have released an additional £2.2m for front line activities compared with maintaining the same ratio. DFID plans to accelerate achievement of savings beyond 2005–6 as new systems are introduced, reducing further the proportion of administration costs going to service divisions. Specific targets are subject to the outcome of the Spending Review.

Shared Scholarships Scheme

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans he has to develop the Shared Scholarships Scheme; and if he will introduce support for talented youngsters from developing countries outside the Commonwealth. [174989]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Following a review in 2000, responsibility for administration of the Shared Scholarships Scheme (SSS) transferred, in 2002, to the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom (CSC). This transfer was agreed to enable improved coordination of the SSS with the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Programme and the development of new forms of funding partnerships. The CSC has subsequently established a sub-committee to review the SSS and to recommend improvements. The SSS, to which DFID contributes £2 million per annum, is an initiative with UK Universities jointly to support scholarships for students from developing Commonwealth countries who would not otherwise be able to study in the UK. There are no plans to extend the SSS to provide support for students from developing countries outside the Commonwealth.

St. Helena

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether there is a minimum population of St. Helena below which the Government considers the island to be unsustainable; and if he will make a statement. [174759]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID has no such limit in mind and remain committed to supporting St Helena. However, DFID recognises that population decline has been a problem in recent years and is supporting the island government's efforts to address it.

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what has been the cost to the UK taxpayer of maintaining St. Helena over the past 25 years for which figures are available. [174761]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID's bilateral spending on St. Helena between 1977 and the end of the UK Financial Year 2002–03 totalled over £233 million. This included some modest support, totalling less than £200,000 annually in recent years, for the St. Helena "dependency" of Tristan Da Cunha. Final figures for 2003–04 are not yet available, but are expected to add a further £11 million approximately to that total. St Helena also receives some assistance from the FCO Good Governance Fund and Economic Diversification Programme, amounting to nearly £1.5 million since 1999. In addition, the UK government share of European Union financial commitments to St. Helena since 1981 is over £500,000. DFID and the FCO departmental administration costs are not broken down by individual Territory.

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will estimate the annual *(a)* saving to the UK and *(b)* benefit to the economy of St. Helena of providing air access for St. Helena. [174762]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The information on which to base that estimate is not available. DFID should have a better idea, however, when current work to assess and compare future physical access options for St. Helena is completed later this year. I refer the hon. Member to my Written Statement on 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1WS.

Sudan

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimates he has made

of the number of refugees from Darfur in Chad; when these figures were last revised; and if he will make a statement. [175084]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Reliable figures for the number of refugees in Chad are difficult to find because of the inaccessibility of the areas affected. Agencies on the ground are constantly reviewing their estimates. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) press statement on 14 May 2004 estimated that there were 120,000 Darfurian refugees in Chad. Refugees International estimated on 19 May that the number could be nearer 200,000.

The Government are gravely concerned about the serious situation in Darfur. In addition to the refugees in Chad, there are over 1.2 million internally displaced people in Darfur who are in a precarious situation likely to become worse with the onset of rains later this month.

The UK is heavily engaged in the humanitarian response to this crisis. DFID is the second largest donor after the US and so far has committed over £16.5 million to agencies working in Darfur and Eastern Chad. A breakdown of these commitments is given below. In addition, DFID has seconded four humanitarian officers to support United Nations Office for the Co-Ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)'s response to the crisis in Darfur and are seconding an additional three for the UN Joint Logistics Centre. DFID is also paying for a despatch of non-food items (22,500 blankets and 15,000 plastic sheets) for distribution by humanitarian agencies.

UK Government-funded humanitarian interventions in Darfur, Sudan

Period	*Agency*	*Description*	*Total cost (£)*
October to December 2003	UNHCR	Supplementary Appeal for Emergency Assistance to Sudanese Refugees in Eastern Chad—2003	1,000,000
October 2003 to September 2004	SC-UK	Emergency Response to Conflict Related Internal Displacement in North Darfur	500,000
November to December 2003	ICRC	Contribution to the ICRC 2003 Emergency Appeal for Sudan	1,000,000
November 2003 to March 2004	WFP	Additional Contribution to 2003 UN Appeal, due to Crisis in Darfur, to Provide Emergency Food Assistance to Sudanese Populations Affected by War and Natural Disasters	2,000,000
January to April 2004	MSF-F	Emergency Assistance to IDPs in Darfur—through increasing access to health care in conflict areas, disease prevention, halting nutritional deterioration and treating malnourished children	491,369
January to December 2004	MSF-H	Darfur Components of Emergency Health Interventions in Northern Sudan Project	650,000
February to December 2004	UNICEF	Emergency Assistance to Humanitarian Crisis in Darfur for Health; Water Supply; Water and Environmental Sanitation; Relief and Shelter Items; and the Protection of Children	1,000,000
February to November 2004	GOAL	Emergency Assistance to Population in Kutum Province, North Darfur—through a combined Health, Nutrition and Shelter Intervention	575,963
March to December 2004	ACF	Emergency Nutrition Programme in North Darfur	250,000
March to December 2004	WFP	Emergency Distribution of Food Aid Commodities to Sudanese Refugees in North East Chad	1,000,000
March 2004 to January 2005	UNHCR	Emergency Assistance to Sudanese Refugees in Eastern Chad	1,000,000
April 2004 to December 2004	OXFAM	Public Health Humanitarian Response Darfur (Water/ Sanitation Programme)	2,193,161
May 2004 to December 2004	WFP	Emergency purchase and distribution of Food Aid for internally displaced Sudanese in Darfur	2,000,000
May 2004 to November 2004	WHO	Emergency primary health care and response to communicable diseases in Darfur; support to measles vaccination programme	1,500,000
May 2004 to December 2004	UNICEF	Additional support to humanitarian assistance for crisis in Darfur; emergency nutrition; emergency health care and the protection of children	1,500,000
May 2004 to July 2004	UNJLC	Support to enable UNJLC to co-ordinate the logistics of an effective humanitarian response in Sudan	250,000
		Total	16,910,493

Zimbabwe

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Zimbabwe about its stockpiling of food in the run-up to national elections. [174777]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Although the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) provides little information about the activities of the parastatal Grain Marketing Board (GMB), donors believe that current GMB stocks are less than 100 thousand metric tonnes (MT), compared with a national food requirement of up to 1.8 million MT. GMB will build up its stocks in coming months as the harvest comes in, which is appropriate. Donors are particularly concerned about the dishonesty of the GoZ in declaring that the current harvest is in the order of 2.4 million MT and that Zimbabwe will be self-sufficient in food for the coming year, as confirmed by Robert Mugabe in a television interview this week.

The GoZ cancelled a Crop and Food Supply Assessment that was recently in progress jointly with the World Food Programme and Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN, which would have provided an independent figure. Other recent studies suggest the actual harvest to be at or below 1.2 million MT. Donors are concerned that the GoZ is trying to control food supply in the country in the run-up to parliamentary elections next year, pretending that land reform has

been successful. Apart from deceiving its population, the GoZ is putting many of them at great risk of hunger later in the year, while probably needing to divert a substantial amount of its scarce foreign exchange to import grains.

PRIME MINISTER

Sudan

Clare Short: To ask the Prime Minister what action he is taking to *(a)* bring about an end to the killing of the black Muslim Sudanese of Darfur and *(b)* secure access for humanitarian assistance to relieve their suffering. [175840]

The Prime Minister: I am deeply concerned about the humanitarian situation in Darfur. Following the cease-fire agreement of 8 April between the Government of Sudan and the Darfur groups, we are calling on all parties to co-operate fully with the Africa Union-led ceasefire monitoring mission. We are also considering how we can contribute to this.

I wrote to the Sudanese President earlier this year emphasising the Government's concern at the situation in Darfur. We continue to hold discussions with the Sudanese Government on access for humanitarian assistance and my right hon. Friends the Foreign Secretary and the Secretary of State for International Development raised the matter with the Sudanese Foreign Minister during his visit to London on 11 May. The Sudanese Foreign Minister has now announced new measures governing the issue of visas and travel permits to humanitarian workers wishing to travel to Darfur.

We hope that these measures will facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance to a population in great need and will be closely monitoring their implementation. We have already committed £16.5 million in response to the crisis and are urging other partners to contribute as well.

Govan Shipyard

Mr. Blunt: To ask the Prime Minister (1) what meetings *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials held with the management of Govan/Kvaerner to discuss the future of the Govan shipyard; [R] [174254]

(2) what role he played in informal and oral approaches made to GEC over the purchase of Govan shipyard; [R] [174256]

(3) on which dates in 1999 he met Mr. George Simpson of GEC; if he will publish minutes of the meetings; and if he will list the attendees at those meetings; [174311]

(4) what communications *(a)* he and *(b)* his representatives and advisers had with GEC in 1999 over (i) the proposed merger of BAE-GEC and (ii) Govan shipyard; and if he will publish the communications; [174312]

(5) what communications *(a)* he and *(b)* his representatives and advisers had with Kvaerner, their representatives and advisers over the proposed closure of the Govan shipyard in 1999; [174313]

(6) what meetings *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials held with Sir Gavin Laird to discuss the future of the Govan shipyard. [174315]

The Prime Minister: My officials and I have meetings and discussions with a wide range of organisations and individuals. As with previous Administrations it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings, under exemptions 2 and 7 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Mr. Blunt: To ask the Prime Minister (1) what *(a)* his and *(b)* his officials' involvement was in the negotiations over the future of Govan shipyard; [R] [174255]

(2) what meetings took place between Mr. Ed Miliband and his officials in 1999 to discuss the *(a)* GEC-BAE merger and *(b)* Govan shipyard; [R] [174259]

(3) what advice he received in 1999 on the GEC interest in the Govan shipyard; [R] [174260]

(4) what advice he received from the Ministry of Defence on the GEC-BAE merger; [R] [174258]

(5) when he was first informed of the GEC interest in the Govan shipyard. [R] [174261]

The Prime Minister: Information relating to internal discussion and advice is exempt from disclosure under exemption 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Mr. Blunt: To ask the Prime Minister what *(a)* his, *(b)* his officials and *(c)* his advisers involvement was in approving the GEC-BAE merger. [R] [174257]

The Prime Minister: The decision was made by the then Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, the right hon. Member for Tyneside, North (Mr. Byers) in his capacity set out in the Fair Trading Act 1973.

Mr. Blunt: To ask the Prime Minister what the name was of the task force chaired by Sir Gavin Laird set up by the Government to look for potential buyers for the Govan shipyard; who was on the task force; what its terms of reference were; and when it was disbanded. [174314]

The Prime Minister: The Kvaerner Task Force was set up by Lord Macdonald of Tradeston on 13 April 1999 under the Chairmanship of Sir Gavin Laird to identify potential purchasers of the shipyard at Govan, the engineering business in Clydebank, and for any other facilities subsequently identified for sale in Scotland. The other members of the Kvaerner Task Force were Bill Scott, Malcolm Clark and David Smith. The Task Force was wound up on 14 July 1999.

Iraq

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 748–49W, on Iraq, prior to the Prime Minister reading the International Committee of the Red Cross report on 10 May, what the first date was on which an official working in No. 10 Downing Street saw the report; and what action was taken concerning the report between it first being received at No. 10 Downing Street and 10 May. [175568]

The Prime Minister: The report was first received in No. 10 Downing Street by an official on the evening of 9 May. Officials investigated what action had been taken and were made aware that action into the allegations of abuse in respect of UK forces was already in hand. As I have already made clear, I first saw the report on 10 May.

People's Peers Road Shows

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister whether the practice of people's peers road shows to solicit applications has been discontinued. [175304]

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave him on 13 November 2003, *Official Report*, column 430W.

World Environment Day

Sue Doughty: To ask the Prime Minister if he will take steps to mark World Environment Day on 5 June; and if he will make a statement. [175104]

The Prime Minister: The Government and the Environment Agency are working together on a campaign to mark World Environment Day. This will include asking the public to sign the "Pledge to the Future" to identify ways they can improve their local environment, and a publicity campaign by the Environment Agency on how businesses can make their organisations more sustainable.

TRANSPORT

Flight Security (Northern Ireland)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether a senior citizen's pass with photographic image is an acceptable form of identity for security purposes when flying between Great Britain and Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [173600]

Mr. McNulty: While passengers on international flights are required to carry appropriate travel documentation in the form of passports, visas etc., there is no requirement for passengers to carry identification on domestic flights. We are aware that a number of carriers have instituted such a rule. This measure, and determination of what types of identification are acceptable, is part of the aircraft operator's own conditions of carriage. They usually provide clear indications to would-be passengers on their websites etc. of such requirements but in case of doubt or dispute, queries should be addressed directly to the airline concerned.

Blue Badges

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many and what percentage of people in Great Britain are in receipt of a Blue Badge for disabled drivers. [175866]

Mr. McNulty: The Blue Badge scheme provides a national arrangement of parking concessions for severely disabled people who travel either as drivers or passengers. Approximately 2.41 million people in Great Britain are currently in receipt of a Blue Badge. This equates to about 4 per cent. of the population.

Civil Servants

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many civil servants in his Department are employed to deal with local transport plans and annual progress reports submitted to his Department by local authorities. [174169]

Mr. McNulty: The Department employs five civil servants to deal with Local Transport Plans and Annual Progress Reports alongside their other duties. As well as the five officials currently employed by DfT, four to six staff in each of the eight regional Government offices also deal with LTPs and APRs alongside their other duties.

Computer File Formats

Mr. Allan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his Department's policy is in respect of the computer file formats used for the *(a)* distribution and *(b)* archiving of publicly available documents. [173364]

Mr. McNulty: The DfT website (http://www.dft.gov.uk) provides access to publicly available documents in a range of formats. The majority of content is made available in Hypertext Mark Up Language (HTML), Portable Document Format (PDF) and Microsoft WORD. All images contained within documents are made available in Graphic Interchange Format (GIF) or Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG) formats depending on the complexity of the image. Statistical data tables are provided in Excel, Comma separated values (CSV) and PDF format.

The same formats apply for documents held in archive areas of the website.

Crime (Public Transport)

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how many assaults were committed on buses in each year since 1997; [175454]

(2) how many bus drivers were assaulted on duty in each year since 1997. [175455]

Mr. McNulty: The following table shows the number of bus-related assaults reported to this Department by Transport for London and, for outside London, by a panel of PSV operators.

	Total number of assaults on bus crews and passengers in Great Britain	*Total number of assaults on bus crews in Great Britain*
1997	2,556	1,899
1998	2,195	1,594
1999	2,369	1,680
2000[1]	1,988	1,036
2001	n/a	2,592
2002	n/a	2,874

[1] Figures for 2000 exclude assaults on bus crews in London.

The Safer Travel on Buses and Coaches Panel (STOP) has been established to look at ways to combat assaults, anti-social behaviour and vandalism at stops and

stations and on vehicles and property. The panel brings together those involved in dealing with the issue of safety and security, and includes operators, local authorities, police and unions. It is charged with the important task of facilitating the exchange of ideas and spreading best practice and is considering how the collection of accurate bus and coach crime data can be improved.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many crimes of a sexual nature were committed *(a)* on buses and *(b)* at bus stops in each year since 1997. [175456]

Mr. McNulty: There were 60 sexual assaults on bus passengers in 1997 and 90 in 1998. It is not possible to distinguish between crimes of a sexual nature committed on buses and at bus stops. No data are held centrally for subsequent years.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many acts of vandalism were committed on buses in each year since 1997. [175458]

Mr. McNulty: No data are held centrally on the number of acts of vandalism committed on buses in each year since 1997. However, it is estimated that the average annual cost per operator outside London resulting from acts of vandalism was £31,459 in 2002.

Ministerial Travel

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many coach journeys Ministers have taken on departmental business in each year since 1997. [175072]

Mr. McNulty: The Department for Transport was formed on 29 May 2002. Information about the mode of transport used by Ministers on departmental business is not held centrally. Ministers frequently use a variety of public transport services when undertaking departmental business.

Nuclear Installations (Air Exclusion Zones)

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport on how many occasions since 2000 the Civil Aviation Authority has investigated alleged breaches of the air exclusion zones around nuclear installations. [175080]

Mr. McNulty: Since 2000, the CAA has received 72 reports of breaches of the air exclusion zones around nuclear installations. 12 formal investigations have been carried out resulting in two prosecutions, one formal caution, three warning letters and two dismissed by the courts for insufficient evidence. The remaining four are in progress and may result in prosecution.

Railways

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will list the level of subsidy *(a)* per rail mile travelled and *(b)* per passenger for each train operator for each year since 1997; [174984]

(2) if he will list the subsidy paid to each train operator in each year since 1997 in descending order. [174985]

Mr. McNulty: Details of subsidy paid to each train operator, in each year since 1997, are set out in Appendix 3 to the Strategic Rail Authority's annual report 2002–03.

Details of subsidy per passenger mile/passenger kilometre travelled, and of numbers of passenger journeys made, with each train operator in each year since 1997, are set out in SRA and OPRAF annual reports for the relevant years.

Copies of all SRA and OPRAF annual reports are available in the Libraries of the House.

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what percentage of rail journeys were made by freight trains in the last year for which figures are available. [175001]

Mr. McNulty: In 2002–03 approximately 6 per cent. of the total rail journeys were by made by freight trains.

Road Charging

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has for road charging; whether charges would apply to all roads; whether charges will vary by *(a)* time of day and *(b)* level of traffic; and what the money collected in road charging schemes would be spent on. [175558]

Mr. Jamieson: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport made a statement to the House on 9 July 2003 announcing a feasibility study into the potential for road charging in the UK. The study is expected to report this summer.

Sea ports/Airports

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the contribution of the *(a)* seaports and *(b)* airports industry to the UK economy. [175088]

Mr. Darling: The economic contribution that the aviation industry makes to UK economy is set out in the Air Transport White Paper, though the economic analysis of additional airport capacity focussed on the direct economic benefits to passengers. The Department is managing a research project to collect information about employment in the UK ports.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the social and economic consequences of constraints on port capacity. [175092]

Mr. Darling: The Government are aware of the potential consequences of the emerging constraints on ports capacity and so we ensure that the planning consent process assesses the social and economic aspects of the case for and against port development.

Speed Cameras

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he has reviewed the suitability of locations of all speed cameras in Shrewsbury and Atcham. [175059]

Mr. Jamieson: The West Mercia Partnership, which covers Shrewsbury and Atcham, has confirmed that they are adhering to the guidance and rules for the operation of safety camera activity. Partnerships are expected on a continuing basis to keep camera sites and enforcement at them under review. My Department will shortly publish an independent report on the operation of the Safety Camera Programme for its first three years, and will also publish details of all safety camera sites in the cost recovery programme.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on his review of the location of speed cameras. [R] [174253]

Mr. Jamieson: Partnerships are expected on a continuing basis to keep camera sites and enforcement at them under review. My Department will shortly publish an independent report on the operation of the Safety Camera Programme for its first three years, and will also publish details of all safety camera sites in the cost recovery programme.

Transport (Bootle)

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of priority bus lanes have been created in Bootle since 1997. [175492]

Mr. McNulty: A total of 0.6 miles of priority bus lanes have been provided in Bootle since 1997.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of new cycle lanes have been provided in Bootle using public funds since 1997. [175489]

Mr. McNulty: A total of 9.85 miles of cycle lanes have been provided in Bootle since 1997.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the effects upon residents of Bootle of investment in railway improvements over the next 10 years. [175491]

Mr. McNulty: Merseyrail, which operates local services in Bootle, is a consistently high performer. Residents of Bootle will benefit from the West Coast Main Line upgrade and the new TransPennine Express franchise to make fast inter-city journeys out of Liverpool. The TransPennine Express franchise, which commenced in February, secures investment of around £260 million, which will include the introduction of a new fleet of 100 mph diesel trains leading to increased capacity, improved service quality and performance across the region.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Emergency Planning

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans there are to provide national guidance for schools and care homes in the case of a serious civil emergency. [174687]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Home Office, alongside the emergency services will provide immediate information and advice in the event of a discernible threat or a specific incident. My Department, in its guidance on coping with emergencies (www.teachernet.gov.uk/emergencies), refers schools to Home Office guidance for civil contingencies; and will liaise with the Cabinet Office before writing to chief education officers about the Civil Contingencies Bill due to come into force later this year. We are not currently planning to provide separate national guidance for children's homes in the case of a serious civil emergency. However, we will keep this under review.

Child Care

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many child care places were created in each of the past 15 years, broken down by constituency within each region. [175128]

Margaret Hodge: The Department is unable to provide details of child care places in the past 15 years. We are also unable to provide details of places within each constituency. Statistics have only been collected by local authorities since 1999 following the introduction of the National Childcare Strategy for England.

A table, which has been placed in the Library, details the number of gross and net places created each year by local authority and region since 1999.

Early Years Education

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* free nursery and *(b)* pre-school places were available for (i) three and (ii) four-year-olds in Wirral South in each of the last seven years. [173624]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the form requested.

Figures on the number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four-year-olds in Wirral local education authority area are shown in the table.

The latest figures on provision for three and four-year-olds in England were published in a Statistical Bulletin "Provision for children under five years of age in England—January 2003" which is available on the Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

From April 2004, six months ahead of our original target, all three-year-olds in England whose parents want one, are eligible for a free, part-time early education place.

Number of free nursery education places[1,2] taken up by three and four-year-old children in maintained nursery and primary schools and private, voluntary and independent providers Wirral local education authority area 1997–2003: Position in January each year

	Three-year-olds	Four-year-olds
2003	3,200	3,500
2002	3,200	3,000
2001	3,100	4,400
2000	2,900	3,900
1999	1,700	3,900
1998	1,700	3,900
1997	1,600	3,800

[1] Part-time equivalent number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four-year-old children.

[2] A free nursery education place comprises five two and a half hour sessions of early years education per week, for thirty-three weeks of the year, usually three terms of eleven weeks.

Education Statistics (London)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many instances of truancy there were in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in Brent in each year since 1997; and what the average figures for a London borough were in each year. [172809]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is as follows:

Number of pupils that missed at least a half day due to unauthorised absence in schools in Brent:

Academic year (September—May)	*Primary Schools (percentage)*	*Secondary Schools (percentage)*
1998	3,585 (0.68)	1,378 (0.83)
1999	3,738 (0.66)	1,373 (0.89)
2000	3,971 (0.60)	1,875 (1.04)
2001	3,198 (0.55)	1,930 (0.89)
1002	3,262 (0.49)	1,874 (0.73)
2003	3,036 (0.41)	2,438 (0.86)

Number of pupils that missed at least a half day due to unauthorised absence in schools in the London Government Office Region:

Academic year (September—May)	*Primary schools (Percentage)*	*Secondary schools (Percentage)*
1998	130,606 (0.92)	74,492 (1.52)
1999	133,433 (0.91)	77,789 (1.48)
2000	137,772 (0.90)	81,088 (1.43)
2001	140,592 (0.91)	89,320 (1.49)
2002	136,781 (0.85)	95,570 (1.45)
2003	135,716 (0.79)	100,843 (1.34)

Further Education

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people in the Worthing area he expects to stay in education as a result of the introduction of education maintenance allowances; and what plans he has to provide extra funding to further education colleges in the Worthing area to support these students. [175447]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We estimate there will be about 3,600 extra 16-year-olds in the South East Region in further education this September who would not be participating without EMA. We are unable to provide forecasts of the number of EMA students down to constituency level. The 2002 Spending Review settlement allowed for the expected impact of national EMA in further education institutions.

Higher Education

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what criteria have been applied since 2000 to higher education colleges applying to move from the private sector to Higher Education Funding Council for England direct funding; and what changes there have been since 2000 to these criteria. [175389]

Alan Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 41W. The criteria have been in place since February 2001 and there have been no changes to them.

ICT

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public money has been spent on information and communications technology in schools in the last five years in the London borough of Wandsworth. [175207]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Over the last five years, schools in the London borough of Wandsworth have benefited from the following funding through the Standards Fund grant for ICT (including match funding from the LEA):

£

	Allocation to Wandsworth LEA
2000–01	579,974
2001–02	834,881
2002–03	1,188,913
2003–04	1,199,494
2004–05	1,592,626

Information, Advice and Guidance Partnerships

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people holding above-level 2 educational attainment contacted information, advice and guidance partnerships for assistance in the year to 31 March. [175260]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This is an operational matter for the Learning and Skills Council. The Council's Chief Executive will write to the hon. Member with the information requested and a copy of his reply will be placed in the House Libraries.

Maintenance Allowances

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills from what date students living in North Thanet will be eligible to receive funding under the Education Maintenance Allowance scheme. [173911]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding reply 19 May 2004]*: We are phasing in the EMA scheme nationally from September 2004, to successive 16 year old year groups. EMA will be available to students in North Thanet who are aged 16 at the start of the 2004/2005 academic year.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions his Department has had with the Department for Work and Pensions on the impact of education maintenance allowances on benefits. [174856]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This Department has worked closely with the Department for Work and Pensions in developing the English EMA scheme.

EMA will not affect other family benefits. It is specifically aimed at helping young people from lower income families to overcome barriers to further study caused by the costs of supporting students. EMA is paid

in addition to other support provided by the Government, such as Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit. EMA will not affect Child Benefit.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what evidence *(a)* he and *(b)* the Department of Trade and Industry have collated on the impact of education maintenance allowances on the national minimum wage for 16 year olds; and if he will make a statement. [174942]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Government submitted evidence to the Low Pay Commission on the possible introduction of a minimum wage rate for 16 and 17 year olds in December 2003. The evidence provided the Government with an opportunity to assess the interaction between a minimum wage for 16–17 year olds and incentives to participate in education and training, such as EMA.

This evidence can be accessed online at www.dti.gov.uk/er/nmw/index.htm

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make education maintenance allowances available to young people whose birthdays do not fall within the defined boundaries solely as a result of their being moved a year ahead at school. [174986]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Young people who have progressed a year at school and who are 15 when starting their further education are not eligible for EMA. The EMA scheme is targeted at those who reach compulsory school leaving age. To qualify for EMA under the national scheme a young person must reach the age of 16 between 1 September 2003 and 31 August 2004 and enter full time education in the 2004/2005 academic year. In addition young people aged 17 and over who live in the 56 areas that have already piloted EMA will also be able to apply.

Maintenance Allowances

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he made of the Education Maintenance Allowance pilot schemes before rolling them out nationally; and what changes were made to the scheme as a result of his conclusions. [174991]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: An independent evaluation of the education maintenance allowance scheme has been taking place since 1999. The evaluation has tested the effectiveness of the scheme in increasing participation. Evidence from the pilots shows that EMAs have increased the number of eligible young people in full time education in year 12 in pilot areas by 5.9 percentage points compared to the local authority areas without EMAs. EMAs have also increased participation by young people in Year 13 by 4.1 percentage points.

The evaluation has also assessed the comparative impact of different features and this has informed the development of the national scheme. The main changes are: that household income is assessed rather than parental income; that EMA payments are paid at three rates of £10, £20 or £30 dependent on the household income; the bonus payments are linked to retention and progression in learning rather than achievement of qualifications; and, that more young people can benefit from three years of support.

Medical Students

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 37–8W, on medical students, if he will list the factors taken into account in defining a broad range of social and ethnic backgrounds in respect of the criteria for the establishment of new medical schools; if he will break down the widening participation allocation by institution; and if he will make a statement on widening participation and the maintenance of standards of excellence in the medical profession. [175417]

Alan Johnson: The Government are absolutely committed to widening educational opportunities, not just in medicine but in higher education as a whole. We have always made it clear that admission to university must be on merit, based on the applicant's academic achievement and potential. It is important that universities, as autonomous bodies, ensure that their admission decisions are professional, fair and transparent.

In inviting bids to expand medical school places in September 2000, the Department of Health and the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) asked institutions to provide data relating to the following factors pertaining to social and ethnic backgrounds: "A" Level grades of successful medical students and, where known, unsuccessful candidates; demographic profile of applicants and students admitted to medical schools over the last two years by race, gender, socio-economic group and proportion of students admitted straight from state school; and for institutions without existing medical students, the same information for related disciplines, especially healthcare students.

As my answer of 10 May explained, the HEFCE allocation for widening participation is broken down by institution in Table 1 of the HEFCE document "Recurrent Grants for 2004–05" (March 2004/12), a copy of which can be found in the House of Commons Library. Alternatively, the document can be accessed at http://www.hefce.ac.uk/Pubs/hefce/2004/04_127/ on the internet.

Post-16 Education/Training

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress he has made in talks with *(a)* the Learning and Skills Council and *(b)* the Association of Colleges about the respective roles, responsibilities and powers of those organisations and his Department in relation to the (i) provision and (ii) withdrawal of post-16 education and training in local areas. [175248]

Alan Johnson: The working group, which will consider the LSC-college relationship in relation to post-16 education and training, has yet to meet. Its membership will be agreed between the Department for Education and Skills, the Learning and Skills Council and relevant sector bodies. The Learning and Skills

Council is leading on establishing the group and will write to the hon. Member once the membership and remit for the group has been agreed.

School Absences

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidelines he has issued to *(a)* schools and *(b)* local education authorities about levels of (i) authorised and (ii) unauthorised absence. [174717]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding reply 20 May 2004]:* In December 2001, the Department asked all schools with above average levels of unauthorised absence to set themselves targets to reduce the level of unauthorised absence by the end of this school year. In February 2003, I wrote to all local education authorities reminding them of the importance that the Government attaches to improving the levels of school attendance and urging them to work with their schools in reducing both authorised and unauthorised absences. Also in 2003, we provided 56 local education authorities with expert advisers to help them work with schools to improve attendance levels, in particular, to reduce unauthorised absence to a level closer to that of authorities in similar circumstances. The Department also advises authorities and schools on appropriate levels of absence through analysis of targets set, for example, in Education Development Plans, under the Behaviour Improvement Programme or as part of Local Public Service Agreements.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment has been made of the causal links between absence from school and attainment at the level of *(a)* individual pupils, *(b)* schools and *(c)* local education authorities. [174718]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding reply 20 May 2004]:* The information is as follows:

(a) The Department has recently commissioned the National Foundation for Educational Research to carry out an analysis of data to identify the links between individual pupils' attendance at school and their attainment in examinations. The report is expected in the summer of 2004.

(b) Analysis of school level data for the 2002/3 academic year indicates that there is a correlation between attendance and attainment. For example, in schools with absence levels of 6.5 per cent. or lower, an average of 74.3 per cent. of pupils achieved five or more A*-C grades in GCSE examinations. However, the average fell to 26.7 per cent. in schools where absence levels exceeded 11 per cent.

(c) The data also reveal a general correlation at local education authority level with attainment dropping as absence levels increase. Most authorities with absence levels of 7.0 per cent. or less have, on average, over 60 per cent. of pupils achieving five or more A*-C grades. In those authorities with absence levels exceeding 10 per cent., on average, less than 45 per cent. of pupils achieve five or more A*-C GCSE grades.

School Budgets (London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many school budgets in Greater London, broken down by local education authority, were in deficit in each of the last seven years. [170498]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is only available for the last four years and is contained in the following table:

Numbers of schools in Greater London with deficit budgets

LEA name	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
City of London	0	0	0	0
Camden	4	0	2	6
Greenwich	23	13	21	24
Hackney	21	15	21	13
Hammersmith and Fulham	3	2	5	10
Islington	10	3	2	7
Kensington and Chelsea	4	1	3	2
Lambeth	19	12	13	14
Lewisham	10	11	20	22
Southwark	10	9	21	22
Tower Hamlets	20	17	23	26
Wandsworth	6	5	4	8
Westminster	9	17	12	11
Barking and Dagenham	14	4	6	14
Barnet	5	8	16	5
Bexley	11	5	11	10
Brent	10	10	14	17
Bromley	13	11	8	15
Croydon	7	2	2	9
Ealing	9	7	5	5
Enfield	5	5	4	5
Haringey	32	23	18	11
Harrow	2	2	0	2
Havering	5	6	4	7
Hillingdon	8	11	13	10
Hounslow	9	6	6	13
Kingston-upon-Thames	3	3	3	4
Merton	5	3	4	3
Newham	14	17	20	20
Redbridge	6	4	4	8
Richmond-upon-Thames	3	2	2	6
Sutton	1	2	3	2
Waltham Forest	10	7	12	13

Notes:
1. The data are taken from local education authorities' Section 52 Outturn Statements submitted to the DfES. Financial data used to determine budget is taken to the nearest pound.
2. School level data has only been collected by the DfES since the inception of Section 52 in 1999–2000.
3. For 1999–2000 to 2001–02 the data are taken from the Balance Carried Forward column. In 2002–03 data comes from Other Revenue Balance.
4. 2002–03 data subject to changes by the LEA which may alter the results for that period.

Student Assistance

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assistance his Department offers to students from low income backgrounds who are embarking on further or higher education before their 19th birthday; and if he will extend education maintenance allowances to such students. [174990]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Young people from lower income households who are aged 16 at the start of the 2004/05 academic year can apply to receive the education maintenance allowance. We are phasing in the scheme

nationally from September 2004 to successive 16 year-old year groups. By 2006 all young people aged 16 to 19 who meet the eligibility requirements will be able to receive EMA. In addition, the Learner Support Fund provides a safety net to students who experience financial hardship. For those students in higher education from lower income backgrounds the £1,000 higher education grant is available from September 2004. This will ensure a continuous system of non-repayable support for tuition for those most in need.

Sure Start Unit

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people the Sure Start Unit employs; and what the Unit's expected budget is in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06. [175375]

Mr. Charles Clarke: As at 1 April 2004, the Sure Start Unit employed 299 permanent staff. The expected budget for 2004–05 will be £12.7 million. Budgets are set annually.

University Fees

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students from *(a)* Chorley and *(b)* Lancashire are attending university; and how many (i) pay no tuition fees and (ii) pay partial tuition fees. [173767]

Alan Johnson: In England and Wales, students on full-time undergraduate courses and their families are expected to make a contribution towards the cost of their tuition only if they can afford to do so.

For entry in 2002, there were 6,792 applicants domiciled in Lancashire LEA who were accepted through UCAS to full-time first degree and HND courses at UK institutions. Data on the number of students from Chorley attending university are not available.

The number and percentages of students in England and Wales in academic year 2002/03 (latest year for which data are available) who have been assessed to make a nil or partial contribution towards the cost of their tuition are shown in the table:

England and Wales: Academic year 2002/03 (provisions)

	Student Support Scheme Student numbers (000s)[1]	*Student Support Scheme Students (Percentage)*[1]
Nil contribution towards the cost of tuition from student/ parents/spouse/partner[2]	330	43
Partial contribution towards the cost of tuition from student/parents/spouse/ partner	116	15

[1] Contributions towards the cost of tuition are assessed by local education authorities in England and Wales for students normally domiciled in their area and studying in the UK.
[2] Includes students on courses where the fee support was not subject to income-assessment (e.g. PGCE courses, and some other ITT courses; and designated courses at private institutions).
National level data are published annually in the Department's Statistical First Releases (SFRs) (SFR 12/2004 for 2002/03).
Source:
F503G survey of local education authorities

Data are collected from the local education authorities (LEAs) to produce national estimates and the data collection exercise does not allow for the production of firm figures below this level. Therefore data by constituency or local education authority are not available.

University Students (Huntingdon)

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students from *(a)* Cambridgeshire and *(b)* the constituency of Huntingdon are attending university; and how many of these students pay (i) no tuition fee and (ii) a partial tuition fee. [175251]

Alan Johnson: In England and Wales, students on full-time undergraduate courses and their families are expected to make a contribution towards the cost of their tuition only if they can afford to do so.

For entry in 2002, there were 3,025 applicants domiciled in Cambridgeshire LEA who were accepted through UCAS to full-time first degree and HMD courses at UK institutions. Data on the number of students from the constituency of Huntingdon attending university are not available.

The number and percentages of students in England and Wales in academic year 2002/03 (latest year for which data are available) who have been assessed to make a nil or partial contribution towards the cost of their tuition are shown in the table:

England and Wales: Academic year 2002/03[1]

	Student Support Scheme Student numbers[2] *(Thousand)*	*Student Support Scheme Students*[2] *(Percentage)*
Nil contribution towards the cost of tuition from student/ parents/spouse/ partner[3]	330	43
Partial contribution towards the cost of tuition from student/parents/spouse/ partner	116	15

[1] Provisional.
[2] Contributions towards the cost of tuition are assessed by local education authorities in England and Wales for students normally domiciled in their area and studying in the UK.
[3] Includes students on courses where the fee support was not subject to income-assessment (e.g. PGCE courses, and some other ITT courses; and designated courses at private institutions).
Note:
National level data are published annually in the Department's Statistical First Releases (SFRs) (SFR 12/2004 for 2002/03).
Source:
F503G survey of local education authorities

Data are collected from the Local Education Authorities (LEAs) to produce national estimates and the data collection exercise does not allow for the production of firm figures below this level. Therefore data by Constituency or local education authority are not available.

Vocational Qualifications

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average cost of *(a)* a GCSE, *(b)* an intermediate GNVQ, *(c)* an AS-level and *(d)* an NVQ

level-2 or equivalent vocational qualification are; and how many people achieved each of these qualifications in 2003. [172978]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* The cost of examination entry is set by the independent awarding bodies. The typical cost of entry and the number of people achieving *(a)* GCSEs, *(b)* GNVQs and *(c)* AS levels in 2003 is as follows:

Qualification	Typical cost of entry[1] (£)	Number of candidates achieving qualification[2]
(a) GCSE		
Full	21.00	682,828
Short Course	14.50	275,841
(b) Intermediate GNVQ		48,842
Part 1		
Full	79.00	45,550
(c) GCE AS level	33 (11 per unit)	315,357

[1] Typical cost of entry is based on entry through Edexcel. These figures have been taken from information provided on the Edexcel website.
[2] Information on candidates attempting GCSEs, GNVQs and AS levels in 2003 is taken from information collated for the 2003 Performance Tables.

Using the most recent data available the number of level 2 NVQs (National Vocational Qualifications) and OVQs (Other Vocational Qualifications) achieved in 2002 are shown in the following table.

Qualification	Typical cost of entry[1] (£)	Number of qualifications achieved[2]
(d) NVQ Level 2	84.00	177,115
OVQ Level 2	[3]	98,307

[1] Typical cost of entry is based on entry through Edexcel. These figures have been taken from information provided on the Edexcel website.
[2] Information on candidates attempting GCSEs, GNVQs and AS levels in 2003 is taken from information collated for the 2003 Performance Table
[3] For OVQs the cost is not shown as this would be dependant upon the exact qualification.

CABINET OFFICE

Emergency Communications Network

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how it is planned that senior Government figures will remain in contact in the event of a terrorist attack that eliminated the London telephone network. [172751]

Mr. Alexander: A range of measures are available to maintain contact with senior Government Ministers and officials in the event of degradation of the telephone network. These include the use of managed call preference schemes, secure fixed and mobile facilities, the private Whitehall telephone service and the Government Secure Intranet.

Non-departmental Public Bodies

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many non-departmental public bodies have been *(a)* created and *(b)* abolished since July 2003. [175451]

Mr. Alexander: This information is not currently available centrally.

I refer the hon. Member to my response to the hon. Member for Kingston and Surbiton (Mr. Davey) on 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1444W, when I indicated that later this year we would be launching a Public Bodies database on the internet. This will contain statistics as at 31 March 2004 which can then be compared with figures in the previous annual "Public Bodies" publications.

Official Vehicles

John Barrett: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what percentage of official vehicles used by the Department are run on *(a)* petrol, *(b)* diesel, *(c)* liquid petroleum gas and *(d)* compressed natural gas. [172770]

Mr. Alexander: The responsibility for the provision of ministerial cars and drivers has been delegated under the terms of the Framework Document to the Government Car and Despatch Agency. I have asked its Chief Executive Mr. Nick Matheson to write to the hon. Member. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Public Bodies

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office (1) how many public bodies sponsored by other Departments have been *(a)* merged and *(b)* abolished since 1997 as a result of a quinquennial review by his Department; and if he will make a statement; [174709]

(2) how many quinquennial reviews of public bodies have been carried out since 1997; on what dates; and for which Departments. [174710]

Mr. Alexander: It is the responsibility of the relevant parent Department to ensure its public bodies are kept under review. Cabinet Office does not carry out such reviews for other Departments. The rigid requirement to review public bodies in accordance with detailed guidelines at least every five years ceased in 2002. Sponsor Departments now have greater flexibility in determining the appropriate timing and format for reviewing a particular public body. Information about the number and timing of reviews of public bodies by Departments is not held centrally by the Cabinet Office.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Beef

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the amount of imported beef which is processed in local factories and sold in Northern Ireland with a produce of Northern Ireland label under the Farm Quality Assured Scheme. [175915]

Mr. Pearson: Only beef derived from animals from FQAS registered farms and slaughtered in an FQAS registered slaughterhouse may be labelled as FQAS under the Livestock and Meat Commission Assurance

Scheme. The rules pertaining to the FQAS and the EU Beef Labelling Scheme preclude imported beef being sold under a FQAS label.

Broadband

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the percentage of households in Northern Ireland who have broadband access. [175863]

Mr. Gardiner: Based on analysis of information obtained from the public domain, industry sources and service providers, it can be estimated that broadband services aimed at residential users are available to approximately 70 per cent. of households across Northern Ireland.

Business Tariffs

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made in securing European Commission approval for a three year subsidy scheme to reduce tariffs for business customers at 10 per cent. below true costs. [175722]

Mr. Gardiner: A paper has been submitted to the European Commission outlining the Government's proposal to make an intervention aimed at bringing about a 10 per cent. decrease in electricity prices for non-domestic consumers below the level they would otherwise have been.

A meeting to discuss the matter with Commission officials will take place early next month.

Creative Writing Funding

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much public money was granted by *(a)* the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, *(b)* the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, *(c)* the Ultach Trust and *(d)* Foras na Gaeilge towards the publication of creative writing in the Irish language in Northern Ireland in each year since 1999. [168560]

Angela Smith: The Arts Council of Northern Ireland has not made funding available specifically for the publication of writing in the Irish language. However, the Arts Council have given £6,000 per annum to "An tUltach", an Irish language literary and cultural magazine, and in 2003–04, £27,200 to an arts supplement published by Lá, an Irish language newspaper. Both these publications include an element of creative writing in Irish.

The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure's funds in support of the arts in Northern Ireland is disbursed chiefly through the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the Department has not made any funding directly available for the publication of creative writing in the Irish language.

The Ultach Trust is a registered charitable trust. It is not directly funded by Northern Ireland Departments and the Government are not responsible for the Trust's expenditure.

Foras na Gaeilge has not provided any funding for the publication of creative writing in the Irish language.

Disabled Drivers

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many and what percentage of people in Northern Ireland are in receipt of a blue badge for disabled drivers. [175862]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has written to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin to Mr. Gregory Campbell, dated 25 May 2004:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about how many and what percentage of people in Northern Ireland are in receipt of a blue badge for disabled drivers. I have been asked to reply as the issue raised falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

I can advise you that the number of persons currently holding a Blue Badge in Northern Ireland is 74,146. Based on the 2001 population census figure of 1,685,267, this represents 4.4 % of the population.

Heart Conditions

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate how many individuals in Northern Ireland have implantable defibrillators; and how many procedures to implant these devices were performed in the Province in each of the last five years. [175160]

Angela Smith: Procedures to perform the implantation of defibrillators are undertaken at the Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust and the Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust. Each trust maintains records of their patients who have been fitted with the device. According to the two trusts there are 381 individuals in Northern Ireland who have been fitted with implantable defibrillators since the beginning of the financial year 1999–2000.

The following table provides figures for the number of procedures that were performed to implant these devices over the last five years.

	Number of implantable defibrillators fitted
1999–2000	46
2000–01	66
2001–02	55
2002–03	81
2003–04	133

Homeless Report

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the 21st Report of the Committee of Public Accounts, Session 2003–04, "Housing the Homeless". [175902]

Mr. Spellar: I welcome the report and will be making a formal response to the Public Accounts Committee in due course.

Iraq (Public Sector Employees)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* doctors, *(b)* nurses,

(c) allied health professionals and *(d)* others employed in the NHS in Northern Ireland are providing assistance in Iraq. [175218]

Angela Smith: The information requested is not available centrally.

Livestock Collection

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the national collection scheme to assist livestock farmers in disposing of fallen stock will apply to Northern Ireland. [175591]

Mr. Pearson: Yes.

Local Government Finance

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list by district council area the *(a)* total amount of debt owed by each of the 26 local authorities and *(b)* the amount of debt per elector in each district. [174379]

Angela Smith: The amount of debt owed by each of the 26 district councils and the amount per elector in each district, at 31 March 2003, is set out in following table.

District council	*Debt (£)*	*Number of electors*	*Debt per elector (£)*
Antrim[1]	5,924,159	29,301	202.18
Ards[1]	17,365,391	48,962	354.67
Armagh	23,116,660	37,030	624.27
Ballymena[1]	23,576,459	40,836	577.34
Ballymoney	5,006,373	18,707	267.62
Banbridge	13,327,993	28,685	464.63
Belfast[1]	23,601,119	155,929	151.36
Carrickfergus[1]	9,718,566	24,470	397.16
Castlereagh	19,030,679	42,679	445.90
Coleraine[1]	22,427,214	35,155	637.95
Cookstown	1,689,565	22,087	76.50
Craigavon[1]	8,614,863	53,040	162.42
Derry	20,256,762	63,434	319.34
Down	8,715,435	41,863	208.19
Dungannon and South Tyrone	1,766,842	33,129	53.33
Fermanagh	2,188,192	40,742	53.71
Larne	5,260,870	20,434	257.46
Limavady	8,999,312	20,086	448.04
Lisburn[1]	26,557,800	66,498	399.38
Magherafelt	78,117	27,551	2.84
Moyle[1]	7,004,403	10,576	662.29
Newry and Mourne	21,973,624	57,365	383.05
Newtownabbey	29,018,716	51,613	562.24
North Down[1]	15,551,195	49,671	313.06
Omagh	9,340,300	31,709	294.56
Strabane	2,725,066	25,388	107.34

[1] Includes borrowings raised for housing, prior to the establishment of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

Love for Life Programme

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the reason is for the Department of Education's decision to refuse funding for the Love for Life programme in schools. [175692]

Mr. Gardiner: My Department does not directly fund or prescribe the use of any particular programmes or materials that schools should use. It is entirely a matter for individual schools to select the resources and materials they consider necessary to deliver the curriculum. The Chief Executive of Love for Life was advised of this reason in a letter dated 11 May.

Professional Qualifications Directive

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the proposed European Directive on the mutual recognition of professional qualifications, with particular reference to the impact in Northern Ireland of free movement of health professionals. [175169]

Angela Smith: The proposed European Directive on mutual recognition of professional qualifications aims to consolidate and rationalise existing rules. The Government welcome the simplification of rules and particularly welcomes new provisions for temporary and occasional supply of services. However, free movement must be balanced by a due regard for public health and safety, especially in the field of health. The proposal as it now stands reflects the view, shared by the Commission and the Council, that prior checks are necessary for health professions, before services can be provided on a temporary basis. The rules for prior checking of credentials before permanent practice are unchanged.

Queen's University Belfast

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the costs were of *(a)* setting up and *(b)* maintaining in each year since establishment the (i) Omagh and (ii) Armagh campuses of Queen's University Belfast. [175214]

Mr. Gardiner: Queen's University Belfast, like all other UK universities, is an autonomous institution entirely responsible for its own policies and procedures, including decisions relating to the establishment of outreach campuses in Northern Ireland. The costs of setting up and maintaining the campus at Armagh is a matter internal to Queen's University and I am not able to provide details of these costs.

Queen's University does not have a physical campus at Omagh. However, Queen's and Omagh College have, for many years, collaborated to provide a range of joint academic awards in the Omagh region.

Sean O'Cealleogh

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what representations he has made to the US Administration about the decision of a US court not to deport Sean O'Cealleogh. [169927]

Mr. Leslie: I have been asked to reply.

The information sought is not readily available, but is presently being collated, and will be provided as soon as possible.

Smoking

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to ban smoking in public places in Northern Ireland. [175213]

Angela Smith: Substantial progress on the provision of smoke-free facilities can be made through the "Five Year Tobacco Action Plan for Northern Ireland", which was published in June 2003. The plan, which was prepared by an inter-sectoral working group, does not propose an outright ban on smoking in public places;

rather it stresses the importance of building on changes in public attitudes towards tobacco use, if the overall aim of creating a tobacco-free society is to be met. With this in mind, the plan includes a series of actions designed to promote the provision of smoke-free premises and facilities.

A copy of the plan is available in the Library of the House.

Teenage Pregnancies

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many conceptions there were in females aged 11 to 19 years in Northern Ireland in each year since 2000, broken down by age. [175225]

Angela Smith: Information on the number of conceptions is not available. However, information on the number of registered live and still births to mothers in Northern Ireland, by age, for the years 2000–02, is available and is detailed in the table.

Number of live and still births to Northern Ireland resident mothers, 2000 to 2002

	Age of mother					
Registration year	*(a) 14 years and under*	*(b) 15 years*	*(c) 16 years*	*(d) 17 years*	*(e) 18 years*	*(f) 19 years*
2000	11	47	165	312	484	601
2001	5	37	129	280	493	588
2002	5	32	113	304	494	566

Source:
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency.

Teenage Pregnancies

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many attendances at sexual health clinics there were by those aged 11 to 19 years in Northern Ireland in each year since 2000, broken down by *(a)* age and *(b)* sex. [175223]

Angela Smith: Information on the total number of attendances at sexual health clinics is not collected centrally according to age and gender. Information is, however, available on the number of initial contacts with Genito-Urinary Medicine clinics each year, broken down by age and gender, in respect of persons with various sexually transmitted infections. This information is shown for the financial years ending March 2000, March 2001, March 2002 and March 2003 in the following table.

Initial contacts

	Under 15	*15*	*16–19*	*Total*
1 April 1999–31 March 2000				
Male	1	0	169	170
Female	9	16	397	422
Total	10	16	566	592
1 April 2000–31 March 2001				
Male	5	2	219	226
Female	8	15	475	498
Total	13	17	694	724
1 April 2001–31 March 2002				
Male	1	0	201	202
Female	6	15	440	461
Total	7	15	641	663
1 April 2002–31 March 2003				
Male	3	3	195	201
Female	6	21	464	491
Total	9	24	659	692

Note:
Figures refer to the total number of initial contacts in respect of primary and secondary infectious syphilis, uncomplicated gonorrhoea, uncomplicated chlamydial infection, anogenital herpes simplex (first attack), anogenital warts (first attack), and HIV antibody counselling with testing.

Ulster Hospital (Shuttle Bus)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the potential benefits of a shuttle bus service between the Ulster hospital and Belfast city centre. [175210]

Mr. Spellar: There has been no assessment made of the potential benefits of a shuttle bus service from Belfast city centre to the Ulster hospital.

Unmanned Railway Crossings

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the safety risks associated with unmanned railway crossings in Northern Ireland since the accident at Woodtown Crossing, Co. Londonderry on 11 May. [175525]

Mr. Spellar: Safety on the Northern Ireland railway network is the responsibility of Northern Ireland Railways. Translink have advised that an inquiry is under way into the cause and circumstances surrounding the tragic accident at Woodtown crossing. Furthermore a review of all accommodation crossings by independent consultants is nearing completion and will result in a re-evaluation of the categorisation of over 200 user worked crossings throughout the network.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Free Television Licences

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many pensioner households in the Elmet constituency receive a free TV licence. [174874]

Estelle Morris: TV Licensing, who administer free television licences for people aged 75 or over as agents for the BBC, are not able to provide geographical breakdowns of the number of free licences issued. However, 2001 Census data for parliamentary constituencies identifies 7,131 people aged 75 or over living in the Elmet constituency.

Audio-description Technology

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how she is working with interested parties to encourage the development of audio-description technology adapted for *(a)* museum and heritage collections and *(b)* visual arts work. [175016]

Estelle Morris: DCMS and its sponsored bodies have undertaken a range of initiatives aimed at increasing the use of audio description, which, through visual information and interpretive commentary, can greatly enhance appreciation of cultural exhibits and sites by visually-impaired people. Some of the key initiatives are as follows.

Arts Council England (ACE) and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), with support from English Heritage, funded the "Talking Images" project managed by the Royal National Institute for the Blind, which resulted in extensive guidance for museums, galleries and heritage sites on how to provide audio description and venue access, including a technical specification for user-friendly audio-guide equipment.

MLA has produced further guidance on inclusive technology, distributed to more than 3,000 museums, libraries and archives, and is also promoting technical web-accessibility for online cultural collections, so that new services such as audio description can be easily accessed. An example of innovation in this area is the Tate Modern's imap website, which uses audio description and images adapted for the partially-sighted through heightened colour contrast.

English Heritage has audio guides at over 50 of its properties and is looking to increase this number. Many sites also have set tours for the visually-impaired and interactive audio tours. English Heritage has also produced a guide on improving access for blind and partially-sighted people.

Casinos

Mr. Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the permitted areas where casinos may be established under the Gaming Act 1968; and in which of those areas casinos are not currently operating. [175819]

Mr. Caborn: The areas where casinos are allowed to operate under the Gaming Clubs (Permitted Areas) Regulations 1971 are as follows:

London

That area which is within the area specified in the licensing (Metropolitan Special Hours Area) Order 1961—plus the City of Westminster and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

The rest of England, Wales and Scotland

The areas of the former county boroughs, non-county boroughs and urban districts of:

Aberdeen
Birkenhead
Birmingham
Blackpool
Bolton
Bournemouth
Bradford
Brighton
Bristol
Cardiff
Coventry
Derby
Dudley
Dundee
Edinburgh
Glasgow
Great Yarmouth
Hove
Huddersfield
Kingston upon Hull
Leeds
Leicester
Liverpool
Luton
Lytham St. Annes
Manchester
Margate
Newcastle upon Tyne
Northampton
Nottingham
Plymouth
Portsmouth
Ramsgate
Reading
Ryde
Salford
Sandown/Shanklin
Scarborough
Sheffield
Southampton
Southend-on-Sea
Southport
Stockport
Stoke-on-Trent
Sunderland
Swansea
Teesside/Middlesbrough
Torbay
Walsall
Warley
West Bromwich
Wolverhampton.

There are currently no casinos operating in Ryde, Sandown/Shanklin or Warley.

Cricket Tours

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions her Department has had with the International Cricket Council regarding the rules operated by the ICC in respect of cricket tour cancellations. [175487]

Mr. Caborn: The Government have not discussed the rules about cricket tour cancellations with the International Cricket Council. This is a matter between the ICC and the England and Wales Cricket Board.

Departmental Buildings

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many buildings in England owned by her Department are used at less than 25 per cent. capacity for more than three months of the year. [175982]

Mr. Caborn: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport leases four buildings or part buildings in London, none of which, ever fall to an occupancy level as low as 25 per cent.

Electronic Programme Guides

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) if she will request that Ofcom include a requirement for a periodic review of the ordering of channels on electronic programme guides (EPGs) in its new code of practice for EPG providers; and if she will make a statement; [174670]

(2) what assessment she has made of the impact of television channels' positioning on the electronic programme guides on viewer choice; what steps she intends to take to ensure that EPG providers facilitate a reordering of channels disadvantaged by their EPG listing; and if she will make a statement; [174671]

(3) what discussions she has had with Ofcom about the role of the electronic programme guide in promoting fair competition between the UK 24-hour news sources on digital television; and if she will make a statement; [174672]

(4) what discussions she has had with Ofcom about whether the new electronic programme guide code will include a requirement for a review of channel ordering on the EPG; and if she will make a statement. [174673]

Estelle Morris: The regulation of electronic programme guides is a matter for Ofcom and therefore I have not had any detailed discussions with them on this matter.

Under section 310 of the Communications Act 2003, Ofcom has to draw up a code giving guidance as to the practices to be followed in the provision of electronic programme guides. Ofcom must review and revise this code from time to time.

In their consultation on this issue, Ofcom stated that they "intend to review the code at intervals of no more than two years, or more frequently if circumstances warrant it". They proposed that the code should require "all EPG providers to have an objectively justifiable method of allocating listings" and stressed that "this does not preclude different methods"—for example, objectively justifiable methods could include, "first come first served" listings, alphabetical listings and those based on audience shares.

In their consultation on the regulation of electronic programme guides, Ofcom state that "discriminatory treatment of a channel in terms of listings or presentation would constrain its ability to compete effectively with other channels for audience share and advertising revenue and would thus be prejudicial to fair and effective competition".

Intellectual Property Rights

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport who the members are of the forum on intellectual property rights being established jointly by her right hon. Friends the Minister for the Arts and the Minister for Science and Innovation; what sectors they represent; what the agenda will be for the forum's work; and what timetable it will be working to. [R] [175687]

Estelle Morris: This Department and the Department of Trade and Industry are currently finalising details of the forum. An announcement will be made as soon as possible.

Sports Spectators

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people watched professional *(a)* rugby league, *(b)* football, *(c)* rugby union and *(d)* cricket in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [175480]

Mr. Caborn: In 2003, around 1.6 million people attended professional Rugby League matches: 1.4 million at Super League matches; 100,000 at Challenge Cup ties; 100,000 at National League matches.

In the 2003–04 football season, 29 million people attended Premier League and Football League matches: 13.3 million at Premier League games; 16 million at Football League matches (Divisions 1, 2 and 3).

In 2003, around 4.5 million people attended Rugby Union matches in Britain: 3.4 million attending international matches; 1.1 million at Zurich Premiership matches.

In the May to September 2003 cricket season around 1.9 million people attended cricket matches in England: 630,000 attending international games; 1.3 million attending domestic cricket matches.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Speed Cameras (West Sussex)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much money was raised in fines from speed cameras in the last year for which records are available in *(a)* West Sussex and *(b)* the East Worthing and Shoreham constituency. [175046]

Caroline Flint: Information on the revenue raised from speed offences detected by camera is not available.

Available information on the number of fixed penalties and court fines ordered to be paid within the Sussex police force area for the offence of 'speeding detected by camera' in 2002 is shown in the table. It is not possible from the data collected centrally to identify the county of West Sussex and the constituency of East

Worthing and Shoreham within the geographical area of the Sussex police force.

Not all fines and fixed penalties will have been paid.

Fixed penalty and court proceedings data for speeding offences detected by cameras[1] in the Sussex police force area, 2002

	Rounded 2001
Fixed penalties	
Number of tickets[2]	19,000
Estimated revenue (£)[3]	1,141,000
Court proceedings[4]	
Number of fines	610
Total amount of fine (£)	54,700
Average fine (£)	90

[1] Offences under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and The Motor Vehicles (Speed Limits on Motorways) Regulations 1973.
[2] Paid i.e. no further action.
[3] "Estimate" based on £60 penalty charge.
[4] Includes cases where fixed penalty notices were originally issued but not paid and subsequently referred to court.

Correspondence

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects the Immigration and Nationality Directorate to reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Wrexham of 23 October 2003 in connection with Mr. Jama Ali Farah (ref. F1036752). [172199]

Mr. Browne: Officials at the Immigration and Nationality Directorate replied on 3 November 2003 to my hon. Friend's letter of 23 October 2003.

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the hon. Member for West Worcestershire will receive a response to his letter of 7 April 2004, reference PO4301/4. [174749]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* I wrote to the hon. Member's letter on 25 May 2004.

Criminal Justice

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions his Department has had with the Department for Transport on reform of the criminal justice system. [172844]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office is in regular contact with the Department for Transport on criminal justice issues, including sentencing, support for victims of road crash incidents and road traffic policing.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the budget is for each local criminal justice board in 2004–05; and what the proposed budget is for 2005–06. [172957]

Paul Goggins: The amount of funding from the centre to support the activities of each Local Criminal Justice Board in 2004–05 has yet to be agreed but it is hoped that it will be at least equal to the £40,000 that was provided to each Local Criminal Justice Board in 2003–04. The final sum provided in 2004–05 will be in addition to the salary cost paid by the centre for the support provided by the Performance Officer to each Local Criminal Justice Board area. The proposed budget for 2005–06 will not be known until after the outcome of the 2004 Spending Review has been considered.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the criminal justice boards where representatives of Victim Support are *(a)* full members of the Board and *(b)* attend board meetings. [172958]

Paul Goggins: The four Criminal Justice Boards where representatives of Victim Support are full members of the Board are Avon and Somerset, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and London.

Attendance at Local Board meetings is a matter for each Board's discretion. However, Boards where the Victim Support representative may, on occasion, attend board meetings as a member of a Victim and Witness sub-group include Cambridgeshire, Cheshire, Cumbria, Devon and Cornwall, Durham, Dyfed Powys, Essex, Greater Manchester, Hampshire, Kent, Norfolk, North Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, South Yorkshire, Staffordshire, Suffolk, Sussex, Thames Valley, Warwickshire and West Yorkshire. In addition to this, a Victim Support representative is a member of the Merseyside Advisory Group and therefore may possibly attend some of the Board meetings.

Drugs Testing/Treatment

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many drugs testing and treatment orders were issued in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* each London borough in each year since 1997. [163092]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 22 March 2004]:* Drug Treatment and Testing Orders (DTTOs) have been available since October 2000 when they were rolled out nationally following an 18-month pilot period in three areas. The London Probation Area is required to submit monthly figures to the National Probation Directorate pertaining to the number of Orders made but is not required to break this down by boroughs. The breakdown by borough shown in Annexes A and B has been obtained from London Probation Area records.

The number of orders made in each year from October 2000 to February 2004 is as follows:

	Number	
October 2000 to March 2001	251	(not available by borough)
April 2001 to March 2002	556	(not available by borough)
April 2002 to March 2003	715	(by borough at Annex A)
April 2003 to February 2004	941	(by borough at Annex B)

Annex A: Drug Treatment and Testing Orders made in London between April 2002 to March 2003 by borough

	Number
Bexley	11
Greenwich	32
Brent	23
Harrow	10
Ealing	33
Hillingdon	7
Hounslow	22
Barnet	16
Enfield	27

Annex A: Drug Treatment and Testing Orders made in London between April 2002 to March 2003 by borough

	Number
Haringey	38
Bromley	18
Croydon	44
Camden	35
Islington	28
Hammersmith and Fulham	16
Kensington and Chelsea	12
Westminster	12
City	0
Hackney	43
Newham	21
Tower Hamlets	22
Lambeth	39
Lewisham	25
Southwark	45
Barking and Dagenham	15
Havering	9
Redbridge	21
Waltham Forrest	17
Kingston	7
Merton	10
Richmond	3
Sutton	12
Wandsworth	29
Total	702

Note:
In addition, 13 orders were made in London on offenders of No Fixed Abode in any borough.

Annex B: Drug Treatment and Testing Orders made in London between April 2003—February 2004 by borough

	Number
Bexley	8
Greenwich	37
Brent	30
Harrow	14
Ealing	37
Hillingdon	27
Hounslow	24
Barnet	22
Enfield	31
Haringey	41
Bromley	23
Croydon	35
Camden	47
Islington	35
Hammersmith and Fulham	24
Kensington and Chelsea	16
Westminster	34
City	0
Hackney	34
Newham	35
Tower Hamlets	44
Lambeth	53
Lewisham	47
Southwark	62
Barking and Dagenham	21
Havering	7
Redbridge	17
Waltham Forrest	30
Kingston	7
Merton	15
Richmond	6
Sutton	19
Wandsworth	53
Total	935

Note:
In addition, six orders were made in London on offenders of No Fixed Abode in any borough.

Fines

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of fines was collected by each local criminal justice board in the last year for which figures are available. [173777]

Paul Goggins: Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJBs) do not directly collect fines. Fine enforcement is the responsibility of local Magistrates' Courts Committees (MCCs). But, given the importance of fine enforcement to public confidence in the Criminal Justice System, LCJBs are encouraged to monitor and to work jointly to improve payment rates within their local areas.

The table shows the payment rate for April 2003 to March 2004 for each of the 42 local MCCs. This represents the total value of fines (excluding confiscation orders) collected as a percentage of the total value of fines imposed over this period. The Department for Constitutional Affairs set MCCs a target of 75 per cent. for the year ending March 2004. Note that it is possible for an area's payment rate to exceed 100 per cent. if a sufficiently high value of fines imposed prior to April 2003 are collected.

	Payment rate (Percentage)	
Magistrates' Court Committee	*Q4 (January to Mar 2004)*	*Year 2003–04*
Avon and Somerset	77	83
Bedfordshire	84	80
Cambridgeshire	110	100
Cheshire	78	82
Cleveland	114	91
Cumbria	91	93
Derbyshire	89	79
Devon and Cornwall	55	68
Dorset	69	72
Durham	93	90
Dyfed Powys	102	81
Essex	109	94
Gloucestershire	61	95
Greater London	82	66
Greater Manchester	72	64
Gwent	84	85
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	68	86
Hertfordshire	63	68
Humberside	87	96
Kent	78	78
Lancashire	90	86
Leicestershire	73	69
Lincolnshire	75	75
Merseyside	51	59
Norfolk	85	79
North Wales	75	89
North Yorkshire	138	98
Northamptonshire	81	96
Northumbria	81	82
Nottinghamshire	68	72
South Wales	76	76
South Yorkshire	101	81
Staffordshire	67	78
Suffolk	71	80
Surrey	77	74
Sussex	95	100
Thames Valley	63	65
Warwickshire	80	94
West Mercia	74	79
West Midlands	54	53
West Yorkshire	69	58
Wiltshire	92	94
England and Wales	76	74

Gun Crime

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance has been issued to police regarding the use of informants in cases of gun crime. [175540]

Caroline Flint: The use of informants in cases of gun crime is subject to the standard police operating procedures, which apply generally in relation to the use of informants.

Home Detention Curfew Scheme

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners were recalled for failing to adhere to home detention conditions during January and February in each prison region. [163270]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 23 March 2004]:* The number of prisoners who were recalled for failing to adhere to the home detention curfew conditions during January and February 2004, by Prison Service management region, is given in the table.

HOC recalls, by Prison Service management area from which the prisoner was discharged

	January 2004	*February 2004*
All Establishments	220	189
North East	5	3
Yorks and Humberside	20	18
East Midlands (N)	10	9
North West	20	19
East Midlands (S)	15	14
Eastern	15	19
West Midlands	31	22
Wales	6	4
South West	15	16
Thames Valley and Hants	5	7
Kent Surrey and Sussex	12	6
London	8	9
Female Estate	32	20
Juveniles Estate	2	2
High Security Estate	8	8
Contracted Out	16	13

Illegal Arms Trade (Nuclear Weapons)

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether investigations by the police authorities have been undertaken in respect of individuals and companies for the offence of assisting or inducing weapons-related acts overseas, in particular for developing, producing or participating in the development or production of a nuclear weapon; and if he will make a statement. [174627]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

Investigation and prosecution of offences involving assisting or inducing weapons-related acts overseas is the responsibility of HM Customs and Excise. However, Customs' cannot comment on whether a matter is under current investigation; Exemption 4 (Law enforcement and legal proceedings) of the Open Government Code applies.

Customs have an important role in countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. They work closely with other Government Departments and agencies, in the UK and overseas, to ensure that effective action is taken against proliferators.

Any prosecution for such offences require the consent of the Attorney-General.

Immigration Training

Mr. Sarwar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what funding was provided to the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner to provide immigration training for voluntary sector workers in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004. [171792]

Mr. Browne: The Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC), in its annual business plan, submits its budget proposals to the Home Office for approval. The total budget allocation is then paid, in monthly grant in aid payments, to the OISC, which then has authority to incur the expenditure approved without further reference to the Department.

The OISC community training budgets for the relevant period, which have been approved by the Home Office, were:

	£
2002–03	200,000
2003–04	175,000
2004–05	170,000

National Identity Register

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in what circumstances the police would be authorised to access data stored on the National Identity Register. [170258]

Mr. Browne: It is incorrect to say that any body or person will have "access" to the register, rather the legislation will permit the Secretary of Sate to disclose information where a person consents or, where a person does not consent, only for specified purposes to specified persons.

People will therefore be free to produce an identity card on a voluntary basis, including to a police officer, as a means of establishing their identity.

There is an exception to the general bar on disclosing information from the register without consent where disclosure to the police is in the interests of national security and for the prevention and investigation of crime, as set out in Clause 20(3) of the draft Identity Cards Bill. Such disclosure may be authorised only where the Secretary of State is satisfied that it was not reasonably practicable for the police to have obtained the information by other means. For example, if fingerprint information is recorded on the register, the police would first have to search their own fingerprint records before resorting to the register. In addition, Clause 24(2) enables the Secretary of State to impose other requirements that must be satisfied before such a disclosure is made.

Correspondence

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will publish the investigatory report referred to in the letter to the hon. Member for Totnes from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State dated 17 March 2004, regarding the treatment of Mr. Torben Vannan and Mr. Calvin John Vannan at Heathrow airport on 15 February 2004. [172761]

Mr. Browne: I apologise for the delay in providing a substantive response to the hon. Member's letter of 3 March.

The investigating officer has now completed his report, and I wrote on 25 May detailing the outcome of the inquiries into the concerns he raised.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will answer the question from the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South of 29 January 2004, reference 152236. [165364]

Paul Goggins: I replied to the hon. Member on 26 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 759W.

Police (Lancashire)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether radios used by Lancashire police work in adjoining police areas; and whether they are compatible with radios used by *(a)* Cumbria, *(b)* Merseyside and *(c)* Greater Manchester police forces. [175495]

Caroline Flint: Operational arrangements are in place to ensure that Lancashire police can communicate with neighbouring forces.

Lancashire police can already communicate seamlessly with Greater Manchester police using the new Airwave system. Airwave will be available in Merseyside and Cumbria by the end of March 2005.

Probation Service

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what budget was set for the National Probation Directorate at the commencement of the financial year 2003–04; what the change in gross provision was; and if he will make a statement. [168464]

Paul Goggins: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave on 18 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 860W.

Racial Equality

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the Commission for Racial Equality's section 44 funding is for 2004–05, broken down by region. [172830]

Fiona Mactaggart: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave on 14 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 862W.

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the panel members who decided Commission for Racial Equality section 44 funding for 2004–05. [172848]

Fiona Mactaggart: The members of the Communities and Partnerships Committee who made the decisions on Getting Results funding this year were as follows:

Kay Hampton (Committee Chair)

Trevor Phillips

Gloria Mills

Julia Chain

Khurshid Ahmed

Security Cameras

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much public funding has been spent on CCTV security cameras in Manchester, Central since 1997. [174280]

Ms Blears: Since 1997, the Home Office has provided £3,515,685 to Manchester City Council for Close Circuit Television schemes.

Allocation of that funding locally is a matter for Manchester City Council and Greater Manchester Police. The information is not held centrally.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Illegal Websites

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many websites regulatory bodies have closed down because of the presence of illegal images and content in each of the last two years. [174833]

Mr. Timms: In the UK the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) is charged with the responsibility of managing consumer complaints about potentially illegal content online.

The IWF's Internet Hotline deals with reports of potentially illegal Internet content, such as websites, newsgroups and online groups that contain: images of child abuse anywhere in the world; adult material that potentially breaches the Obscene Publications Act in the UK; and criminally racist material in the UK. Statistics taken from the IWF's annual reports show that in 2002, 88 UK websites and in 2003, 34 UK websites were removed due to potentially illegal content. For images of child abuse hosted overseas the information is passed to IWF's counterparts and law enforcement agencies in those countries and there are no statistics on how many of these sites have been closed down.

Advantage West Midlands

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many staff were employed in a press office or public relations capacity *(a)* by Advantage West Midlands and *(b)* by each regional development agency in (i) 1999, (ii) 2000, (iii) 2001, (iv) 2002 and (v) 2003. [172371]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* The information requested is set out in the following table.

Answers calculated as equivalent full-time posts:

RDA	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Advantage West Midlands	0	0	1	3	3
East of England Development Agency	2.5	3	3.25	3.25	3.5
East Midlands Development Agency	0	0	[1]0	2	2
London Development Agency	0	0	0	5	5
North West Development Agency	0	0	4	5	7
ONE North East	6	6	6	6	7
South East England Development Agency	1.4	2.25	2.1	3.7	5.6
South West of England Regional Development Agency	1	1	3	4	5
Yorkshire Forward	2	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5

[1] Between these years, emda outsourced to an agency.

Beagle Project

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to publish the inquiry into the Beagle project. [174853]

Ms Hewitt: The recommendations from the Report of the Inquiry into the Beagle project will be published on 24 May 2004. The Inquiry covered a wide range of important issues of concern to the United Kingdom, the European Space Agency (ESA) and other member states in ESA. Some of these matters are necessarily confidential, or commercially sensitive to firms in the United Kingdom, so the full report cannot be published under Exemption 1—Defence Security and International Relations and Exemption 13 Third Party Commercial Confidence's of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. Copies of the recommendations will be placed in the Libraries of House.

Belize

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the value was of *(a)* imports and *(b)* exports to Belize in each of the past 25 years in real terms. [175242]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Information on the UK's trade with Belize in real terms is not available. Data on trade at current prices are given in the following table.

UK trade in goods with Belize 1979–2003

£ million, current prices

	UK Exports	UK Imports
1979	10.4	12.1
1980	9.4	13.2
1981	10.0	15.1
1982	10.4	13.3
1983	8.7	11.6
1984	11.5	15.9
1985	8.3	15.0
1986	8.2	18.0
1987	7.5	22.8
1988	12.1	22.5
1989	11.8	24.3
1990	12.4	22.7
1991	14.6	20.8
1992	11.1	32.2
1993	16.6	37.4
1994	12.8	42.5
1995	14.3	47.0
1996	10.2	47.9
1997	13.6	36.3
1998	11.6	33.6
1999	11.7	43.2
2000	11.5	39.6
2001	13.8	34.9
2002	13.7	31.6
2003	17.4	42.0

Source:
Compiled by SU Statistics from HM Customs & Excise data.

Competitiveness Council

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the outcome was of the Competitiveness Council of 17 to 18 May; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including its voting record; and if she will make a statement. [174810]

Jacqui Smith: I represented the UK at the Competitiveness Council on 17–18 May 2004.

The Council held a debate on better regulation and on competitiveness and innovation, based on a number of documents covering: industry policy; the strategy for life sciences and biotechnology; proactive competition policy; and the latest state aid scoreboard. Ministers emphasised the need for reduced, simpler regulation the importance of SMEs, innovation, the need for new policies to stimulate private investment in scientific research, and the development of close links between industry and universities. The UK drew attention to the need for economic reform and structural change, and called for the Council to match its broad aspirations with decisions on key dossiers.

Two sets of Council Conclusions on Better Regulation, and on Competitiveness and Innovation were formally agreed.

Ministers exchanged views on the proposed Chemicals Regulation (REACH). The discussion focused on three key areas: registration, manufacturers' duty of care, and the role of the EU Chemicals Agency. Ministers stressed the importance of striking the right balance between ensuring that the EU chemicals industry remains competitive and delivering benefits for human health and the environment.

The UK advocated a system of "One substance-One registration". Most member states expressed support for the principle, but said that the proposal needed further development. The presidency invited the UK to bring forward its proposal as soon as possible, and asked the working group to do further work on the other aspects of registration and the role of the Chemicals Agency.

Commissioner Busquin gave a brief update on the negotiations on the International Thermonuclear Experimental reactor (ITER), with the aim of securing the ITER site in the EU.

The Council discussed the Commission's proposals on the admission of third country nationals to carry out scientific research in the EU. The Council recognised that it was vital for the EU to have more researchers and largely welcomed the proposal.

However, the Council noted that further work was needed to refine the proposal, in particular in relation to the role and responsibilities of the host organisation, whether to differentiate between public and private organisations, and the procedures for family reunification. These messages are to be passed to the President of the Justice and Home Affairs Council.

In the absence of an expected Commission Communication, Commissioner Busquin gave a brief presentation on the Future of European research.

The Council reached agreement on the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive. The UK supported the Directive's aim of harmonising national consumer protection laws against unfair commercial marketing and advertising.

The Presidency confirmed that a first reading agreement had been reached with the European Parliament on the Regulation on Consumer Protection Co-Operation. The aim of the Regulation is to promote co-operation between national authorities on the enforcement of consumer protection legislation.

The Council was unable to reach agreement on a Regulation on Sales Promotion. The proposal aims to create a harmonised regime for sales promotions involving offers of discounts, free gifts, premiums, and promotional games and contests.

Member states were unable to reach agreement on the "Country of Origin" principle, as well as a number of other issues, notably: promotional games, information requirements, and the application of the Regulation to pharmaceuticals.

Discussion on the final outstanding points on the Regulation to establish a Community Patent continued at the Council. Member states could not agree on the legal effect of translations of a patent claim and the length of time for filing such translations. Germany, France, Spain and Portugal all indicated they could not support the Presidency compromise text. The Presidency stated it would bring the matter to the attention of the President of the European Council.

The Council reached political agreement on a common position on a Directive on the Patentability of Computer-Implemented Inventions. The Directive contains provisions in accordance with the practice of the European Patent Organisation on the patentability of such inventions.

The Council also reached political agreement on a common position on the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications Directive. The Directive aims to create a clearer system for the recognition of qualifications in the field of regulated professions by consolidating 15 Directives covering all professions into a single legislative text.

Political agreement on a common position was reached on a Regulation to amend the Community Customs Code, which aims to improve security at EU external frontiers.

The UK voted in favour of all of the legislative measures agreed at the Council.

Computer File Formats

Mr. Allan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her Department's policy is in respect of the computer file formats used for the *(a)* distribution and *(b)* archiving of publicly available documents. [173365]

Ms Hewitt: Publicly available documents are distributed through the DTI websites predominantly in HTML and PDF to ensure that the information is as widely accessible as possible. On the main DTI website formal publications are available at http://www.dti.gov.uk/publications/.

We are proposing to archive and preserve electronic publications within the Department's electronic record and document management system in the format in which they were published. We will be reviewing this approach in discussion with the National Archives.

Democratic Republic of Congo

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what action she has taken in response to the report entitled Unanswered Questions, Companies, Conflict, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. [175552]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 24 May 2004]*: This report, which poses questions primarily based on the published UN reports, is being studied with interest. We have contact with Rights and Accountability in Development, the authors of this report.

Departmental Annual Report

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the reasons were for the increase in the total net administration costs of her Department between 2002–03 and 2003–04 as set out in the Departmental Report 2004, Cm 6216, page 161. [171612]

Ms Hewitt: As is the standard approach, the 2004 Departmental Report provides an-actual outturn figure for 2002–03 and an estimated outturn figure for 2003–04. These two figures are not equivalent and cannot be compared directly. The actual outturn figure for 2003–04 will be published in the 2005 Departmental Report.

The actual outturn figure for 2003–04 was lower than estimated, mainly due to the generation of additional receipts, and some technical accounting adjustments. On an equivalent basis, the net administration cost for 2002–03, was £16 million higher than 2002–03, and this was awarded through Spending Review 2002. The reasons for this were an additional £8 million for front line services in the Employment Tribunals Service, ACAS and The Insolvency Service, £5 million for

electronic Government IT services and an additional £3 million covering a range of activities across the Department.

Departmental Publications

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 79W, on departmental publications, if she will provide the information her Department holds centrally on the newspapers, magazines and periodicals for which it is responsible. [173962]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* I am enclosing a list of serial publications as notified to my Department's Publications Unit. The list is of serial publications (excluding annual publications) that were produced between 1 April 2003 and 31 March 2004 and contains a brief description of each publication's subject matter.

Publication title	*Subject matter*
Automotive industries: driving towards a cleaner future. Issue 1	Industry—Automotive
Biotech advantage: making the best use of intellectual property from bioscience	Industry—Biotechnology
Biotechnology: the science of the 21st century. Issue 1	Industry—Biotechnology
Bio-wise newsletter	Industry—Biotechnology
Cleaner coal research matters	Energy—Cleaner Coal Technology Programme
Compensation for miners: coal health claims newsletter. Latest issue 8, spring 2004	Mining
East midlands news: the newsletter of export support activity in the East Midlands	UK Trade and Investment
ENERGIE focus	Energy
Energy trends	Energy
Environmental opportunities: the magazine for the environmental goods and services industry	Environment
Environmental technologies: UK greening up. Issue 1	Environment
e-sight. (Internet only)	Science and Technology
Food and drink. UK: an appetite for business. Issue 1	Manufacturing
Global Watch	Science and Technology
Hawliadaou Afiechydon Glo. Llythyr newyddion 8. Gwanwyn 2004	Mining
Information communications technologies: UK at the hub of the business network. Issue 1	Information and Communication Technology
Invest.UK: key facts	Inward Investment
Joint energy security of supply working group (JESS): third report.	Energy
Key facts	UK Trade and Investment
Korean advisers group newsletter	UK Trade and Investment
lawndal I Lowyr. Hawliadau Afiechydon Glo. Llythyr newyddion 7, hydref 2003	Mining
LBP news	Business Support Services
Machinery: independent sources of advice	Standards
Machinery: transposed harmonised standards	Standards
Machinery: UK approved bodies	Standards
Monthly bulletin of indices: price adjustment formulae for construction contracts	Industry—Construction
Monthly statement of bricks, blocks and cement	Industry—Construction
Monthly statistics of building materials and components	Industry—Construction
New review	Energy—New and Renewable, General
North America News	UK Trade and Investment
Objective: the UK structural funds newsletter	European Union
Overseas trade: the Trade Partners UK magazine for trade promotion and development	UK Trade and Investment
Pressure equipment: United Kingdom conformity assessment bodies. (Internet only)	Standards
Quality mark newsletter	Industry—Construction
Quarterly building price and cost indices: public sector construction works	Industry—Construction
Quarterly energy prices	Energy
Regional competitiveness and state of the regions	Competitiveness
Space UK: forum for space news	Space
Telcommunications: UK at the hub of the telecommunications revolution. Issue 1	Telecommunications
Telecom times. (Internet only)	Telecommunications
The manufacturing advisory service newsletter	Manufacturing
TPI news	Environment
UKTI Investment Bulletin	UK Trade and Investment
UKWatch: spotlight on British innovation	UK Trade and Investment
Updating percentages: adjustments for measured term contracts	Industry—Construction

Discrimination Law

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many proceedings were brought by employees under discrimination law in each year since 1997 concerning *(a)* sexual orientation and *(b)* religious belief; and what estimate she has made of the number of such proceedings in 2004 to 2006. [175149]

Ms Hewitt: The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 and the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 came into force on 1 and 2 December 2003 respectively. These Regulations give all workers a right to bring Employment Tribunal proceedings about discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, or religion or belief, a right which did not in general exist before.

In the period December 2003 to April 2004 there have been 30 Employment Tribunal applications registered by the Employment Tribunals Service relating to sexual orientation and 22 applications relating to religion or belief. These figures will be included with others in the Employment Tribunals Service's Annual Report, which is due to be published and laid before the House in mid-July.

In the Regulatory Impact Assessments prepared for the above Regulations, the DTI estimated that there would be around 1,000 applications a year relating to

sexual orientation and around 1,000 applications a year relating to religion or belief.

Domestic Heating

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of domestic properties in Great Britain are heated by *(a)* electricity, *(b)* solid fuel and *(c)* natural gas. [175857]

Mr. Timms: Information on the fuels used to heat domestic properties in Great Britain is published by BRE in its Domestic Energy Fact File. The latest available data relate to 2001, and are shown in the table.

		Main form of heating in 2001 (percentage)				
Type of dwelling	*Number of homes*	*Solid fuel heating*	*Electric heating*	*Gas heating*	*Oil heating*	*Other form of heating*
Centrally heated	22,030,000	3.02	10.78	79.79	4.29	2.12
Non-centrally heated	2,392,000	12.76	31.25	53.35	0.00	2.64
All	24,422,000	3.98	12.78	77.20	3.87	2.17

ECGD

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will place research conducted on the competitive environment of the Export Credits Guarantee Department in the Library. [174828]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: In April 2004 ECGD published its International Comparison Report, which compares ECGD with other large export credit agencies. The report is already available on ECGD's website but a copy will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assistance is given by the Export Credits Guarantee Department to UK companies wishing to trade with Russia. [174838]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Export Credits Guarantee Department can offer medium term cover on individual cases in Russia with a value of up to £80 million although much larger cases can be considered. ECGD is also able to offer Overseas Investment Insurance to protect UK direct investment in Russia against the risks of war, expropriation and restrictions on remittances.

Equality and Human Rights Commission

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment has been made of the costs that will be incurred by businesses in dealing with the guidance of the Equality and Human Rights Commission; and what assessment has been made of the costs that will be incurred by businesses in complying with its codes of practice. [174703]

Ms Hewitt: The Government published the White Paper "Fairness for All: A New Commission for Equality and Human Rights" on Wednesday 12 May 2003. The White Paper sets out our proposals for a new body to meet the challenges we must overcome if we are to end discrimination and promote respect for human rights. The establishment of a single organisation to champion equality, diversity and human rights meets the strong call from the business community for a more joined-up approach to these issues.

An assessment of the costs to businesses due to the creation of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR) has been made in the Partial Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA), which forms part of the White Paper. As the establishment of the CEHR imposes no new regulatory burden on business there will be no costs associated with complying with guidance or codes of practice issued by the CEHR, other than where a business is currently in breach of existing legislation. Guidance and codes of practice issued by the CEHR will make businesses more aware of their legal responsibilities, thus reducing the risk of litigation.

Nevertheless, there may be small costs associated with reading and understanding initial guidance issued by the CEHR, estimated to be around £39 per business. However as this guidance is likely to cover all areas of discrimination and human rights legislation it should offer an overall saving in time and cost spent in reading guidance related to each individual area, as is currently the case.

EU Social Chapter

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the effects of the EU Social Chapter on the residents of Blackpool North and Fleetwood. [175886]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The residents of Blackpool North and Fleetwood have benefited from the EU Social Chapter by having their employment rights extended to include:

the right to Parental Leave which gives parents the right to 13 weeks unpaid leave at the birth or adoption of a child;

the entitlement of part-time workers to the same pro-rata terms and conditions of employment as full time workers, thereby removing any discrimination and improving the quality of part-time jobs;

the provision that once a prima facie case has been made in an employment tribunal claim, the burden of proof is placed on the defendant (usually the employer), who will need to demonstrate that sex discrimination has not occurred;

rights under the Fixed Term Work Directive that provide equal treatment and prevent abuse of fixed term contracts;

rights under the European Works Council Directive which requires companies with at least 1000 employees in total and at least 150 workers in each of the two Member States, to establish structures for consulting workers on issues that affect them and;

In addition, the Information and Consultation of Employees Directive to be implemented in the UK by March 2005, establishes a right to new minimum standards for workforce communication and involvement in large firms.

Fuel Crisis (Emergency Powers)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the legal basis is for the use of emergency powers to secure energy supplies during a fuel crisis; and what parliamentary scrutiny there has been of the emergency powers which would be used to secure energy supplies during a fuel crisis. [174637]

Mr. Timms: The Energy Act 1976 allows the regulation or prohibition of the production, supply, acquisition or use of fuel where there is or is imminent an actual or threatened emergency in the UK affecting fuel or electricity supplies or to meet international obligations. The Act provides wide-ranging powers to make Orders of general application (subject to negative parliamentary procedure) and specific directions to particular persons (including companies). An Order would lapse after 28 sitting (parliamentary) days, unless it is revoked earlier or the Order is approved by affirmative resolution of both Houses and which then continues for the rest of the 12- month period, unless revoked earlier. The Act provides that the Order may be continued for 12-month periods more than once, each time after resolution of both Houses.

Invest-UK Activities

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the numbers of jobs that were *(a)* created and *(b)* safeguarded as a result of Invest-UK activities in each year between 2000 and 2003. [174690]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The following figures are UK Trade and Investment's assisted inward investors' estimates of job creation in the first three years of their investments:

	Jobs created	*Jobs safeguarded*
2000–01	15,857	6,624
2001–02	4,299	1,252
2002–03	5,669	3,048

In addition UKTI provides funding to the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), and publicises the UK generally as a good destination for inward investors. Inward investors' estimates of the total number of jobs created and safeguarded is as follows:

	Jobs created	*Jobs safeguarded*
2000–01	71,168	52,359
2001–02	35,362	24,069
2002–03	34,850	20,265

Nuclear Industry

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her policy is for retaining a skill base for the nuclear industry in the UK. [174809]

Mr. Timms: To fulfil the Government's policy commitment to develop and implement a nuclear work force development strategy the Department has been closely involved with the formation of a Sector Skills Council to represent the needs of the nuclear industry. Cogent Sector Skills Council was launched on 2 March, covering nuclear, chemical manufacturing and oil and gas industries. Cogent will take a strategic view of the nuclear sector to ensure that the education and training base can meet the nuclear employers current and future needs.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many instances of theft of *(a)* nuclear waste and *(b)* spent fuel rods from nuclear plants in the UK were reported to the police in (i) 2001, (ii) 2002 and (iii) 2003. [174611]

Mr. Timms: There were no reported thefts of nuclear waste or spent fuel rods from civil nuclear sites in the years specified.

Petrol Prices

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent discussions the Government has had with oil producers on reducing the price of petrol. [174844]

Mr. Timms: International oil prices are one of a number of factors that influence the price of petrol.

Other Ministers, officials and myself meet bilaterally and multilaterally with representatives of oil producing nations on a regular basis as part of our ongoing dialogue with oil and gas producing countries. For example, I led a UK delegation to the International Energy Forum in Amsterdam, 22–24 May 2004, for informal discussions between producing and consuming nations on a wide range of energy issues.

At the recent IMF meeting we joined other countries in expressing our concern at the high level of the oil price as one of the risks to the world recovery. There are a number of factors underlying the current high price but we are urging oil producers to increase production to help reduce the price to a more sustainable level.

Productivity

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her policy is for *(a)* increasing the productivity and *(b)* cutting the costs of (i) her Department and (ii) its agencies and non-departmental public bodies. [172189]

Ms Hewitt: I refer to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 148–49W.

Remote Wind Generation

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how the Government's energy policy takes account of the cost estimated by Ofgem of reinforcing the transmission grid in order to cope with the scale of wind farm development envisaged. [174804]

Mr. Timms: The Government have already undertaken a significant amount of analysis both prior to and after the 2003 Energy White Paper on the costs associated with incorporating increasing amounts of renewable generation into the electricity network.

We believe the right framework is in place to deliver the reinforcement of the transmission grid needed to support the Government's energy policy objectives. The transmission operators are responding to the increased level of demand for connections to the system from renewable energy generators. The market is regulated by Ofgem to ensure that investment in new transmission

infrastructure is cost efficient and the consumer is protected from the consequences of unnecessary transmission expenditure. In addition, the industry is working to ensure that wind and other renewable generation connection to the system in future will have the characteristics necessary to maintain the integrity of the electricity networks.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how the Government's energy policy for large-scale intermittent wind power generation addresses the diseconomy of part-time operation thereby forced upon the necessary conventional back-up; and how this deterrent to back-up generation will affect the risks to security and stability. [174807]

Mr. Timms: Although wind generation is undoubtedly less predictable and more intermittent than conventional generation, when aggregated nationally, the implications for the operation of the electricity system are significantly mitigated. Work by the National Grid Company indicates that it will be some years before the growth in wind generation has a noticeable impact on overall reserve plant requirements, although there will come a time when additional reserve will be required.

The impact of this in reduced overall efficiency of generation and associated increase in emissions will be negligible compared with the savings in emissions realised by the operation of the wind generation itself. Nevertheless, the Government in conjunction with the electricity industry, is exploring possible means of further mitigating the effects of intermittency and unpredictability.

Renewable Energy (Oldham, West and Royton)

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the effect of recent trends in investment in renewable energy on residents of Oldham West and Royton. [170879]

Mr. Timms: As I far as I am aware recent trends in investment have not led directly to new renewables capacity in Oldham West and Royton itself.

However, there are a number of proposals for developments in the surrounding area. United Utilities have already submitted a section 36 application for a 26 turbine development at Scout Moor, and an application for a two turbine development at Uglow Moor has also been submitted. There are also a number of solar PV developments (both constructed and under assessment) in nearby Rochdale and Bury.

Software Patents

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when the Council of Ministers will next discuss the proposed European Directive on the patentability of computer-implemented inventions; and if she will oppose any proposals during the discussions for the extension of software patents. [174744]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 20 May 2004]*: The competitiveness council discussed the proposed Directive on the patentability of computer-implemented inventions at its meeting on 17 and 18 May 2004, which my right hon. Friend the Minister for Industry and the Regions attended for the UK. The position of the UK Government has always been to clarify the law on the patentability of computer-implemented inventions, not to change the extent of patentability. Political agreement was reached on a revised text. The UK supported the Directive in the Council and we would oppose any proposal for the extension of software patents.

Trade Shows

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the benefits provided by Government-selected sponsors to UK firms that receive grants to help co-ordinate trade shows abroad. [174706]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Accredited Trade Organisations (formerly known as Sponsors) add value to Government grants by providing support services to exhibitors before, during and after the event. The performance of each ATO is assessed by customer satisfaction scores, compliance with the terms and conditions of the support scheme and contribution to UK Trade and Investment targets on developing new and new-to-market exporters. All ATOs must maintain a basic level of performance to remain accredited, and future budget allocations to ATOs are linked to performance.

Surveys carried out by the University of Reading estimate that 70 per cent. of companies receiving exhibition grants through ATOs register a sustainable improvement in their business performance.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much money her Department has paid to small firms for help in co-ordinating trade fairs abroad in each of the last five years; and of that money, how much has then been paid to Government-selected sponsors. [174707]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Figures for grants to small and medium sized enterprises are available only for 2003–04, when 81 per cent. of company grants were given to firms in that category. The following table extrapolates that percentage to cover earlier years, showing total company grants and (in brackets) grants to SMEs. We do not routinely collect information on the total amounts SMEs pay to Accredited Trade Organisations (formerly known as Sponsors) for the services they provide and this could only be established at disproportionate cost.

£ million

	Total company grants	*Grants to SMEs*
1999–2000	14.2	(11.5)
2000–01	16.8	(13.6)
2001–02	16.6	(13.4)
2002–03	18.2	(14.7)
2003–04	16	(14.6)

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the

role of sponsors in helping UK firms co-ordinate trade shows abroad and their cost to *(a)* UK businesses and *(b)* UK public funds. [174858]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Accredited Trade Organisations (formerly known as Sponsors) provide a range of services, including assessing companies' suitability for specific events, negotiating deals with exhibition organisers on stand space and construction, promoting the UK group at the event, troubleshooting on exhibitors' behalf and processing grant claims. On the costs of this to UK businesses I refer the hon. Member to the PQ No. 174707 answered today. In 2003–04 UK Trade & Investment gave grants totalling £2 million to Accredited Trade Organisations for organising UK groups at 438 exhibitions.

Wind Turbines

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many wind turbines in Wales have *(a)* been erected and *(b)* not been erected despite being given planning permission. [169755]

Mr. Timms: As far as we are aware, the total number of wind turbines within Wales and with UK grid connection is 394, 30 of these are offshore at North Hoyle.

The total number of wind turbines to be erected for new projects within 2004, within Wales and with UK grid connection is 75.

We have no records of the number of "off-grid" turbines, nor of wind turbines granted permission but not built.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Middle East

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the government of Israel over the effect of Israeli military action on *(a)* homes, *(b)* water supply systems and *(c)* other infrastructure funded by his Department in the territories governed by the Palestinian Authority. [175141]

Mr. Rammell: The Government are deeply concerned at recent Israeli demolition of Palestinian homes in Rafah. We recognise Israel's need to defend itself within international law, but these actions constituted a form of collective punishment and were contrary both to international law and to Israel's commitments under the Roadmap. The UK made representations to the Israeli Embassy and Prime Minister Sharon's office in Tel Aviv.

We have made clear our concerns to the Government of Israel about damage to water sources and the destruction of Palestinian agricultural land caused by Israeli actions. In April we made representations to the Israeli authorities about the destruction of a HMG funded latrine near Hebron. We will continue to do so when such incidents occur.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with his counterpart in the US on Israeli actions in the Gaza Strip. [175040]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary speaks to his US counterpart frequently on a wide range of issues, including the Middle East Peace Process. It is the longstanding practice of successive Governments not to make public the details of discussions with foreign Governments, under exemption 1 *(b)* of part 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Israeli Government concerning current activity in the Gaza Strip. [175042]

Mr. Rammell: Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials made representations to the Israeli Charge in London on 18 May and on 21 May and to the Israeli Prime Minister's Office in Tel Aviv on 18 May, about the impact of the Israel Defence Forces in operations in Rafah. In a press statement on 19 May, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary expressed his profound concern about the deaths of Palestinian civilians demonstrating against house demolitions. Israel must act within international law and refrain from using excessive force and taking actions which amount to collective punishment.

Chad

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the Movement for Democracy and Justice in Chad's claim of having captured the Slafist Group for Preaching and Combat's second-in-command, Amari Saifi; and if he will make a statement. [175085]

Mr. Mullin: We are unable to confirm the capture of Amari Saifi.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with *(a)* his counterpart in Chad, *(b)* other representatives of the Government of Chad and *(c)* United Kingdom representatives in Chad concerning the army mutiny of the night of 16th to 17th May; and if he will make a statement. [175110]

Mr. Mullin: The Government has had no discussions with the Government of Chad about the incidents in N'Djamena on 16, 17 and 18 May. The UK is not represented in Chad; it is covered as necessary by our High Commission in Yaounde, Cameroon.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the *(a)* national and *(b)* regional security impact of the army mutiny which took place in Chad on the night of 16 to 17May; and if he will make a statement. [175111]

Mr. Mullin: The facts and causes of the incident in N'Djamena on 16, 17 and 18 May remain unclear, and any assessment of the national and regional security impact would be speculative.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment of the security impact of the army mutiny which took place in Chad on the night of 16 to 17 May he has received from the United Kingdom representatives in *(a)* Niger, *(b)* Nigeria, *(c)* Cameroon, *(d)* Central African Republic and *(e)* Sudan; and if he will make a statement. [175112]

Mr. Mullin: UK representatives in Cameroon, where the UK's Ambassador to Chad resides, are monitoring the situation. The reasons for the incident in N'Djamena on 16, 17 and 18 May remain unclear. We have had no information from UK representatives in Nigeria and Sudan. The UK is not represented in Niger or the Central African Republic.

Correspondence

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the hon. Member for West Worcestershire will receive a response to his letter of 29 March, reference 175680/04. [174748]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer of 20 May 2004]:* I apologise to the hon. Member for the late reply to his letter. This was the result of an administrative error within the department. I will ensure he receives a reply without further delay.

Cuba

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the United Kingdom's *(a)* policy on and *(b)* relationship with Cuba. [175148]

Mr. Rammell: UK policy towards Cuba is one of constructive engagement and dialogue, as set out by the EU's Common Position on Cuba which was adopted in 1996. The Common Position states that, "The main objective of the European Union in its relations with Cuba is to encourage a process of peaceful transition to pluralistic democracy and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as improvement in the living standards of the Cuban people." We do not favour isolating Cuba, and have consistently voted against the US Embargo at the United Nations General Assembly.

Following a crackdown on the peaceful opposition in March 2003, the EU—in line with the Common Position—condemned Cuba's actions and adopted a series of measures that reflected our human rights concerns. The Cuban response to these measures was to reject all EU development aid, and to "freeze" contact with EU Embassies in Havana. Nevertheless the UK continues to maintain close co-operation with Cuba in areas as diverse as child protection, migration and law enforcement, and encourages trade, tourism, education, sport, science and cultural links between the two countries. We remain committed to dialogue.

Darfur

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the Government's policy is in relation to the crisis in Darfur; and if he will make a statement. [175841]

Mr. Mullin: We are seriously concerned about the crisis in Darfur. The humanitarian needs are enormous, and civilian protection is a priority. The UN have reported disturbing patterns of massive human rights violations which may constitute war crimes and/or crimes against humanity. While the UN's report makes no conclusion as to ethnic cleansing, it does note that attacks by Government forces and Janjaweed militia appear to have been largely ethnically based. We, and our EU partners, have made clear that alleged abuses should be thoroughly investigated.

My right hon. Friends, the Foreign Secretary, the Secretary of State for International Development, and I registered strongly our concerns with the Sudanese Foreign Minister when he visited London on 11 May. We are calling on the Government of Sudan and the Darfur groups to implement fully the 8 April ceasefire agreement. In particular the Sudanese Government must act now to rein in the Janjaweed, and all parties should co-operate to enable quick deployment of the African Union-led ceasefire monitoring mission. We expect deployment of this mechanism to have a positive effect on civilian protection, and are currently considering a possible UK contribution to it. We hope that a fully-monitored ceasefire and improved humanitarian access will provide a conducive atmosphere for inclusive political talks on the future of Darfur to begin as soon as possible.

On 20 May the Sudanese Foreign Minister announced new measures governing the issue of visas and travel permits to humanitarian workers wishing to travel to Darfur. We hope that these measures will facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance to a population in great need. The Department for International Development have already committed over £16.5 million to UN agencies, the Red Cross and operational NGOs in response to the crisis, making the UK the second biggest bilateral donor in Darfur. We have also provided key personnel to support the UN co-ordination effort.

Eritrea

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Eritrean Government about the Christians imprisoned for their faith. [174553]

Mr. Mullin: I raised this issue with President Isaias on 15 January. Our Embassy in Asmara raises it regularly with the Eritrean Government, most recently on 18 May.

Hutu Militia

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Rwanda in connection with the gangs of Hutu militia operating in the Congo. [174988]

Mr. Mullin: The presence of armed Rwandan Hutu groups in the Democratic Republic of Congo, dating back to the Rwandan genocide of 1994, is one of the key barriers to lasting peace in the Great Lakes region because of the threat they pose to Rwandan stability.

The UK has consistently pressed all parties in the region, including the Government of Rwanda, to co-operate on disarming these groups and resettling them back in Rwanda.

Iraq

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs with which private security companies the UK has contracts for services in Iraq; how much was paid to each in the financial year to 31 March; and what services they provide. [175094]

Mr. Rammell: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) employs private security companies to protect British civilian staff working at the British Office Baghdad or seconded to the FCO to work for the Coalition Provisional Authority. ArmorGroup Services Ltd. provide static guards at an approxmate cost of £1.1 million to 31 March 2004. Control Risks Group provide armed protection teams for mobile security at an approximate cost of £13.1 million to 31 March 2004.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the financial extent of the alleged corruption in the UN oil-for-food programme in Iraq. [175593]

Mr. Rammell: It is not possible to assess the financial extent of the alleged corruption in the UN oil-for-food programme in Iraq, pending completion of the independent UN and Iraqi investigations.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what fee income was earned by the UN Security Council for administering the UN Oil for Food programme in Iraq. [175594]

Mr. Rammell: The United Nations Security Council earned no fee income from the Oil for Food programme (OFF). Administration of the OFF programme was undertaken by the UN Secretariat's Office of the Iraq Programme. UN administrative and operational charges amounted to 2.2 per cent. of the programme's costs.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the amount of money made by Saddam Hussein's regime as a result of the alleged corruption in the UN Oil for Food programme. [175595]

Mr. Rammell: It is not possible to assess the financial extent of the alleged corruption in the UN Oil for Food programme in Iraq, pending completion of the independent UN and Iraqi investigations.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which banks were used to administer the UN Oil for Food programme in Iraq. [175596]

Mr. Rammell: The UN Treasury administered the banking arrangements of the Oil for Food programme. BNP Paribas was the only bank to issue letters of credit under the programme, and collateral to back those letters of credit was held by BNP Paribas. Funds that were not required to be used as collateral for letters of credit were invested with multiple banks based on competitive bidding.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the Coalition Provisional Authority's response to the Iraqi Governing Council's request for an independent investigation into the UN Oil for Food programme in Iraq. [175597]

Mr. Rammell: The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) has authorised the Iraqi Board of Supreme Audit (BSA) to pursue an independent investigation of the Oil for Food programme in Iraq. We welcome this investigation. Following an open tender process, Ernst & Young has won the contract to carry out the investigation on behalf of the BSA. We understand that the CPA will also co-operate fully with the UN's independent inquiry to ensure that investigators have access to the relevant information in Iraq.

Kenya

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which Ministers of the present government have visited Kenya in an official capacity. [175163]

Mr. Mullin: Since the election of President Mwai Kibaki and the National Rainbow Coalition party in December 2002, the following Ministers have made official visits to Kenya:

Right hon. Clare Short, then Secretary of State for International Development, January 2003:

Right. hon. Baroness Amos, then FCO Minister of State, January 2003

Right. hon. Baroness Amos, then Secretary of State for International Development, July 2003

Hon. Elliott Morley, Minister of State for the Environment and Agri-Environment, September 2003.

I made a four day-long visit to Kenya at the end of October 2003.

Kosovo

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what travel advice his Department is issuing to NGOs and humanitarian organisations about the safety of travel to *(a)* Gmice and *(b)* elsewhere in the region of Kamenia in Kosovo. [175842]

Mr. MacShane: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office travel advice for Kosovo, which applies to the entire province and is targeted at all British citizens, reads as follows:

"Because of continuing tensions, you should avoid non-essential (including holiday) travel to Kosovo and travel within the Presevo and Bujanovac districts of Southern Serbia."

Full travel advice can be found at www.fco.gov.uk and is updated regularly.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the current security situation *(a)* in Gmice and *(b)* elsewhere in the region of Kamenia in Kosovo; which cultural or ethnic group dominates the area; and if he will make a statement. [175843]

Mr. MacShane: According to the information we have received the overall security situation in Gmice and the municipality of Kamenica is currently stable.

The municipality of Kamencia is predominantly Albanian with several Serb villages.

Liberia

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the *(a)* effectiveness and *(b)* efficiency of the UN disarmament programme in Liberia; and if he will make a statement. [175185]

Mr. Mullin: We welcome the steps taken by the United Nations Mission in Liberia to restart the Disarmament, Demobilisation. Rehabilitation and Reintegration (DDRR) programme in April, and the improved arrangements put in place following the problems that arose in December. 16,981 ex-combatants have been disarmed since the restart of the programme.

It was agreed, at the International Contact Group on Liberia meeting in London on 11 May, that there needed to be increased focus on the Rehabilitation and Reintegration aspects of DDRR and that there should be continuity in the process. We are concerned at the disturbances of 17 May. It is the responsibility of the factions represented in the National Transitional Government of Liberia to ensure there is full co-operation with the DDRR process.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what contributions the UK Government has *(a)* pledged and *(b)* delivered to the UN disarmament programme in Liberia; and if he will make a statement. [175186]

Mr. Mullin: The UK has pledged a total of £6 million to the Disarmament, Demobilisation, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (DDRR) process, £4 million in 2004–05 and £2 million in 2005–06. So far £1 million has been transferred to the UN DDRR fund. We plan soon to decide how we commit the balance of funds for this financial year.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when *(a)* he and *(b)* members of his Department last met the UN Secretary-General's special representative for Liberia to discuss (i) the UN disarmament programme in Liberia and (ii) the security situation in Liberia; and if he will make a statement. [175187]

Mr. Mullin: I attended the International Contact Group on Liberia meeting in London on 11 May, which was also attended by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), Jaques Klein. SRSG Klein and I discussed a range of issues including the security situation and the disarmament programme.

Nigeria

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Nigerian Government to curb the sectarian violence in *(a)* the city of Kano, *(b)* the town of Yelwa and *(c)* the state of Taraba; and if he will make a statement. [174557]

Mr. Mullin: The British High Commission, together with the EU, has urged all parties to the disputes to exercise restraint, and has urged the Nigerian Government to exercise full respect for human rights and the rule of law in restoring order. The British High Commissioner travelled to Kano and his staff went to Plateau State to see the situation at first hand to make these points. We have offered humanitarian support to the relevant authorities.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate his Department has made of the numbers of people killed in Nigeria as a result of *(a)* political, *(b)* religious and *(c)* ethnic violence in each year since 1999; and if he will make a statement. [175194]

Mr. Mullin: The Nigerian Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution estimates that the total number of deaths from political, ethnic and religious violence between 1999–2003 is not less than 10,000.

We have expressed concern at the recent conflict in Plateau State in our public statement of 7 May, a copy of which together with the EU's statement on violence in Kano of 13 May, has been placed in the Library of the House. The British High Commission in Nigeria is in close touch with Federal and State authorities to press for a peaceful resolution to existing conflicts and longer-term reconciliation.

Organisation of American States

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the *(a)* environmental and *(b)* economic impact of the proposed free trade pact between the United States of America and Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, to be signed at the Organisation of American States in Washington DC on 28 May; and if he will make a statement. [175113]

Mr. Rammell: No assessment has been made of the impact of this third-party agreement.

Sri Lanka

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which areas of Sri Lanka *(a)* the British High Commissioner and *(b)* a member of his staff has visited during the last 12 months; and what action has been taken by his Department following receipt of the reports made by him or his staff. [175165]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The British High Commissioner has visited the districts of Kilinochchi, Kandy and the Vanni during the past 12 months. Members of the British High Commission have visited the districts of Nuwara Eliya, Badulla, Kegalle, Moneragala, Kandy, Trincomalee, Batticoloa, Ampara, Ratnapura, Kilinochchi, Anuradhapura, Vavuniya, Polonnaruwa. Jaffna. Sigiriya, Puttalam, Dambulla, Moratuwa, Hambantota, Galle, Matara and Diyatalawa. Their reports have been used to inform policy.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he last discussed with the Government of Sri Lanka human rights issues within that country; and if he will make a statement. [175166]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: I have not yet had the opportunity to discuss human rights issues with the new Sri Lankan Government. However I discussed the peace process, including the need to strengthen it with a credible and effective human rights enforcement machinery, last September with GL Peiris, then Minister for Constitutional Affairs, and government spokesman on the peace process. Officials at our High Commission in Colombo, including the High Commissioner, raise this issue with the Sri Lankan authorities on a regular basis.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what role Libya has played in the situation in Darfur, Sudan; and if he will make a statement. [174837]

Mr. Mullin: We have no evidence of Libyan involvement in the situation in Darfur.

Tibet

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the Government's policy on *(a)* Tibetan autonomy, *(b)* the level of recognition of Chinese suzerainty over Tibet and *(c)* the Tibetan people's right to independence. [175498]

Mr. Rammell: Successive British Governments have regarded Tibet as autonomous while recognising the special position of the Chinese authorities there. This remains our position.

Turkey (EU Accession)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the requirements placed upon Turkey for accession to the EU; and if he will make a statement on progress being made by Turkey in that regard. [175153]

Mr. MacShane: The requirements for Turkey's accession to the EU are set out in the Copenhagen criteria of 1993, and are the same as apply to all EU Candidates. To this end, the European Council decided in December 2002 that: "If the European Council in December 2004, on the basis of a report and a recommendation from the Commission, decides that Turkey fulfils the Copenhagen political criteria, the European Union will open accession negotiations with Turkey without delay."

We welcome the adoption by Turkey of wide-ranging constitutional and legislative reforms to meet the Copenhagen political criteria. Seven Packages of Legislative Reform have been passed since 2002, overhauling Turkey's government, penal and legal system, and—in an iterative process with the EU (most recently at the 18 May Association Council)—ensuring that Turkey's domestic reforms converge with EU norms. Eleven constitutional amendments are currently being finalised. These include abolition of the death penalty in all situations, abolition of State Security Courts, and establishment of supremacy of international law over domestic law.

My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister stressed the importance of effective implementation of reforms at the first UK/Turkey Summit on 17 May in Ankara, underlining the UK's strong support for Turkey's EU candidature and our determination to help Turkey comply with the Copenhagen political criteria in advance of December's European Council decision.

Visas

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many applications for visas have been refused at British High Commission offices in *(a)* Pakistan, *(b)* Sri Lanka and *(c)* India during the last 12 months. [175159]

Mr. Mullin: The UK visas Central Reference System reports the following statistics for visa applications between 1 May 2003 and 30 April 2004.

	Received	*Issued*	*Refused*	*Other*[1]	*Refused (percentage)*
Pakistan	131,987	97,132	25,725	9,130	19.5
Sri Lanka	30,453	21,032	8,518	903	28.0
India	315,439	246,713	58,479	10,247	18.5

[1] Other includes withdrawn, lapsed and pending applications

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Parliamentary Answers (Envelopes)

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission if he will make it his policy to stop the practice of despatching one page parliamentary answers to hon. Members in large heavy-duty envelopes. [174767]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: During the present Parliament I have answered 244 parliamentary questions, 24 of which were tabled by my hon. Friend. A copy of each answer is sent to the Member who tabled the question in an A4 brown manila envelope (Banner product 901–5043). This envelope is 100 per cent. recyclable paper and is made from 80–100 per cent. recycled stock, with at least 60–85 per cent. being post-consumer waste. On one occasion, due to a lack of stock, a different A4 manila envelope (Banner product 901–5033), which is made to the same standards, was used to circulate an answer.

I have given instructions that answers should in future be sent in white "wallet" envelopes (Banner product 900–0015), which are 100 per cent. recycled.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Age-Related Payments Bill

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in the Elmet constituency receive £100 help towards the payment of council tax. [174875]

Malcolm Wicks: The information requested is not available. The latest available data shows 8,270 households in the parliamentary constituency of Elmet with at least one resident aged 70 or over. We therefore expect a similar number to benefit from the one-off 70 plus payment announced by the Chancellor in his recent Budget.

The intention is for the payments to be made automatically with the 2004–05 Winter Fuel Payment, to those who are eligible and who do not need to claim it, before the end of the year. People who do not get a Winter Fuel Payment will need to claim the one-off payment from the Department for Work and Pensions before 31 March 2005.

Notes:

1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest five.

2. Any residence found to have four or more occupants is not included in these figures as it is assumed to be a Residential Care Nursing Home.

Source:

IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. sample of Winter Fuel Payments data for Winter 2003–04.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what discussions he has had with his colleagues in the Northern Ireland Office in relation to the extension of the Age-Related Payments Bill to Northern Ireland. [175144]

Malcolm Wicks: Officials in the Department for Work and Pensions are working closely with officials in the Department for Social Development. The intention is to provide for age-related payments in Northern Ireland by Order in Council.

Pension Credit

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in the Elmet constituency *(a)* have claimed the minimum income guarantee and *(b)* are claiming pension credit. [174873]

Malcolm Wicks: The information available is given in the following table. The Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) was replaced by Pension Credit on 6 October 2003. Those who were receiving MIG immediately prior to that date were transferred automatically to Pension Credit.

Minimum Income Guarantee and Pension Credit recipients, Elmet, October 2003 and April 2004

	Number
Minimum Income Guarantee (3 October 2003)	
Households	2,330
Individuals	2,645
Pension Credit (30 April 2004)	
Households	3,255
Individuals	3,865

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest five.

2. Figures for individuals include a small number of partners under age 60

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in *(a)* London and *(b)* Brent have claimed pension credit since it was introduced; and how many people in (i) London and (ii) Brent are entitled to claim pension credit. [172815]

Malcolm Wicks: At 30 April 2004 there were *(a)* 260,510 households (309,275 individuals) in London and *(b)* 10,565 households (12,775 individuals) in Brent receiving Pension Credit. Information on the number of people who are eligible for Pension Credit is not available in respect of individual local authority areas. However, we estimate that approximately 450,000 pensioner households in the London region are eligible for Pension Credit. This estimate is based on data from the Family Resources Survey for 2001–02. A revised estimate, based on data from the Family Resources Survey for 2002–03, will be available later this month.

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest five.

2. Individual recipients include a small number of partners under age 60.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many recipients of pension credit are receiving *(a)* less than 10p per week, *(b)* 10p to 19p per week, *(c)* 20p to 29p per week, *(d)* 30p to 39p per week, *(e)* 40p to 49p per week, *(f)* 50p to 59p per week, *(g)* 60p to 69p per week, *(h)* 70p to 79p per week, *(i)* 80p to 89p per week and *(j)* 90p to 99p per week in each Greater London borough. [173334]

Malcolm Wicks: The figures in question for individual London boroughs are too small to be reliable. The information for inner and outer London areas is in the table. An award of pension credit of less than 10p per week is not payable unless the person is receiving another benefit payable with pension credit.

Pension credit awards of less than £1, London Government Office Region (GOR), 30 April 2004

	Less than 10p	10p to 19p	20p to 29p	30p to 39p	40p to 49p	50p to 59p	60p to 69p	70p to 79p	80p to 89p	90p to 99p	Total
London GOR	60	85	85	75	100	115	90	105	120	125	960
Inner London-West	5	15	5	5	15	15	10	10	10	15	105
Inner London-East	10	15	20	15	30	30	25	30	25	30	230
Outer London-East and North East	15	20	35	25	30	20	20	25	40	30	260
Outer London-South	15	20	15	15	10	25	20	20	25	25	190
Outer London-West and North West	15	15	15	15	20	25	20	25	20	25	195

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest five.

2. Columns might not sum correctly due to rounding.

Enhanced New Deal

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have entered the Enhanced New Deal 25 plus *(a)* once, *(b)* twice, *(c)* three times and *(d)* four or more times; and if he will make a statement. [175064]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 21 May 2004]:* The information requested is in the table:

People Entering Enhanced New Deal 25 plus[1]

Number of starts on the programme	*Number of people*
1	157,110
2	35,150
3	18,170
4[1] Or more	7,820

[1] Or more

Source:
New Deal Evaluation Database

Through a combination of economic stability and radical labour market reforms, more than 1.9 million more people are in work now than in 1997 and unemployment at its lowest level for nearly 30 years.

Active labour market policies ensure people can take advantage of the many job opportunities coming up all the time. With UK unemployment the lowest for a generation, partly due to programmes like New Deal, the Government is extending help and support to other jobless people, especially lone parents and those with disabilities.

Claimant long term (one year plus) unemployment has been virtually eradicated for young people and has fallen by three-quarters for all adults since 1997. New Deal 25 plus has played an important role in this success, so far helping more than 173,000 people into work.

Notes:

1: Data relates to start of ND25 plus Enhanced Programme in April 2001 to December 2003

Incapacity Benefit

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people were receiving incapacity benefit in each of the last 25 years, broken down by constituency within each region. [175124]

Maria Eagle: The available information has been placed in the Library.

Income Statistics

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the trend in *(a)* average and *(b)* pensioner incomes as compared with (i) average and (ii) medium earnings, over the last 10 years. [173933]

Malcolm Wicks: Such information as is available is in the following table.

Percentage growth in net equivalised income, both before housing costs have been taken into account (BHC) and after housing costs have been taken into account (AHC):

Change between 1994–1995 and 2002–2003	*Percentage*
Whole population income BHC	24
Whole population income AHC	31
Pensioner income BHC	22
Pensioner income AHC	30

Pensioners' average income has increased at a rate similar to that of the population as a whole since 1994–95.

The figures in the table allow a valid comparison between pensioners and the population as a whole. They relate to household disposable income and cannot be compared directly with average earnings. A closer comparison is given by the mean net Before Housing Costs income received by pensioner units in their own right, which increased by 25 per cent. between 1994–95 and 2002–03. Over the same period, average earnings have seen a growth of 13 per cent.

Notes:

(a) The income growth figures in the table are estimates taken from the Households Below Average Income (HBAI) series. Data is derived from the Family Resources Survey. The latest date for which data is available is 2002–03. The earliest date for which data is available from the Family Resources Survey is 1994–95. For this reason, it has only been possible to present nine years' worth of data.

(b) The income measure used is mean weekly net (disposable) equivalised household income, consistent with HBAI conventions: income is adjusted to reflect the composition of the household, and is net of income tax, National Insurance contributions and Council Tax. Figures are quoted on both a Before Housing Costs and After Housing Costs basis, in line with HBAI conventions.

(c) Income figures in the table show growth in real terms, deflating by the Retail Prices Index all items excluding Council tax. The earnings figure shows growth in real terms, deflating by the Retail Prices Index all items (RPI) series.

(d) The source for earnings values is the Average Earnings Index, which is based on information obtained from the Office for National Statistics' Monthly Wages and Salary Survey. Average earnings are obtained by dividing the total amount paid by the total number of employees paid, including those employees on strike and temporarily absent. This information is then weighted and formed into an index.

(e) Part (ii) of the question has been interpreted as asking for median earnings, which is a figure that is not available from the Average Earnings Index.

(f) Both the Family Resources Survey and the Average Earnings Index cover Great Britain.

Job Seekers

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether clients using Jobseeker Direct services when seeking job-broking advice and assistance by telephone will have access to Language Line if they do not speak English well; and if he will make a statement. [175034]

Jane Kennedy: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from David Anderson to Andrew Dismore dated 25 May 2004:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question, concerning clients of Jobseeker Direct having access to the telephone interpreter services provided by Language Line. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

All customers who call Jobseeker Direct or any of our contact centres, and do not speak English, have unrestricted access to the telephone interpreter services provided by Language Line. In addition, Welsh language callers have a specific number to dial and they currently receive a full Welsh language Jobseeker Direct service.

I hope this reply to your question is helpful.

Lung Diseases

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people were diagnosed to be suffering from *(a)* asbestosis and *(b)* mesothelioma in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by (i) sex and (ii) age. [174796]

Jane Kennedy: Cases of asbestosis identified through the Department for Work and Pensions Industrial Injuries and Disablement Benefit Scheme provide the best indication of the number of asbestosis diagnoses. Provisional figures for Great Britain in 2003 are shown by sex and age group in Table 1.

Table 1: Cases of asbestosis identified thought the industrial Injuries and disablement benefit scheme in Great Britain in 2003 by sex and age group[1]

	Age group					
Sex	*0–44*	*45–54*	*55–64*	*65–74*	*75+*	*Total*
Males	—	20	150	260	210	635
Females	—	—	5	5	5	15
Total	—	20	155	265	215	650

[1] Provisional figures.

Reliable figures for the number of diagnoses of mesothelioma are not available. The disease is rapidly fatal in nearly all cases, and a good indication of the number of diagnoses is given by the annual number of deaths. Numbers of deaths in Great Britain in 2001 (the latest year for which figures are available) are given in table 2.

Table 2: Mesothelioma deaths in Great Britain in 2001 by sex and age group

	Age group					
Sex	*0–44*	*45–54*	*55–64*	*65–74*	*75+*	*Total*
Males	9	100	365	535	570	1,579
Females	5	20	54	70	120	269
Total	14	120	419	605	690	1,848

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* teachers and *(b)* office workers were diagnosed to be suffering from *(a)* asbestosis and *(b)* mesothelioma in the last year for which figures are available. [174797]

Jane Kennedy: Substantial exposures to asbestos are required in order for asbestosis to be clinically manifested within the lifetime of an individual. Teachers and office workers are very unlikely to have had such exposures during the course of their work. In 2003, 10 cases of asbestosis were identified by the Department for Work and Pensions Industrial Injuries and Disablement Benefit Scheme among occupational groups most likely to be predominantly office based. The coding of occupations is not of sufficient detail to specifically identify teachers from this data source.

Reliable figures for the number of diagnoses of mesothelioma are not available. The disease is rapidly fatal in nearly all cases, and a good indication of the number of diagnoses is given by the annual number of deaths. In 2001 (the latest year for which figures are available) there were 14 mesothelioma deaths among teachers and 24 among office workers. However, death certificates record only the last occupation of the deceased. The typically long time between asbestos exposure and the onset of mesothelioma means that the occupation recorded may not be the one in which exposure took place.

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what forecast his Department has made for the diagnosis of cases of *(a)* asbestosis and *(b)* mesothelioma cases in (i) 2010 and (ii) 2015; and when they are expected to peak. [174798]

Jane Kennedy: Cases of asbestosis identified through the Department for Work and Pensions Industrial Injuries and Disablement Benefit Scheme provide the best indication of the number of asbestosis diagnoses. The number of cases in the year 2010 and 2015 is projected to be less than 1,000 in each year. No estimate of the peak number of cases is available.

Reliable figures for the number of diagnoses of mesothelioma are not available. The disease is rapidly fatal in nearly all cases, and a good indication of the number of diagnoses is given by the annual number of deaths. The number of mesothelioma deaths in Great Britain is forecast to be between 1,950 and 2,025 in the year 2010 and to be between 1,900 and 2,450 in the year 2015. The annual total number of mesothelioma deaths is expected to peak at around 1,950 to 2,450 deaths some time between the years 2011 and 2015.

New Deal

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost is of each stage of *(a)* the New Deal for Young People and *(b)* the New Deal 25 plus using the unit cost model operational from April; and if he will make a statement. [175190]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 21 May 2004]:* The information requested is not available.

A unit cost system has been in place from April 2004. This records information on staffing costs across a broad range of activities, including New Deal administrative costs at a summary level. However, this system does not capture the information requested.

A more sophisticated model will be developed as part of the Department's Resource Management System. The Resource Management System project is currently moving into the design and development stage and will be looking at addressing this requirement.

Online Pension Forecasts

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects the online national insurance retirement pension forecast to be available. [173242]

Malcolm Wicks: It is intended to make the service available in a controlled go-live environment, following six months of intensive testing, in the fourth calendar quarter of 2004, initially to DWP staff. This will allow DWP to study the impact of the registration and enrolment function of the Government Gateway, which is a pre-requisite of using the service. Previous e-services have made this requirement optional. Access to citizens will be made available one month later incorporating the lessons learned.

The service will be called the State Pension Forecast e-Service and will be primarily accessed via the Pensions Service Web site, but will have links from all DWP websites and the Government Gateway site.

Pension Centre Offices

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proposals he has for the future of pension centre offices; and if he will make a statement. [174042]

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement about the future of Burnley Pension Centre. [174159]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answers 18 May 2004 and 20 May 2004]:* The Pension Service structure, including pension centres, is being reviewed as part of a programme of efficiency measures. The next stage of planning is currently being developed and more information will be available within one month.

The programme will allow us to complete the task we set out to achieve when we introduced The Pension Service and to meet the DWP budget challenge. It also supports our commitment to meeting targets and continuing to introduce new and better ways of working, supported by improved technology and smarter processes.

This will enable us to deliver some very real improvements in our service to customers and in job satisfaction for our people.

Pension Income (Over-50s)

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what proportion of people between the age of 50 and state pension age live in households without an occupational pension income; what proportion of these are in each decile of overall income distribution; and if he will make a statement. [172538]

Malcolm Wicks: There were 6.8 million people between the age of 50 and state pension age who lived in households without an occupational pension income in the financial year 2002–03. This equated to 73 per cent. of all individuals in this age group.

The proportion of this group located in each decile of the equivalised income distribution, both before and after housing costs have been taken into account, is presented in the table.

	Income before housing costs	*Income after housing costs*
Decile 1	11	11
Decile 2	7	8
Decile 3	8	7
Decile 4	8	9
Decile 5	9	8
Decile 6	10	10
Decile 7	11	10
Decile 8	11	12
Decile 9	12	12
Decile 10	13	14

Notes:

1. Figures are for the financial year 2002–03, the latest date for which data are available.
2. Estimates are for Great Britain.
3. Estimates relate to the status of individuals at the time they were interviewed for the FRS.
4. The estimates are based on sample counts, which have been adjusted for non-response using multipurpose grossing factors that control for tenure, council tax band and a number of other variables. Estimates are subject to sampling error, and to remaining variability in non-response which is not corrected by the grossing regime.
5. The income measure used is weekly net (disposable) equivalised household income (that is to say income that is adjusted to reflect the composition of the household).
6. The Households Below Average Income series presents analysis of income of two bases: Before Housing Costs (BHC) and After Housing Costs (AHC). This is principally to take into account variations in housing costs that themselves do not correspond to comparable variations in the quality of housing.
7. Occupational incomes include income from the following: pension from a previous employer, widow's employee pension and trade union or friendly society pension.

Source:

Family Resources Survey (FRS).

Pensioner Benefits

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the estimated total income for pensioners from *(a)* benefits and *(b)* private sources is since 1992; and what this figure is as a percentage. [172494]

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the proportion of pensioners' income coming from *(a)* state and *(b)* private sources. [175069]

Malcolm Wicks: There is no single data source which covers pensioners' benefit and private incomes between 1992 and the present. The information provided is based on Family Expenditure Survey data between 1992 and 1996–97 and Family Resources Survey data between 1994–95 and 2002–03. Direct comparisons between information from the two surveys should not be made.

The table shows the average weekly income for pensioner units (pensioner couples and single pensioners) in 2002–03 prices and rounded to the

nearest pound. Private sources of income include private pension income, investments, earnings and other types of income.

Both benefit income and private income have increased significantly between 1996–97 and 2002–03, with gross income rising by 20 per cent. in real terms.

	Gross income	Benefit income		Private income	
		£ per week	Percentage of total	£ per week	Percentage of total
Family Expenditure Survey data					
1992	213	107	50	106	50
1993	212	113	53	99	47
1994–95	226	118	52	109	48
1995–96	232	117	51	115	49
1996–97	230	122	53	108	47
Family Resources Survey data					
1994–95	220	117	53	103	47
1995–96	216	118	55	98	45
1996–97	230	121	53	108	47
1997–98	234	123	52	111	48
1998–99	243	124	51	118	49
1999–2000	252	130	52	121	48
2000–01	265	133	50	132	50
2001–02	273	138	51	133	49
2002–03	277	142	51	134	48

Notes:
1. Private and benefit income may not sum to total gross income due to rounding, and because free TV licences for over 75s are included in total income but not in either benefit or private income.
2. Percentages are calculated from unrounded cash figures.
3. Analysis consistent with Pensioners' Incomes 2002–03.
4. Family Expenditure Survey Figures are for the UK, Family Resources Survey Figures are for Great Britain.

Pensioner Income

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average pensioner income was for the financial years *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04. [172882]

Malcolm Wicks: Information on pensioners' incomes is available from the Family Resources Survey for 2002–3. Figures for 2003–4 are not yet available.

Information on mean and median net income before housing costs for pensioner couples and single pensioners is in the table.

	Mean net income	Median net income
Pensioner couples	327	262
Single pensioners	177	153

Source:
Pensioners' Incomes 2002–3

Notes:
1. Figures are for Great Britain
2. Figures are weekly income in 2002–3 prices
3. Net income is net of income tax and National Insurance Contributions and, local taxes.

Post Office Cards

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions why post office cards have been issued which are then replaced by new cards with identification strips; and how much it is estimated to have cost to issue the first set of cards. [175505]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 24 May 2004]*: The operation of the Post Office card account is a commercial and operational matter for Post Office Ltd and I have asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Project Funding

Mr. Colman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many *(a)* solely state-financed and *(b)* public-private partnership and private finance initiative projects for which his Department is responsible have been launched in each region in each of the last 10 years; [160951]

(2) how much was spent by *(a)* the Government on solely state-financed projects and *(b)* the (i) Government and (ii) private sector on public-private and private finance initiative projects for which his Department is responsible in each of the last 10 years, broken down by region. [160952]

Maria Eagle: The Department and its predecessor organisations, the former Department of Social Security and the Employment Service, launched no solely state-financed capital investment projects in the period 1993 to 2003.

The Department and its predecessors initiated a very large number of projects between 1993 and 2003. In the main these were funded from running costs but many also have an element of capital spending. Available information on private sector capital investment in public-private partnership (PPP) and private finance initiative (PFI) projects launched during the period is in the tables. Information on the Department's capital spend by project is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. All DWP PPP and PFI projects are national projects so regional information is not available.

Project title	Year launched	Total Capital Value (£ million)	Capital Spend 1998–99 (£ million)	Capital Spend 1999–2000 (£ million)	Capital Spend 2000–01 (£ million)	Capital Spend 2001–02 (£ million)	Capital Spend 2002–03 (£ million)	Capital Spend 2003–40 (£ million)
No projects 1994 to 1996	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
ESCOM	1997	4	1	1	1	1	—	—
PRIME	1997	959	69	26	32	15	66	9
PRIME EXPANSION	2003	—	—	—	—	—	—	10
EDS/IT Partnership Agreement	1998	217	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
HR Partnership	1999	6	—	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Child Support Reforms	2000	3	—	—	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Strategic Outsourcing	2000	33	—	—	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Network and Office Services	2000	9	—	—	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
New Tax Credits	2002	11	—	—	—	—	n/a	n/a
Pensions Forecasting System	2002	0	—	—	—	—	n/a	n/a
Advanced Telephony	2003	10	—	—	—	—	—	0

Project title	Year launched	Capital Spend 2004–05 (£ million)	Capital Spend 2005–06 (£ million)	Capital Spend 2006–07 (£ million)	Is project operational	Details
ESCOM	1997	—	—	—	Operational Contract ended 31 March 2002	Computerised replacement for Employment Service paper based system, awarded to Siemens Business Services
PRIME	1997	13	18	10	Operational-Period Contract commenced 1 April 1998, ends 2018	Transfer of the ownership and management of buildings on the former DSS part of estates, and all associated risk, to the private sector. Under a 20 yr contract, Land Securities Trillium now provides DWP with fully serviced office accommodation
PRIME EXPANSION	2003	25	22	20		
EDS/IT Partnership Agreement	1998	n/a	n/a	n/a	Operational-Period of contract 1 August 1998 to 31 July 2008	Provision of IT and telephony services to the Employment Service
HR Partnership	1999	n/a	—	—	Operational- Contract commenced 1 April 1999. Due to terminate on 31 March 2005	Integrated Employment Service payroll and Human Resources service awarded to Rebus HR Services and Norwich Systems Accounting
Child Support Reforms	2000	n/a	n/a	n/a	Operational- Contract ends 2010	Awarded under the DSS ACCORD framework for IS and IT services
Strategic Outsourcing	2000	n/a	n/a	n/a	Operational-Period of contract 1 September 2000 to 31 August 2010	ITSA Outsourcing. Awarded under the DSS ACCORD framework for IS and IT services
Network and Office Services	2000	n/a	n/a	n/a	Operational-Period of contract 1 June 2001 to 31 May 2006	Networks and Office Services Project (WAN). Awarded under the DSS ACCORD framework for IS and IT services
New Tax Credits	2002	n/a	n/a	n/a	June 2002 to August2010	DWP NTC project awarded to Affinity (EDS)
Pensions Forecasting System	2002	0	0	0	June 2002 to December 2006	DWP PFS awarded to Affinity (EDS)
Advanced Telephony	2003	3.4	3.5	3.5	March 2003 to March 2008	DWP Advanced Telephony Business Allocation (ATBA) with BT, signed 31 March 2003 to provide 5-year PFI route for Contact Centre Telephony. This is part on and part off balance sheet.

n/a = indicates that a year on year breakdown of expenditure is not available.

Notes:

1. In addition to the above projects there are 3 PPPs, with Affinity (EDS), Arcway (BT) and Working Links, which are strategic partnerships and as such have not in themselves involved capital investment. Any such investment is covered by the specific PFI deals set out above.
2. The PRIME capital spend by year figures do not total the total capital value of the project because the table does not cover the full 20 year period of the contract.

State Pension

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects to have prepared estimates for the number of people contracted out of second tier state pension provision in *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2002–03 and *(c)* 2003–04. [173241]

Malcolm Wicks: We hope to publish estimates of the number of people contracted out of the State Second Pension in the 2001–02 and 2002–03 tax years by the end of 2004. Estimates of the number of people contracted out in the 2003–04 tax year are expected to be published at the end of 2005.

State Pension Statements

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list each item of information which may be contained in a state pension statement. [170099]

Malcolm Wicks: State pension forecasts may contain the total weekly state pension earned to date and forecasted to state pension age based on today's rates. The total figure has a breakdown of the basic state pension, including the number of qualifying years, the percentage and amount of basic state pension.

Where appropriate, the total figure will provide a breakdown of any additional state pension due, less any contracted-out deduction.

The forecast may also show:

the date of birth used to calculate the forecast;

current employment status advised by the customer;

the customer's national insurance contribution status;

whether the customer is paying into another pension scheme.

Where appropriate, the forecast will also provide the following:

the number of years for which Home Responsibility Protection has been awarded;

the date of divorce or widowhood.

Where a former or late spouse's national insurance contribution has been used in the forecast calculation, the letter sent with the forecast explains the conditions attached.

Additionally, where appropriate, the customer is advised of deficiencies in their national insurance contributions in the preceding six years and how payments of these may increase their state pension entitlement.

Winter Fuel Payments

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for North Wiltshire of 30 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1370–71W, on winter fuel payments disallowed because of late application, if he will update the table to include late claim disallowances made in respect of winter 2003–04. [172961]

Malcolm Wicks: The figures for previous years given in the table have not changed. So far for this winter 2003–04 we have received 646 claims for a Winter Fuel Payment after the deadline for claiming of 30th March 2004.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many claims for winter fuel payments were disallowed because of late application in *(a)* 2001–02 and *(b)* 2002–03 in each Greater London borough. [173335]

Malcolm Wicks: The information requested is not available as figures are not kept for individual constituencies or boroughs. Overall figures of late claim disallowances for Winter Fuel Payments in Great Britain are in the following table.

	Late Claim Disallowances Made
2001–2002	10,308 in respect of winter 2000–2001
2002–2003	1,745 in respect of winter 2000–2001 4,564 in respect of winter 2001–2002
2003–2004	1,760 in respect of winter 2000–2001 2,204 in respect of winter 2001–2002 3,948 in respect of winter 2002–2003

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the deadlines for applications for winter fuel payments were in *(a)* 2001–02 and *(b)* 2002–03. [173336]

Malcolm Wicks: The majority of payments were made automatically without the need to claim. The deadlines for Winter Fuel Payment applications to be received by the Department for winters 2001–02 and 2002–03 were 30 March 2002 and the 30 March 2003 respectively where claims were required.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many claimants for winter fuel payments in Scotland were disallowed because of late application in *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2002–03 and *(c)* 2003–04. [174021]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available.

Data about where unsuccessful claimants lived at the time has not been retained.

HEALTH

Additives

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate he has made of the average *(a)* daily and *(b)* annual per capita consumption of cyclamates in each year since 1989; [175507]

(2) what research was conducted into the safety of *(a)* aspartame, *(b)* monosodium glutamate and *(c)* cyclamates prior to their introduction onto the British market. [175508]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 24 May 2004]*: I am advised by the Food Standards Agency that surveys of additive intake are not conducted on an annual basis, however the following intake data for cyclamate are available from studies conducted in 1999 and 2003.

The mean intake of cyclamate by United Kingdom consumers was assessed in 1999 and 2003 to be:

Milligrams per kilogram of body weight per day

	Adult	*Children*
1999	0.77	8.16
2003	—	4.46

The safety of aspartame, monosodium glutamate and cyclamate was assessed by the European Commission's Scientific Committee for Food (SCF) prior to their introduction onto the European Market. Details of the research conducted into their safety are contained in the SCF reports which are available at:

Aspartame http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/fs/sc/scf/out155_en.pdf

Monosodium glutamate http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/fs/sc/scf/reports/scf_reports_25.pdf

Cyclamate http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/fs/sc/scf/out53_en.pdf

Air Weapons

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will make it his policy to collect statistics on the number of patients treated each year in the NHS for injuries involving air weapons; [174829]

(2) if he will make a statement on the *(a)* age profile of patients treated in hospital for injuries resulting from air guns, *(b)* type of injuries suffered and *(c)* the times of year when these injuries are most frequently suffered. [172445]

Miss Melanie Johnson: It would be disproportionately costly to collect statistics on national health service patients treated for injuries specifically involving air weapons and the Department has no plans to do so.

Capital Funds

Mr. Andrew Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much of the £145 million in 2004–05 of capital funds received for other uses is set aside to cover the borrowing freedoms of foundation trusts; [173847]

(2) for what further purposes he has set aside capital funds in 2004–05 which are not allocated direct to NHS organisations. [173848]

Mr. Hutton: The table is an extract from figure 4.2 of the Department of Health Departmental Report 2004. This shows the opening disposition of 2004–05 hospital and community health services capital for allocation to the national health service.

The £82 million for central budgets is for various arms length bodies. The £145 million within programme central budgets for other investments includes up to £104 million for estimated capital spending by national health service foundation trusts. The balance of £41 million is part of an opening unallocated provision set aside to cover in-year pressures and risks on the capital programme overall.

The overall capital spending by NHS trusts and NHS foundation trusts is financed through a mixture of income generated internally, mainly depreciation, plus borrowing. It is not therefore possible to determine what borrowing will be required against one element of their total capital spending.

Disposition of 2004–05 Hospital and Community Health Services Capital Resources—Extract from Figure 4.2 of the Department of Health Departmental Report 2004

		£ million
HCHS capital available for allocation to NHS trusts and PCTs		3,331
To be allocated as follows:		
Central budgets		82
Direct allocations to strategic health authorities, NHS trusts and primary care trusts		
SHA strategic capital	763	
Trust and PCT operational capital	928	
Access fund	100	
Total direct allocations for local prioritisation		1,791
Programme capital budgets		
Delivery of ICT strategy	700	
Junior doctors' working hours	2	
SIFT—Medical and dental undergraduate support	35	
Improving the provision of decontamination services in the NHS	13	
Modernising the hospital manufacture of medicines	24	
Nursing home care strategy	16	
Walk-in centres	10	
Primary care facilities—including NHS LIFT	110	
Audiology	32	
Dangerous severe personality disorder (DSPD)	20	
Other mental health, including TILT security, CAHMS, long-term low secure and womens	40	
Renal	9	
Diabetes	10	
Coronary heart disease	140	
Cancer equipment	95	

Disposition of 2004–05 Hospital and Community Health Services Capital Resources—Extract from Figure 4.2 of the Department of Health Departmental Report 2004

	£ million
Expanding genetics	9
Dental modernisation fund	20
Pathology modernisation	8
PFI batching	20
Other investments	145
Total to NHS trusts/health authorities/primary care trusts	1,458

Children's Hospital (Manchester)

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his latest estimate is of the completion date of the new children's hospital in Manchester. [175403]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* It is estimated that the new children's hospital in Manchester will be completed in April 2009.

Correspondence

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he intends to reply to the hon. Member for Southend West's letters of 26 March and 19 April regarding the Human Tissue Bill. [173378]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A reply was sent to the hon. Member for Southend West on 17 May 2004.

Cross-border Hospital Treatments

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* English residents were referred for treatment in Welsh hospitals and *(b)* Welsh residents were referred for treatment in English hospitals in each year since 1999. [175535]

Mr. Hutton: Data are not collected centrally for English residents referred for treatment in Welsh hospitals. Available data on Welsh residents referred for treatment in hospitals in England are shown in the table.

Welsh residents in England, count of in-year admission episodes NHS hospitals, England, 1999–2000 to 2002–03

	Number
1999–2000	41,508
2000–01	41,273
2001–02	40,626
2002–03	39,175

Notes:
Data was derived by selecting cases where the strategic health authority (SHA) of residence was given as Wales (that is a Welsh postcode).
In-year admissions
An in-year admission is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider, excluding admissions beginning before 1 April at the start of the data year. Periods of care on-going at the end of the data year (unfinished admission episodes) are included. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
Grossing
Figures are grossed for coverage, except for 2001–02 and 2002–03, which are not yet adjusted for shortfalls.
Strategic Health Authority Data Quality
These figures have been derived from the SHA of residence of the patient, which itself is derived from the postcode of the patient. SHA data were added to historic data-years in the HES database using 2002–03 boundaries, as a one-off exercise in 2004. There is some change in completeness of residence-based fields over time, where the majority of unknown values are due to missing postcodes on birth episodes. Users of time series analysis need to be aware of this issue in their interpretation of the data.
Data Quality
HES are compiled from data sent by over 300 NHS trusts and primary care trusts in England. The Department of Health liaises closely with these organisations to encourage submission of complete and valid data and seeks to minimise inaccuracies and the effect of missing and invalid data via HES processes. While this brings about improvement over time, some shortcomings remain.
Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Departmental Staff (Drugs)

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many shared care schemes for drug misuse include workplace occupational health specialists. [171628]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information on the number of shared care schemes for drug misuse including occupational health specialists is not available.

Dermatology

Mr. Keith Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he has received reports of regional variations in the incidence of skin cancer in England. [175053]

Ruth Kelly: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Keith Bradley dated 25 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning reports of regional variations in the incidence of skin cancer in England. [175053].

Information on newly diagnosed cases of cancer is collected by nine regional cancer registries in England, and a standard data set based on registrations for residents of their areas is submitted to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Regional data on the incidence of skin and other cancers is published annually by ONS in the "Cancer Statistics Registrations" series (MB.l). The most recent data available are for the year 2000. Copies are available in the House of Commons Library and on the National Statistics website at: http://w·vw.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk = 8843&Pos = &Co!Rank = l&Rank = 240

Elective Admissions

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's oral statement of 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 332, on the Financial Statement, how many elective admissions there were for *(a)* MRI scans and *(b)* CT scans in each year since 1997. [174584]

Mr. Hutton: Data outlining how many elective admissions there were for *(a)* magnetic resonance imaging scans and *(b)* computer tomography scans are not collected centrally.

However, a count of imaging and radiodiagnostic examinations or tests by imaging modality is collected on the Department's KH1 2 return. Data on MRI and CT scans is shown in the table.

Total number of imaging and radiodiagnostic examinations or tests, CT and MRI, England, 1995–96 to 2002–03

	[1] CT	[2] MRI
1995–96	1,709,244	347,817
1996–97	1,056,365	394,940
1997–98	1,172,656	473,074
1998–99	1,254,474	522,138
1999–00	1,359,852	585,797
2000–01	1,488,752	632,594
2001–02	1,625,304	705,706
2002–03	1,767,791	786,646

[1] Computer tomography
[2] Magnetic resonance imaging:
Source:
Department of Health form KH12

General Practitioners

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what monitoring is being undertaken by his Department to ensure that general practitioners continue to offer routine appointments beyond 48 hours if the patient chooses them, with particular reference to the GP access target. [174631]

Mr. Hutton: Patients should be able to see a general practitioner within 48 hours if they want. Equally, patients should be able to pre-book appointments further ahead if this suits them. The former does not exclude the other and both options must be features of a modernised and responsive National Health Service.

Arrangements for monitoring progress towards the NHS Plan primary care access target require primary care trusts to check that practices are allowing patients to book ahead. Local centres of the national primary care development team continue to work with primary care trusts and practices to ensure that this is the case.

Head Lice

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on guidelines regarding the control of head lice in schools. [175280]

Dr. Ladyman: Our policy, which is shared by the Department for Education and Skills, is to encourage a "whole school approach" to the detection and treatment of head lice. This entails encouraging parents to check their children and other family members for head lice as need arises, and arranging treatment—either through a combing regime or insecticides—where necessary with such advice and support from the local primary health care team (general practitioner, health visitor, school nurse or local pharmacist) as they may require. If this exercise is successfully undertaken at the same time by all parents of children within a school, then the spread of head lice can be controlled.

Health Screening

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the cost of *(a)* an electro-cardiogram, *(b)* a blood pressure test, *(c)* an electron beam tomography scan, *(d)* a lung function test, *(e)* a blood test, *(f)* a mammogram, *(g)* bowel cancer screening, *(h)* an X-ray and *(i)* a cervical smear test. [174455]

Mr. Hutton: Current cost data, for the specified tests are detailed, where available. No data are available for blood pressure tests of lung function tests.

(a) Electro-cardiogram or ECG.

for tests undertaken as part of an out-patient consultation, the national average cost is £101.

where the test is undertaken as a direct access test (general practitioner request), the national average cost is £29.48.

(b) Electron beam tomography scan.

No data are available centrally for this specific scan. Data are available for computer tomography scans, of which electron beam tomography is one type.

CT scans, are undertaken in a wide range of specialties.

the national average cost for CT scans undertaken in an outpatient setting range from £164-£209 depending on specialty;

the national average cost of a CT scan undertaken as a direct access test (GP request) is £102.

(c) Blood test.

These are undertaken in a variety of pathology specialties, depending upon the reason for undertaking the test. The national average cost of a blood test undertaken as a direct access test (GP request) is detailed by specialty as follows:

	£
Phlebotomy test	10.63
General pathology test	1.72
Chemical pathology test	2.48
Haematology test	3.32
Histology/Histopathology test	17.87
Immunology test	7.45
Microbiology/Bacteriology test	7.09
Neuropathology test	14.00
Virology test	7.82
Biochemistry test	2.05
Other test	5.43

(d) Mammogram.

The cost of a mammogram undertaken in a direct access setting is £31.67.

(e) Bowel Cancer screening.

A faecal occult blood test (FOB) test for bowel cancer costs £5. 2 per cent. of all tests are positive and require a subsequent diagnostic colonoscopy, at a cost of £127.

At present, the FOB test is being piloted with two sites.

There is currently no national programme for bowel cancer screening.

(f) X-ray.

The national average cost for a direct access test (GP request) is £14.97 for a standard (Band A) X-ray.

(g) Cervical smear test.

The cost of a cervical smear test is £37.50 (uplifted for inflation from data source).

Data sources:

Items *(a, b, c, d, f)*: National Schedule of Reference Costs Appendix 1, Payment by Results Core Tools Publication. The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Item *(e)*: "The Evaluation of the UK Colorectal Cancer Screening Pilot—Final Report, revised May 2003"—a report undertaken for the national screening programme.

Item *(g)*: "The NAO report on the Performance of The NHS Cervical Screening Programme in England", published in 1998, and adjusted for inflation.

Health Services (Nottinghamshire)

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS patients waited for more than 13 weeks for outpatient appointments within Nottinghamshire health authority areas in each year since 1997. [173526]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is shown in the table.

Number of outpatients waiting over 13 weeks from a general practitioner referral to consultant appointment, by provider, for the Nottinghamshire area

	National health service trust	*Number*
1996–97	Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	757
	Central Nottinghamshire NHS Trust	0
	Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham, University Hospital NHS Trust	7,939
	King's Mill Centre for Health Care Services NHS Trust	0
	Nottingham Healthcare NHS Trust	401
1997–98	Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	969
	Central Nottinghamshire NHS Trust	325
	Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham, University Hospital NHS Trust	10,063
	King's Mill Centre for Health Care Services NHS Trust	2,672
	Nottingham Healthcare NHS Trust	88
1998–99	Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	1,613
	Central Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	104
	Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham, University Hospital NHS Trust	12,361
	King's Mill Centre for Health Care Services NHS Trust	2,986
	Nottingham Healthcare NHS Trust	3
1999–2000	Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	1,129
	Central Nottinghamshire NHS Trust	925
	Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham, University Hospital NHS Trust	6,738
	King's Mill Centre for Health Care Services NHS Trust	2,164
	Nottingham Healthcare NHS Trust	0
2000–01	Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	577
	Central Nottinghamshire NHS Trust	76
	Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham, University Hospital NHS Trust	4,923
	King's Mill Centre for Health Care Services NHS Trust	1,364
	Nottingham Healthcare NHS Trust	7
2001–02	Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	624
	Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham, University Hospital NHS Trust	2,234
	Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust[1]	23
	Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust[2]	1,232
2002–03	Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	211
	Queens Medical Centre Nottingham University Hospital NHS Trust	928
	Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	7
	Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust	896
2003–04	Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	106
	Queens Medical Centre Nottingham University Hospital NHS Trust	284
	Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	1
	Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust	346

[1] In April 2001 Nottingham Healthcare NHS Trust became Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust.

[2] In March 2001 the Central Nottinghamshire NHS Trust was abolished, and Newark Hospital from the Central Nottinghamshire NHS Trust was combined with the King's Mill Centre for Healthcare Services NHS Trust to form Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust.

Source:

Department of Health QM08

Health Services (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time for a hip replacement operation in the Tamworth constituency was in the most recent period for which figures are available. [174546]

Dr. Ladyman: Data are not collected specifically for Tamworth,

The table shows both the mean time waited and the median time waited for a hip operation for the population covered by Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth Primary Care Trust during 2002–03.

Count of finished in-year admission episodes, mean and median time waited, national health service hospitals, England 2002–03

	Number
Finished in-year admission episodes	164
Mean time waited	199 days
Median time waited	180 days

Notes:

Main operation: hip replacement

Method of admission: elective

Finished In-Year Admissions

A finished in-year admission is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider, excluding admissions beginning before 1 April at the start of the data-year. Admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

Ungrossed Data

Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).

Main Operation

The main operation is the first recorded operation in the HES data set and is usually the most resource intensive procedure performed during the episode. It is appropriate to use main operation when looking at admission details, e.g. time waited, but the figures for "all operations count of episodes" give a more complete count of episodes with an operation.

Time Waited

Time waited statistics from Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) are not the same as the published waiting list statistics. HES provides counts and time waited for all patients admitted to hospital within a given period whereas the published waiting list statistics count those waiting for treatment on a specific date and how long they

have been on the waiting list. Also, HES calculates the time waited, as the difference between the admission and decision to admit dates. Unlike published waiting list statistics, this is not adjusted for self-deferrals or periods of medical/social suspension.
Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses there were in the Tamworth constituency in each of the last 10 years. [174547]

Dr. Ladyman: Data are not collected specifically for Tamworth.

The tables show the number of doctors and the number of nurses for the old South Staffordshire health authority, which covered the Tamworth constituency, from 1994 to 2001, and for Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth Primary Care Trust from 2001 to 2003.

Hospitals, public health medicine and community health services (HCHS) doctors[1] and general medical practitioners (excluding retainers)

	South Staffordshire Health Authority	Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth Primary Care Trust
1994	642	—
1995	653	—
1996	681	—
1997	709	—
1998	731	—
1999	759	—
2000	713	—
2001	762	82
2002	—	86
2003	—	94

[1] Excludes hospital medical hospital practitioners and hospital medical clinical assistants, most of whom are general practitioners (GPs) working part time in hospitals.
Note:
Data as at 30 September every year except GP as at 1 October 1997–99.

Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff and practice nurses employed by unrestricted principals and equivalents (UPEs)[1]

	South Staffordshire Health Authority	Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth Primary Care Trust
1994	—	—
1995	2,666	—
1996	2,849	—
1997	2,835	—
1998	2,955	—
1999	2,932	—
2000	3,125	—
2001	3,165	171
2002	—	345
2003	—	376

[1] UPEs include general medical service unrestricted principals, personal medical services contracted GPs, and personal medical services salaried GPs.
Notes:
1. Headcount practice nurse figures are estimated for these years.
2. Data as at 30 September every year except practice nurses as at 1 October 1997–99.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* general practitioners' surgeries and *(b)* health clinics have been (i) modernised and (ii) removed to other premises in the Tamworth constituency since 1997. [174548]

Dr. Ladyman: The data are not available in the format requested.

The table shows the number of primary care premises replaced and the number refurbished in the following areas since 2000: South Staffordshire Health Authority; North Staffordshire Health Authority; Shropshire Health Authority.

Tamworth was within the former South Staffordshire Health Authority.

These three organisations were replaced by Shropshire and Staffordshire Strategic Health Authority in 2002.

Primary care premises replaced and refurbished

	2000–01		2001–02		2002–03		Third quarter 2003–04	
	Number of premises replaced	Number of premises refurbished	Number of premises replaced	Number of premises refurbished	Number of premises replaced	Number of premises refurbished	Number of premises replaced	Number of premises refurbished
South Staffordshire Health Authority	1	1	1	2	—	—	—	—
North Staffordshire Health Authority	0	8	0	4	—	—	—	—
Shropshire Health Authority	4	2	4	0	—	—	—	—
Shropshire and Staffordshire Strategic Health Authority	—	—	—	—	4	8	2	7
Totals	5	11	5	6	4	8	2	7

Source:
Department of Health LDPR Quarterly Returns

Mobile/Wireless Communications

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether current research being carried out by the mobile telephone health research team at King's College London is examining mobile and wireless communications systems. [174394]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Link Mobile Telecommunications and Health Research programme is jointly funded by Government and industry. It currently supports about 20 projects under the management of an independent programme committee. One of these projects is being undertaken at the mobile phone research unit at King's College London. It is a study designed to examine whether mobile phone signals cause unpleasant symptoms such as headaches, nausea, dizziness and fatigue. Details of the programme and each project currently funded can be found on the website www.mthr.org.uk

NHS Facilities

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether new facilities monitored by NHS Estates conform to design guidance with respect to the numbers

of wash-hand basins; and what action his Department has taken to ensure compliance by new facilities that do not meet the requirements of the guidance. [174636]

Mr. Hutton: NHS Estates guidance sets out recommendations concerning the provision of wash hand-basins in a number of differing circumstances.

The exact number of wash-hand basins required in any particular situation will vary according to a variety of factors including the design and configuration of the room.

Trust chief executives are responsible for ensuring that there are effective arrangements in place for infection control.

NHS Land

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the last full inventory of land owned by *(a)* the NHS and *(b)* NHS trusts was carried out; and what steps he is taking to sell off unused excess land. [175838]

Mr. Hutton: An independent valuation of all national health service property assets is undertaken every five years with the 2005 exercise nearing completion. Registers of such assets, including land, are held and continually updated by individual NHS bodies.

Land and property identified as surplus to requirements is sold in accordance with departmental guidance given in "Estatecode".

An agreement in principle has been reached to transfer surplus land in the ownership of the Secretary of State for Health to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

NHS Staff

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 28 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1092W, on NHS staff, whether locums and those on temporary contracts are included in figures for NHS returnees. [175396]

Mr. Hutton: Locums and those on temporary contracts are not included in the figures for national health service returners.

NHS Staff (Wirral, South)

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* therapists and *(b)* scientists were located in Wirral South in each of the last seven years. [172686]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected on a constituency basis. The information available is shown in the table and relates to national health service organisations serving the South Wirral constituency.

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff in the specified organisations as at 30 September each specified year.

headcount

		1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
5F8	Bebington and West Wirral PCT	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	4	60	65
QDC	Wirral HA	[1]	2	2	6	9	[1]	[1]
RBL	Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	497	512	530	541	540	554	570

[1] Not applicable.

Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of patients with suspected cancer in Wirral, South saw an NHS consultant within two weeks in each of the last seven years. [172688]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected on a constituency basis. The earliest information available is shown in the table and relates to national health service organisations serving the South Wirral constituency.

All cancer waiting times, selected NHS Trusts
Urgent referrals received within 24 hours

Quarter ended	*Name*	*Total referrals seen during the quarter*	*Number of patients seen during the quarter by a specialist within 14 days of the decision to refer by their GP*	*Number of patients seen during the quarter by a specialist after 14 days of the decision to refer by their GP*	*Percentage compliance with the two week standard*
December 1999	Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	110	74	36	67.3
December 2000	Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	138	117	21	84.8
December 2001	Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	611	608	3	99.5
December 2002	Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	696	558	138	80.2
December 2003	Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	810	807	3	99.6
June 2000	Royal Liverpool Children's NHS Trust	190	176	14	92.6
June 2001	Royal Liverpool Children's NHS Trust	1	1	0	100.0
December 2003	Clatterbridge Centre for Oncology NHS Trust	1	1	0	100.0

Source:
Department of Health form QMCW

Nurses Training

Laura Moffatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans his Department has to ensure that nurse *(a)* training and *(b)* career pathways adequately reflect the need for specialist skills in care of the elderly. [175522]

Mr. Hutton: The curriculum for nurse training is decided by higher education institutions in line with guidance from the regulatory body, the Nursing and Midwifery Council.

Within the adult/general branch of nursing, undergraduate and diploma courses cover the nursing skills needed in the care of the elderly. Once qualified, nurses can undertake further specialist skills training in this area.

We are continuing to implement current policies that support specialist and advanced role in the care of older people. These include the development of nurse consultant posts, nurses with special interests, nurse prescribing and leadership programmes.

Nutritional Supplements

Mr. Hawkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has made to EU officials on behalf of UK businesses in relation to plans for a draft Directive on nutritional supplements for sports competitors; and if he will make a statement. [175282]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* A working document for a Directive on foods intended to meet the expenditure of intense muscular effort, especially for sports people, was issued by the European Commission in April 2004 and an expert working group was held on the 10 May 2004. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) represents the United Kingdom for this work and its officials attended the expert working group.

The FSA has already had discussions with the industry about the draft Directive and will continue to do so as the negotiations progress.

Obese Children

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his policy is on promoting stomach stapling as a method for dealing with obesity problems in children. [172588]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* The National Institute for Clinical Excellence guidance on surgery for morbid obesity advises that surgery should only be considered when there is evidence that all appropriate and available non-surgical measures have been adequately tried but have failed to maintain weight loss. In July 2002, the NICE published guidance on surgery to aid weight reduction for people with morbid obesity. The guidance recommends that surgery is only performed on people aged 18 and over.

Osteoporosis

Dr. Naysmith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice and treatment is offered to those patients who are identified as being at high risk of developing osteoporosis. [173541]

Dr. Ladyman: Patients identified as being at high risk of developing osteoporosis should be given advice on diet, exercise, avoiding excessive consumption of alcohol and reducing smoking. There are a range of treatment options which aim to provide pain relief, improve mobility and prevent further bone loss.

Palliative Care

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what plans he has for progressing the partnership between his Department, Marie Curie Cancer Care and other voluntary organisations in the field of palliative care with particular reference to *(a)* improving services for people who choose to die at home and *(b)* increasing the number of people who are able to die at home; [174395]

(2) what action he is taking to increase the number of terminally ill patients who are able to exercise their choice to die at home; [174396]

(3) what further plans he has for supporting choice in palliative care for cancer patients to meet the commitment given in the recent document, Building the Best: Choice, Responsiveness and Equity in the NHS; [174397]

(4) what assessment he has made of the potential savings to the NHS if more terminally ill people were given the choice of dying at home. [174621]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* Building on the Best commits the Department to improve care for people coming to the end of their lives by taking forward training programmes to ensure that all patients, regardless of their diagnosis, will have access to high quality palliative care.

An additional total of £12 million investment over three years was announced by the Secretary of State on 26 December 2003. This additional money will widen the pool of staff who are trained in meeting the needs of people nearing the end of their lives. As a result more patients will be offered appropriate support in the setting of their choice.

The cancer services collaborative is currently working in partnership with Macmillan Cancer Relief, Marie Curie Cancer Care and Lancashire and South Cumbria Cancer Network to support the implementation of specific end of life care tools. These tools, recommended in the National Institute for Clinical Excellence guidance on supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer as examples of good practice, will be adapted to meet the needs of other patient groups.

Over time this investment will result in greater choice for patients in where they wish to live and die and a decrease in the numbers of older people transferred from care homes to a district general hospital in the last week of life and emergency admissions of patients who expressly wish to die at home or care home.

We are also currently identifying pilots to develop an integrated cancer care model for cancer patients shaped by users and involving health and social services and the voluntary sector. These pilots will specifically address issues about caring for patients at home and the possible reduction of costs of hospital services.

Personal Health Care

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what arrangements are in place to review cases to ensure that individuals are not incorrectly charged for personal health care; [173912]

(2) what the criteria are for initiating an investigation into cases of individuals incorrectly charged for personal health care; [173940]

(3) how many cases are being investigated of individuals who may have been incorrectly charged for personal health care in each local authority in England in each of the last six years. [174036]

Dr. Ladyman: The Continuing Care (National Health Service Responsibilities) Directions and the Delayed Discharges (Continuing Care) Directions, both published in February, should ensure appropriate assessments for fully funded national health service continuing care, whether it is prior to hospital discharge or in a community setting. All strategic health authorities have systems in place to review cases where individuals, or their families, feel they were inappropriately denied fully funded NHS continuing care and will investigate all cases brought to their attention. Information on the number of people who were wrongly denied NHS care since 1996 will be available once the data have been validated.

Positron Emission Tomography Scanners

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the use of positron emission tomography scanners in the early diagnosis of lung cancer; and if he will make a statement; [175706]

(2) what assessment he has made of the demand for positron emission tomography scans in the NHS; [175707]

(3) what plans he has to increase the number of positron emission tomography scanners in the NHS. [175708]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Positron emission tomography (PET) is still a relatively new technology and there is evidence of its potential benefits in the diagnosis and treatment of a limited number of tumours, including lung cancer.

The Department is currently working with the national health service, the clinical community and research stakeholders to develop a framework for the provision of PET scanners in England. This will set out, from the evidence, which tumour groups would benefit from PET scanning, likely future demand, and consider the optimal configuration and possible location of PET scanners in England. This will be sent out to stakeholders for consultation in early summer.

It will be for local health communities to consider the framework when it is published and decide whether to adopt this technology based on local needs and circumstances.

Primary Care Trusts (Non-Clinical Staff)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many non-clinical staff were employed in each primary care trust in England at September 2003, broken down by grade. [173090]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of staff employed by primary care trusts in non-clinical roles has been placed in the Library.

Public Bodies

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many times a year the board of the NHS Information Authority is scheduled to meet; and on what date it last met. [175393]

Mr. Hutton: The NHS Information Authority (NHSIA) is a National Health Service Special Health Authority. Its board meets monthly. The most recent meeting was on 6 May at the NHSIA offices in Birmingham. Board papers are published on the NHSIA website at www.nhsia.nhs.uk.

The next meeting of the board will take place on 3 June 2004 at Grange Holborn Hotel, Southampton Row, London, at 2pm. In accordance with the NHS code of openness, board meetings are open to the public.

Sexually Transmitted Infections

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people aged *(a)* under 12, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17 and *(h)* 18 years have suffered from each sexually transmitted infection in each of the last three years. [172865]

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many sexually transmitted infections were reported in young people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years in England in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex; and if he will make a statement; [174501]

(2) what the prevalence rate of reported cases of sexually transmitted infections in young people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 in England was in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex; and if he will make a statement; [174502]

(3) how many cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in each year since 2000, broken down by strategic health authority; and if he will make a statement; [174526]

(4) what the prevalence rate of reported cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years was in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) strategic health authority, (ii) disease and (iii) sex; and if he will make a statement. [174527]

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many cases of sexually transmitted infections were reported in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex; [174458]

(2) what the prevalence rate of reported cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 was in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex; [174483]

(3) how many cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years were reported in the Essex Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex; [174576]

(4) what the prevalence rate of reported cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years were in the Essex Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex. [174586]

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many cases of sexually transmitted infections were reported in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years in each year since 2000, broken down by *(a)* disease and *(b)* sex; [174507]

(2) what the prevalence rate of reported cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years was in each year since 2000, broken down by *(a)* disease and *(b)* sex; [174508]

(3) ow many cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years were reported in the Essex Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000, broken down by *(a)* disease and *(b)* sex; [174514]

(4) what the prevalence rate of reported cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years was in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex. [174515]

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years were reported in the Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex; [174954]

(2) what the prevalence rate of reported cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years was in the Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex. [174955]

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the prevalence rate of reported cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years was in the Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex; [175384]

(2) how many cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years were reported in the Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex. [175385]

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years were reported in the Dorset and Somerset Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex; [175626]

(2) what the prevalence rate of reported cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years was in the Dorset and Somerset Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex. [175627]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 17 May 2004]*: I refer the hon. Members to the reply I gave to my hon. Friends, the Members for Workington (Tony Cunningham) and Heywood and Middleton (Jim Dobbin) today.

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years were reported in West Cumbria Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex; [175424]

(2) what the prevalence rate of reported cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years were in the West Cumbria Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex; [175518]

(3) how many cases of sexually transmitted infections were reported in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex; [175519]

(4) what the prevalence rate of reported cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years was in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex. [175520]

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many cases of sexually transmitted infections in people of 19 years and under were reported in Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by *(a)* disease, *(b)* sex and *(c)* age; [175764]

(2) what the prevalence rate of reported cases of sexually transmitted infections in people of 19 years and under was in Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by *(a)* disease, *(b)* sex and *(c)* age; [175765]

(3) how many cases of sexually transmitted infections were reported in people 19 years and under in each year since 2000, broken down by *(a)* disease, *(b)* sex and *(c)* age; [175789]

(4) what the prevalence rate of reported cases of sexually transmitted infections in people 19 years and under was in each year since 2000, broken down by *(a)* disease, *(b)* sex and *(c)* age. [175790]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The available information on rates of sexually transmitted infections in the age groups requested has been placed in the Library.

The national strategy for sexual health and HIV (linking closely to the Government's teenage pregnancy strategy) identifies young people as a priority group for action to improve sexual health. The Government's 'Sex Lottery' and teenage pregnancy, 'Ruthinking' media campaigns are raising awareness among young people of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and how to avoid them. The Department is also tackling the most common STI through the national chlamydia screening programme, which already covers a quarter, or 84, of primary care trusts in England and is being rolled-out across the rest of the country. Sexual health has also been highlighted as an important area in the "Choosing Health" public health White Paper consultation, launched on 3 March.

Mrs. Roe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years were reported in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex; [174888]

(2) what the prevalence rate of reported cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years was in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex. [174889]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to my hon. Friends the Members for Workington (Tony Cunningham) and Heywood and Middleton (Jim Dobbin) today.

Solvent Abuse

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many staff in the NHS specialise in solvent abuse among children. [169030]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department does not collect statistics on the number of staff in the national health service who specialise in solvent abuse among children.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the implementation of the Working Time Directive and its effect on *(a)* doctors' hours and *(b)* the availability of doctors within the NHS. [167877]

Mr. Hutton: The working time directive (WTD) is a legal requirement on which implementation is being taken forward locally. From 1 August, doctors in training will be required to work no more than 58 hours per week on average.

Lessons from WTD pilot sites have demonstrated that compliance is best achieved through working differently using multi-disciplinary teams in line with the wider NHS modernisation agenda, rather than simply employing more doctors.

DEFENCE

Emergency Planning

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans the Government have to provide training for *(a)* helicopter pilots in the armed forces and *(b)* civilian helicopter pilots to assist in an airlift operation in the event of a major emergency. [174675]

Mr. Ingram: In preparation for operational deployments, military helicopter aircrews, both regular and reserve, are fully trained and equipped to meet a wide variety of contingencies. Their skills could be used for airlift operations in the event of a major emergency. The Ministry of Defence has no current plans to train civilian helicopter pilots.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the Government expect to be able to guarantee that the Civil Contingency Reaction Force communications system is compatible with the communications system used by the emergency services. [174686]

Mr. Ingram: As part of the Government's wider strategy to improve communications in the event of an emergency or crisis, the armed forces have procured communications equipment that is compatible with that used by the emergency services. Use of the system is dependent on availability of the commercially provided network infrastructure. Initial capability is available now with full capability expected in April 2006.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether an Army standby unit is ready to help the emergency services immediately in the event of a serious national emergency. [174689]

Mr. Ingram: The armed forces do not maintain units on standby specifically to respond immediately to a national emergency. Nonetheless, in the event of an emergency or crisis, and assuming the civil authorities asked for it, the armed forces would be able to provide support drawing on the most appropriate resources available at the time, which could include regular and Civil Contingency Reaction Force assets.

Iraq

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many scientists have come forward voluntarily since 16 July 2003 and approached the Iraq Survey Group with evidence of weapons of mass destruction and related programmes in Iraq; and when he next expects to present to Parliament an updated document of collated evidence. [175567]

Mr. Hoon: Some Iraqi civilians, including scientists, have approached the Iraq Survey Group with information. However, the Ministry of Defence does not hold exact figures.

The Iraq Survey Group has produced two interim reports, in October 2003 and March 2004, and a further report is expected later this year.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 663W, on Iraq, what the names are of the two individuals whose deaths have been the subject of reports to the Army Prosecuting Authority. [175751]

Mr. Ingram: Of the two cases in advanced stages of consideration only one relates to a death. The individual concerned is an Iraqi civilian named Hassan Abbad Saied.

Air Near-hit Incident (Gloucestershire)

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what disciplinary action has been taken in respect of the aircrew involved in the near-hit incident reported on 4 April 2002 concerning a helicopter and the nuclear installations at Berkeley, Gloucestershire, as recorded in the report of the defence flying complaints investigation team at Henlow, dated 30 May 2002. [174373]

Mr. Caplin: Because the information requested will take a little time to retrieve, I will write to my hon. Friend and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Al Yamamah Contracts

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he was first informed of allegations of corruption involving BAE Systems in connection with the Al Yamamah arms contracts which were drawn to the attention of Sir Kevin Tebbit in 2001. [171750]

Mr. Hoon: I first became aware of allegations of fraud against BAE Systems when they were published in the press in September 2003.

Army Barracks Death

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on what date the Minister of State for the Armed Forces received the Amnesty International Report, "Army Barracks Death: Families Demand Justice" (EUR 45/004/2003); and what his response was. [174742]

Mr. Ingram: Amnesty International's Report, "Army Barracks Death: Families Demand Justice" was received on 18 June 2003. I replied to Halya Gowan of Amnesty International on 2 July 2003.

Army Medal Office (Droitwich)

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what arrangements he has made to ensure the continued efficient operation of the Army Medal Office at Droitwich Spa in the period before its planned closure; [175005]

(2) if he will ensure the Army Medal Office at Droitwich Spa is able to *(a)* purchase equipment and *(b)* recruit staff in the period before the planned closure. [175006]

Mr. Caplin: As I said in my answer of 13 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 556W, the phased closure of the Army Medal Office is part of a risk reduction strategy aimed at minimising disruption to medal service delivery. The work currently in hand to support that strategy includes an analysis of the benefits for service delivery of early equipment purchase and staff recruitment either at Droitwich or at Innsworth. Where such action is cost-effective, to assist in the smooth transfer of responsibilities and reduce the impact on service delivery, it will be done.

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will visit the Army Medal Office in Droitwich Spa to discuss its proposed closure with the staff. [175007]

Mr. Caplin: I have no plans to do so at the present time, but will consider the matter further later in the year.

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 13 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 555W, on Defence Medal Offices, over what period the closure of the Army Medal Office will be phased. [175027]

Mr. Caplin: Detailed work on an implementation timetable cannot begin until the staff preference exercise has been concluded at the end of this month. That work will need to take into account the risk reduction strategies that are currently being developed.

It is not expected that a detailed implementation plan will be available until early autumn.

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 12 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 328W, on the Defence Medal Office, when he will place in the Library a copy of the Investment Appraisal for the proposed closure of the Army Medal Office in Droitwich Spa. [175045]

Mr. Caplin: A copy of the Investment Appraisal was placed in the Library on 20 May 2004.

Defence Bases

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence why his Department does not keep figures for the current number of *(a)* service and *(b)* civilian personnel based at (i) RAF Leeming, (ii) RAF Linton on Ouse, (iii) AAC Dishforth and (iv) Alanbrooke Barracks; and whether his Department has figures for the current number of (A) service and (B) civilian personnel at other defence establishments in the United Kingdom. [173935]

Mr. Caplin: Although individual Defence installations may hold some of this information at a local level, location statistics for Service Personnel are produced centrally by the Defence Analytical Services Agency (DASA). This is done by allocating individuals to a unit based on record of service data, and allocating the unit to a location based postal address. DASA are currently reviewing the source data and process by which these statistics are compiled. The target date for the completion of the review is December 2004. The most recently published location statistics are given in the July 2002 TSP10 publication, which is available in the House of Commons Library. New figures will not be available until the review is complete.

Information on civilians is regularly published by DASA at Government Office Region level where it is believed the data are of sufficient quality. Individual defence installations may hold data at a local level, but centralised systems are not able to provide a reliable breakdown to this level of detail. Individual defence

installations do not routinely publish civilian data as different organisations and agencies are responsible for the same location or site.

Emergency Evacuation (Greater London)

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many helicopters are available in the Greater London area for use in emergency evacuation of people who may be injured in a terrorist attack in London. [175137]

Mr. Ingram: No military helicopters are dedicated to the task of evacuating people who might be injured in a terrorist attack in London. However, there are a number of military helicopters based in the vicinity of Greater London that could be made available to assist the civil authorities if necessary.

Joint Strike Fighter

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the Joint Strike Fighter's ability to take off from warships, with particular reference to *(a)* its expected performance in combat, *(b)* the final cost, *(c)* who is liable for the cost of reconfiguring the aircraft, *(d)* the final in service date and *(e)* the reasons for not identifying the take off problems earlier. [174632]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 11 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 221W to the hon. Member for Hereford (Mr. Keetch). The weight issue impacts most significantly on the landing and take off characteristics of the aircraft, while its combat performance is currently predicted to meet the original requirements. The potential for weight growth was identified at the time of the decision to select the variant, and this, in conjunction with our intention to maximise the flexibility of use of the future carriers (CVF) over their life, influenced our decision to opt for an 'adaptable' design for CVF.

I also refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him on 11 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 219W, regarding the projected final cost of the System Demonstration and Development phase of JSF. Under the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding, the non-US partners in the programme are not bound to contribute to cost increases.

The Future Joint Aircraft in service date, based on current planning assumptions, is 2012.

Medals

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the case for awarding an Arctic medal was last reviewed; by whom it was done; at whose request; and if he will make a statement. [175062]

Mr. Caplin: A review of the case for the retrospective institution of a new medal specifically to recognise wartime service in Arctic waters was carried out by the Ministry of Defence earlier this year at the request of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister.

The conclusion of that review remained that there was no case that could or should be put to the HD Committee for an Arctic Convoy Medal and I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave in the House on 1 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 595W, to my hon. Friend the Member for Nottingham, North (Mr Allen).

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 26 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 728W, to the hon. Member for North Cornwall (Mr. Tyler) on the Suez Medal, what practical constraints limit the issuing of the Suez Canal Zone General Service Medal; and if he will establish a timetable for the completion of distribution to current applicants. [175422]

Mr. Caplin: The constraints are numbers of trained personnel, availability of machinery and funding. It is not practical to establish a timetable for Canal Zone medal applications as each case is unique and it is not possible to say in advance how long it will take to determine each applicant's eligibility for the medal.

Merlin Helicopters

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Merlin helicopters have been *(a)* ordered, *(b)* purchased, *(c)* delivered and *(d)* brought into full service for the Royal Navy since the decision was first made to purchase the Merlin. [174882]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 21 May 2004]:* A total of 44 Merlin Mk1 aircraft have been ordered, purchased and delivered to the Ministry of Defence. 39 helicopters have entered service with the Royal Navy, of which two have been subsequently lost as a result of accidents. The remaining five helicopters are currently being used as trials and development aircraft.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* original budget was and *(b)* the total cost has been of purchasing and fully commissioning the Merlin helicopter for the Royal Navy, both as (i) a total amount and (ii) an amount per aircraft in service. [174884]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 21 May 2004]:* The original budget allocated to the Merlin Mk1 programme was £1.1 billion (VAT inclusive) at 1982 prices. Since that time our requirement has matured and as a result the programme has changed considerably. The final cost of purchasing and commissioning the Merlin Mk1 fleet of 44 aircraft was just over £4.6 billion (VAT inclusive), which equates to approximately £105 million per helicopter.

Missile Defence Interceptor Sites

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with the US authorities about basing missile defence interceptor sites in the UK. [174567]

Mr. Hoon: The Ministry of Defence continues to discuss with the United States a wide range of ballistic missile defence issues. The Government have not yet decided whether the United Kingdom requires its own missile defence, and these discussions do not therefore involve specific architectures or basing assumptions.

Nuclear Power Stations

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what rules govern the rights of *(a)* RAF and

(b) US Air Force aircraft to fly over (i) nuclear power stations and (ii) residential areas; and what breaches of such rules there have been in the past six months in (A) the United Kingdom and (B) Gloucestershire. [173199]

Mr. Ingram: Both Royal Air Force and United States Air Force aircraft operate with the same restrictions in respect of overflights of nuclear installations and residential areas. Nuclear installations are to be avoided by a radius of two nautical miles from a fixed centre-point or a height of 2,000 ft, by all types of aircraft. In respect of "residential areas" we grant avoidances in the United Kingdom military low-flying system to towns with a population of 10,000 or more, as well as everything within certain major avoidance areas. Towns granted avoidances are to be overflown at not less than 1,000 ft by helicopters, and not less than 2,000 ft by fixed wing aircraft. Since the beginning of November 2003 the following breaches of regulations have been established.

Date	*Place*	*Nuclear*	*Town*	*UK*	*Gloucestershire*
17 November 2003	Dungeness, Kent	[1]—		[1]—	
26 November 2003	Berkeley, Gloucestershire	[1]—			[1]—
8 January 2004	Bath		[1]—	[1]—	

[1] Breach

In addition, the following alleged breaches are still under investigation.

Date	*Place*	*Nuclear*	*Town*	*UK*	*Gloucestershire*
21 January 2004	Holmfirth, Lancashire		[1]—	[1]—	
10 February 2004	Swansea		[1]—	[1]—	
18 February 2004	Teignmouth, Devon		[1]—	[1]—	

[1] Alleged breach

Offshore Wind Farms

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make it his policy to reduce the proportion of applications for planning permission for offshore wind farms to which his Department lodges objections. [174589]

Mr. Caplin: Departmental policy must be to maintain the integrity of operations, safety and the nation's defence systems. Objections are only raised when any proposed development would affect these key criteria. It is the Department's stated aim, wherever possible, to assist developers of wind farms, both on-shore and off-shore, to find solutions that will enable a development to proceed to the satisfaction of all parties.

Operation Telic

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what improvements have been made to systems for combat identification in the light of experience gained from Operation Telic. [174603]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence remains committed to improving combat effectiveness and minimising casualties by improving Combat Identification (ID). We already have a continuing programme to support our Armed Forces' Combat ID capability through investment in equipment, training and the continuous review of tactics, techniques and procedures. Following warfighting operations in Iraq the Department undertook a comprehensive review of Combat ID to identify the scope for improvements that could be made. As they become available, lessons from operations in Iraq will inform our approach to all elements of Combat ID capability.

In addition to our programme of continuous improvement and as a direct result of United Kingdom experience during the warfighting phase of Op. Telic, we have continued to deploy in theatre the United States Blue Force Tracking equipment. We have also provided air and ground platforms with systems that support identification in theatre. In addition, we are working on an agreement with the US for the exchange of information on situational awareness systems. Combat Identification devices for vehicles procured under Urgent Operational Requirement arrangements are also being used in routine training.

Radar Reflection (Aircraft)

Mr. Tam Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assistance he is offering to manufacturers of windmill blades in overcoming problems of radar reflection on military aircraft. [166940]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* The Department of Trade and Industry in association with the Ministry of Defence, the Civil Aviation Authority and British Wind Energy Association, through the Wind Energy, Defence and Civil Aviation Interests Working Group have commissioned Qinetiq to investigate the feasibility of developing wind turbine blades that would be invisible to radar. The Department is also aware, through the same Group, that Sheffield University is investigating the technology for development of similar wind turbine blades. Additionally, the working group hopes to test software technology that can be applied to radar to mitigate some of the effects that are caused by wind turbine blades. MOD expects, in due course, to take a major role in testing this technology. MOD officials are available to meet with any manufacturers of wind turbine blades to discuss radar issues.

Rifleman Miller

Mr. Kevin McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what measures have been taken against those responsible for the attack upon Rifleman Miller of the 2nd Battalion the Royal Green Jackets in Ballykinler Barracks, County Down on 10 April. [175196]

Mr. Ingram: The alleged attack upon Rifleman Miller of the 2nd Battalion the Royal Green Jackets at Ballykinler, County Down on 10 April 2004 is still under investigation by the Royal Military Police. Until this investigation is completed and its recommendations considered it would be inappropriate for me to comment on this matter.

Royal Military Police

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the internal process is for the Royal Military Police Special Investigations Branch to

evaluate the investigation of cases in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness; and what computer records are kept of conclusions drawn from internal evaluation. [174741]

Mr. Ingram: Headquarters Provost Marshal (Army) (HQ PM (A)) audits investigations to identify lessons learnt to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of investigations, and to improve the awareness of those who conduct, manage or supervise Royal Military Police investigations.

Additionally, Technical Evaluation Inspections are routinely conducted by the HQ PM (A) Inspectorate, to examine investigative processes and procedures and to conduct quality control audits of investigations conducted.

All Audit and Technical Evaluation Inspection reports are held on file at HQ PM (A), some electronically.

Support Vehicles

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what representations his Department has received from the United States embassy on behalf of US companies for the support vehicles contract; and if he will make a statement. [171576]

Mr. Ingram: We are support vehicle not aware of any representations from the United States embassy regarding the contract.

Typhoon Programme

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much he estimates it will cost the United Kingdom to convert the Typhoon for a ground attack role. [175343]

Mr. Ingram: The Eurofighter Typhoon was planned from the outset to be a multi-role aircraft with an initial ground attack capability, progressively benefiting from enhancement to this and other capabilities as part of an incremental acquisition programme. The cost of these enhancements is currently being discussed as part of the wider, ongoing Tranche 2 negotiations. These negotiations could be prejudiced by the disclosure of cost estimates.

UN Operations

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether British Forces will be subject to Iraqi law following the handover of power on 30 June 2004. [169385]

Mr. Hoon: Following the assumption of authority by the Iraqi Interim Government on 30 June, the intention is that the Multi-National Force including United Kingdom forces will continue to be granted immunity from prosecution under local law. The precise means of achieving this are still under consideration. Members of the Multi-National Force will continue to be subject to the jurisdiction of their sending states.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which branch of the UK military are responsible for the running of prisons in Iraq; who is the head of this branch; and to whom he is responsible for making reports. [174356]

Mr. Ingram: The United Kingdom's only detention facility in Shaibah is currently being run by 1st Regiment Royal Highland Fusiliers, with members of the Military Provost, who report to the Commander Multi-National Division (South East).

Young Service Personnel

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many 16 to 18-year-olds are serving in the *(a)* Army, *(b)* Royal Air Force and *(c)* Royal Navy, broken down by sex. [173773]

Mr. Caplin: I refer my hon. Friend to TSP (Tri Service Publication) 8: Age Distribution of UK Regular Forces at 1 April 2004.

This was published on 19 May 2004 and copies are available in the Library of the House.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 26 May 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agricultural Subsidies

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what help is given to the Exmoor area to secure the highest possible payments in respect of EU funding for farmers. [161881]

Alun Michael: EU co-financed funds are available under the England Rural Development Programme across England, including the Exmoor area. Schemes under this programme help farmers and foresters to become more competitive, diverse, flexible and environmentally responsible as well as providing help to rural communities to adapt and develop. Exmoor is a designated Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) and the Exmoor area was paid a total of £5.4 million under this scheme in 2003, a significant proportion of which was co-financed by the EU.

Anton Dohrn and Rosemary Bank Seamounts

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to protect the Anton Dohrn and Rosemary Bank Seamounts. [166924]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* Seamounts are not one of the habitats listed on Annex I to the Habitats Seamounts Directive for which Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) can be designated. However, seamounts can support habitats such as reefs, which are listed on Annex I. At present, there is little biological information about these two areas, and therefore there is insufficient information to be able to assess whether they meet the site selection criteria for SAC.

Seamounts are one of the habitats on the initial list of threatened and/or declining habitats and species agreed by Ministers in June 2003 under OSPAR (The Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic) Annex V. Work is progressing during 2004 to identify and agree among contracting parties to OSPAR appropriate management measures (which may include marine protected areas) for a selection of the habitats and species on this list.

Bovine Tuberculosis

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the Government will set a timetable for coming to a conclusion about the issue of TB in badgers; and if she will make a statement. [174207]

Mr. Bradshaw: The question of what to do about a wildlife reservoir of bovine tuberculosis is a complex one. The Government are determined to base its future TB policy on sound scientific evidence. The Randomised Badger Culling Trial (RBCT), due to be completed in 2006, should help decide whether culling badgers can form part of a cost-effective, sustainable and practical TB control policy.

On 9 February, Defra launched a consultation on the key principles on which a new long-term strategy for tackling bovine TB will be developed. This consultation asks questions on a wide-range of issues, including how the Government can establish targets, balance costs, benefits and risks, work in partnership with all the key interest groups and how policy can be developed in the light of emerging scientific evidence. That will include evidence from the ongoing RBCT and elsewhere (including the Four Areas badger culling trial in the Republic of Ireland, when published).

On 6 April, Defra announced the publication of a report from an independent scientific panel chaired by Professor Charles Godfray FRS. The report reviewed the progress of the RBCT and associated Defra research, as part of a wider review of Defra's science. The Government are giving careful consideration to the complex recommendations of the report, and the review's conclusions will inform Defra's wider review of TB strategy. Defra has extended the deadline for the public consultation on the TB Strategy review until 4 June, to allow sufficient time for this report to be assimilated and commented on.

Barnet Council

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the decision of Barnet council to terminate its LA21 partnership scheme. [173929]

Mr. Morley: The Government want to see sustainable development become a mainstream issue for local authorities, their partners, and local communities. We believe that the most effective way to achieve this is to build upon the experience of partnership working and community engagement gained through Local Agenda 21 (LA21) and subsume LA21 strategies within statutory community strategies. These are required, by law, to promote sustainable development. Many councils have already done this, and we encourage others to follow suit. It is for authorities to decide whether to have additional plans or a dedicated partnership to support the delivery of sustainable outcomes, but we would expect them to ensure these are in place if LA21 is to end.

Endangered Species

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she plans to bring forward secondary legislation to implement section 307 (Enforcement of Legislation on endangered species) of the Criminal Justice Act 2003. [175236]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* Securing these Criminal Justice Act provisions was a major step forward. New secondary legislation will give effect to the provisions to strengthen police powers and to provide for tougher penalties.

Last year's public consultation exercise identified a number of complex issues which we need to resolve within Government but we are aiming to circulate a draft of the legislation for consultation in the autumn.

Fallen Stock

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects the Fallen Stock Company to be up and running; and if she will make a statement. [174205]

Mr. Bradshaw: The National Fallen Stock Company has been up and running for some months now. It announced its proposals for a National Fallen Stock Scheme to start autumn this year on 13 May. Further details are available on the Defra website at http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/by-prods/default.htm

Farm Subsidies

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what EU rules apply to Common Agricultural Policy funds held by member states which choose to *(a)* place a ceiling on payments to larger farm holdings and *(b)* taper support payments to farm holdings degressively according to size; and what constraints this places upon the member state in respect of the impact of the redistribution of funds otherwise withheld. [172485]

Alun Michael: There are no such EU rules.

Greenhouse Gas

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she will take to ensure that the EU involves developing countries in future allocations of greenhouse gas emissions on an equitable per capita basis. [174043]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* The UK has had initial discussions on future action with a number of developing countries, both at official and ministerial level. For any future climate regime to be effective, it must be as inclusive as possible, and must certainly cover the main developing countries. We are committed to ensuring that developing countries are included in the early stages of the discussions on future action, not only to ensure that the outcome is acceptable to the largest emitting developing countries and we achieve as near universal acceptance as possible, but also to ensure that equity concerns are addressed.

We will continue to engage with developing countries at all levels, both through the formal channels that exist in the UNFCCC and through informal channels. We are currently considering how to build on this dialogue and stimulate further discussion.

Health and Pesticide Exposure

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the report on the Survey of Health and Pesticide Exposure, being carried out by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and funded by her Department, is due to be published. [174664]

Alun Michael: Last July the Organophosphate Information Network informed Defra of its concerns over the conduct of the clinical phase of the study. The Department took these concerns seriously and decided to commission an independent audit of this phase of the study. On the recommendation of the Association of British Neurologists, Professor Kerry Mills from King's College Hospital London, was asked to carry out the audit. Professor Mills' prior commitments and correspondence between the physicians involved, resulted in the audit being started on 19 April this year. This process may take six months to complete.

During the past few days my Department has asked both the hon. Member for North Cornwall and Mrs. Elizabeth Sigmund, the Chair of the Organophosphate Information Network (OPIN), for their opinions on this matter. Following this consultation, I have decided that an interim report should be published pending the completion of the audit.

Seasonal Fruit Pickers

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what monitoring takes place to ensure that seasonal fruit pickers are not paid below the minimum wage. [175442]

Alun Michael: Seasonal fruit pickers are entitled to be paid at least the appropriate Agricultural Minimum Wage set by the Agricultural Wages Board for England and Wales, for each hour they work. Payment of the Agricultural Minimum Wage is enforced by Defra officials of behalf of the Secretary of State. Enforcement activity is complaint led and workers can register a complaint about their pay by telephoning the Defra Agricultural Wages Team on 0845 0000 134.

Pay rates in agriculture are surveyed on a sample basis through the Defra Earnings and Hours Survey. This survey is conducted on a quarterly basis and a summary of results is available on the Defra website (www.defra.gov.uk).

TRANSPORT

Contingency Planning

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the mobile phones and walkie-talkie communications units issued to emergency personnel who would be called upon to deal with a terrorist incident on the London Underground have the capability to work underground. [175081]

Mr. McNulty: British Transport Police (BTP) are responsible for policing on London Underground and would be amongst the first to respond to a terrorist incident on the Underground network. BTP officers have two hand-held radios, one for below ground and one for above.

Metropolitan Police radios work on two thirds of the London Underground network. In responding to a terrorist incident, or other emergency, on the Underground, the Metropolitan Police would work closely with BTP, and most of its responsibility would be at the surface. In the event that Metropolitan Police

officers were required to operate on the sections of the Underground network where their radios do not work, they would be able to communicate from below ground through BTP's radios. They would also receive communications support from London Underground staff.

London Fire Brigade officers carry hand-held radios that work on the London Underground by means of fixed extension aerials in place in all deep level Underground stations. If required to work underground in environments where such fixed aerials are not installed, London Fire Brigade officers are able to deploy portable cable aerials enabling the radios to operate underground.

All London Ambulance Service command vehicles carry portable cable aerials enabling London Ambulance Service radios to operate on the London Underground and other below ground environments.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans there are to provide training for all public transport workers in case of a serious emergency. [174680]

Mr. McNulty: This is primarily a matter for each operator. London Underground, the rail and bus industries have already circulated advice to all front line staff. In addition, the Department requires London Underground to have contingency plans to deal with situations that could effect the security of its operations. These must be accessible at all times to staff at stations, so that they are fully aware of what to do in such situations, and be exercised regularly. We have made similar recommendations to all Train Operating Companies.

Bus Services

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his assessment is of the ability of bus operators to maintain current service levels following the increase in the price of oil. [175438]

Mr. McNulty: Fuel costs represent only 6.5 per cent. of total local bus operating costs, after account is taken of support given by means of Bus Service Operators Grant, and it is not expected that recent changes in world oil prices will of themselves have a significant impact on service levels. We will however continue to monitor trends in overall bus industry costs.

Crime (Public Transport)

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many assaults and attacks where knives or firearms were used were committed on London Underground in each year since 1997. [175459]

Mr. McNulty: The British Transport Police (BTP) have advised me that this information is not readily available and could be compiled only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many crimes involving firearms or knives were committed on *(a)* buses and *(b)* the railways in each year since 1997. [175462]

Mr. McNulty: The British Transport Police (BTP) have advised me that this information is not readily available for crimes committed on the railways and could be compiled only at disproportionate cost. No data is held centrally regarding the number of crimes on buses since 1997 which have involved firearms or knives.

Departmental Staff

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many staff were employed in the Department to work in the communications field, and what the total expenditure on communications for the Department was, broken down by *(a)* Government Information and Communication Service staff and *(b)* other staff, broken down by (i) press officers, (ii) special advisors and (iii) others, in *(A)* 1994–95, *(B)* 1996–97, *(C)* 1997–98 and *(D)* 2001–02. [168677]

Mr. McNulty: *(A)* 17 permanent press officers, all members of the then Government Information Service (GIS), were employed by the former Department of Transport (central)'s Information Division in 1994–95. Further information for this financial year about numbers of other staff and salary costs of these and press officers is not available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

(B) Detailed information on the numbers and salary costs of permanent press officers, members of the then GIS, employed in departmental press offices, including the former Department of Transport *(c)* for the financial year 1996–97, was provided in a memorandum dated 16 June 1998 to the Select Committee on Public Administration and published in its report on the Government Information and Communication Service (HC 770) in July 1998 (http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm199798/cmselect/cmpubadm/770/77002.htm). Copies are in the Libraries of the House. Information for other staff is not available in a comparable format and could only be provided at disproportionate cost. *(C-D)* Information for each of the financial years 1997–98 and 2001–02, when transport policy formed part of the remit of the former Departments of Environment, Transport and the Regions and Transport, Local Government and the Regions (respectively), is not available in a comparable format.

The Special Advisers' Code of Conduct sets out the sort of work a special adviser may undertake on behalf of their Minister. This can include communications activity. Details of the costs of Special Advisers are given on an annual basis.

Disabled Parking

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 22 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 513W, on disabled parking, what progress has been made on *(a)* taking forward the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee's new recommendations, *(b)* revised guidance to local authorities, *(c)* research on the feasibility of a national database of Blue Badge holders and *(d)* consultation on secondary legislation for extending the scheme. [176032]

Mr. McNulty: Work is continuing across all the areas of work I outlined in my previous answer in March.

The revised guidance that will be drawn up to explain the changes I described will be produced in draft and will form part of the public consultation that will take place on the draft regulations to extend the scheme to children under two and those with temporary disabilities. That consultation is expected later this year.

The work specification for the research on a national database is being finalised. We plan to go out to tender on that work over the summer.

Ministerial Visits

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list visits made by each Minister in the Department between December 2003 and April 2004, broken down by *(a)* date, *(b)* constituency visited and *(c)* cost. [171566]

Mr. McNulty: Ministerial visits on official business within the United Kingdom for the period from 1 December 2003 to 30 April 2004 are given in tables 1 to 4. The visits were not made to specific constituencies and a number of visits would involve travelling to or through more than one constituency. Details of the cost of each visit could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

The Government publishes on an annual basis the total costs of all ministerial overseas travel and a list of all visits by Cabinet Ministers costing in excess of £500. Information for 2003–04 is currently being collected and will be published as soon as it is ready.

Table 1: Visits by Secretary of State

Visit	*Date(s) of visit*
Opening of M6 toll road, West Midlands	9 December 2003
Launch of Queen Mary 2, Southampton	8 January 2004
Channel Tunnel Rail Link breakthrough, Kings Cross	27 October 2004
C2C/ Ford centre of excellence, Dagenham	2 February 2004
Opening of train facility, Waterloo	23 February 2004
Nottingham Express Tram	8 March 2004
Rail Seminar, Glasgow	26 March 2004
Regional visit to North East	29 March 2004
Greater Anglia Launch, Liverpool Street	1 April 2004
Rail Seminar, York	23 April 2004
Launch of Highways Agency Traffic Officers, Birmingham	26 April 2004
Rail Seminar, Cardiff	28 April 2004

Table 2: Visits by Kim Howells

Visit	*Date(s) of visit*
Regional visit to North East	2 and 3 December 2003
EWS rail freight performance discussions visit , London	17 December 2003
Christmas rail blockade publicity visit, Clapham Junction	23 December 2003
Regional visit to North West	21 and 22 April 2004
Secure Station award presentation, Hereford	26 January 2004
First Great Western rail performance discussions visit, Reading	4 February 2004
Regional visit to South West	11 February 2004
Trevithick Celebrations—train naming, Cardiff	18 February 2004
Network Rail Scotland performance discussions visit, Edinburgh	7 April 2004
South West Trains—launching digital passenger information screens, Clapham Junction	22 April 2004
Rail Seminar, York	23 April 2004
London Underground power control room visit, central London	27 April 2004
Rail Seminar, Cardiff	28 April 2004

Table 3: Visits by David Jamieson

Visit	*Date(s) of visit*
Visit to Coventry University	4 December 2003
AA:Control Centre visit, Farnborough	8 December 2003
Launch of Queen Mary 2, Southampton	8 January 2004
Visit to Severn View "green refuelling" station, Bristol	22 January 2004
'Sustainable Communities' visit, Redruth	2 February 2004
Visit to Ford Plant, Southampton	26 February 2004
Regional visit, Yorkshire	3 March 2004
Visit to Highway Agency Office and Exeter Airport	25 March 2004
RoSPA Conference, Brighton	29 March 2004
DVLA Campaign, Plymouth	6 March 2004
A249 Kent "sod cutting" and "Greenergy" visit, Maidstone	29 March 2004

Table 4: Visits by Tony McNulty

Visit	*Date(s) of visit*
Visit to Leaside Regeneration Ltd.—Bow Flyover redesign and infrastructure improvements	4 December 2003
Opening Torquay pedestrianisation scheme	8 January 2004
Visit to Thames Gateway—Stratford area in relation to transport and the Olympic bid	7 January 2004
Opening Harrogate bus station and a Bus Challenge project	12 January 2004
Launch of "MAVIS" Rig at Mobility Advice and Vehicle Information centre, Berks and visit to Air Accident Investigation Branch	22 January 2004
Havant—Government Liveability announcement	2 February 2004
Tour of Thames Gateway with South Essex partnership	2 March 2004
Speech to South East Regional Assembly, Woking and visit to Government Office for the South East, Guildford	3 March 2004
Launch of the Solent Travelcard, Portsmouth	4 March 2004
Launch of Urban Bus Challenge project, Corby	15 March 2004
Opening of Surrey's Network Management Information Centre, Leatherhead	24 March 2004
Visit to Com Cab taxi company, Harrow	29 March 2004
Launch of a bus fleet, Hove	2 March 2004
Visit to Rural Bus Challenge scheme, Doncaster	20 March 2004
Opening of public transport interchange scheme, Newcastle	21 March 2004
Opening of British Transport Police mobile custody suite, Stratford, London	22March 2004
Visit to an urban regeneration company and viewing of Local Transport Plan funded projects, Cornwall	28 April 2004

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many Parliamentary Questions to his Department in the last year took *(a)* two to four weeks and *(b)* over four weeks to answer. [174868]

Mr. McNulty: At 21 May 2004, the Department for Transport had answered 3,052 written questions tabled since 18 May 2003. This comprised 2,567 written ordinary questions (98.2 per cent. of which were answered within 10 sitting days) and 485 named day questions (98.8 per cent. of which were answered within 10 sitting days).

Railways

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what assessment he has made of the performance of train operating companies to date in complying with their duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 section 21(2)*(d)* to take reasonable steps to provide disabled persons with a reasonable alternative method of accessing their services where a physical feature makes it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled persons to make use of those services; [175684]

(2) what assessment he has made of the performance of train operating companies to date on revising and implementing new Disabled People's Protection Policies in line with the Strategic Rail Authority's Code of Practice on Train and Station Services for Disabled Passengers and Guidance on Disabled People's Protection Policies; [175685]

(3) what assessment he has made of the performance of train operating companies to date on conducting access audits and making changes to physical features to prepare for the new duties on physical access coming into force under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 on 1 October. [175686]

Mr. McNulty: It is the responsibility of each train operator to comply with the requirements of Section 21 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. All operators have been required by the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) to review their Disabled People's Protection Policy (DPPP). As part of the review each train operator has undertaken access audits of the facilities it operates. Train operators have a commitment to meet the services, standards and guidance defined in the SRA's Code of Practice when refurbishing rolling stock, providing new or enhanced facilities at stations and for the provision of services at stations and on trains. All train operators either have a revised DPPP approved by the SRA or are seeking such approval. Twenty Train Operating Company Disabled People's Protection Policies have been approved to date. Each revised DPPP places an obligation on the operator to provide a 'reasonable alternative means' of making a journey accessible to disabled passengers where physical barriers preclude them from doing so.

Road Traffic Accidents (A49)

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* deaths and *(b)* injuries in road traffic accidents there were on the A49 between Shrewsbury and Ludlow in each of the last five years. [174983]

Mr. McNulty: The following information is taken from figures provided by West Mercia Police and incorporates the A49 from Baileys Roundabout to the Herefordshire/Shropshire County boundary.

	Fatal	*Serious*	*Slight*	*Total*
1999	1	8	72	81
2000	3	12	56	71
2001	2	7	59	68
2002	7	16	47	70
2003	1	4	70	75
Total	14	47	304	365

South Hampshire Rapid Transit Project

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1576W, on South Hampshire Rapid Transit Project, if he will ensure that a decision on the future of the project is made before the 23 July deadline for using compulsory purchase powers. [175436]

Mr. McNulty: A decision will be made in due course.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Abu Ghraib

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the United States Administration, and with whom, on the cases of abuse that have taken place against Iraqi prisoners at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [173074]

Mr. Straw: I have regular discussions with senior members of the US Administration on a wide variety of issues concerning Iraq. It is not our practice to make public the detail of those discussions under exemption 1*(b)* of Part 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions the Commander of the United States forces in Iraq has had with *(a)* the current British representative or his predecessor to the Coalition Provisional Authority and *(b)* the Commander of British Forces in Iraq about the allegations made in respect of the abuse of detainees at (i) the Abu Ghraib prison and (ii) other prisons in Iraq; and what the outcome has been of communications on the matter. [173338]

Mr. Straw: By the time UK officials were aware of the specific allegations the US authorities had already begun detailed investigations. We have had a number of discussions with US military and civilian authorities about the need to improve detention procedures. The US authorities have been taking measures to improve those procedures. The US military established a high level military inquiry under General Antonio Taguba in late January.

Afghanistan

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with his Belgian counterpart concerning Belgium's decision to double its military commitment to Afghanistan; and if he will make a statement. [175710]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We warmly welcome the announcement by the Belgian Prime Minister on 20 May that Belgium will double the size of its troop contingent in Afghanistan to around 600. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not had the opportunity to discuss this with the Belgian Foreign Minister in the short time since the announcement was made.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with his EU counterparts on the number of EU troops stationed in Afghanistan; and if he will make a statement. [175755]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary attended the Berlin Conference on Afghanistan in March and the meeting of G8 Foreign Ministers in Washington on 14 May. Military support in Afghanistan was discussed at both these meetings, which were attended by a number of EU Foreign Ministers. Most recently, on 20 May the Foreign Secretary discussed the need to support the NATO mission in Afghanistan with the Spanish Foreign Minister. EU member states provide around three-quarters of the troops in the International Security Assistance Force and this is likely to increase later this year. In addition, the UK and Germany lead Provincial Reconstruction Teams in northern Afghanistan, to which EU partners and other nations contribute personnel. EU Member States also contribute forces individually to combat missions in Afghanistan under Operation Enduring Freedom.

Bribery

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent guidance he has produced for diplomatic posts on the issue of overseas bribery; and what plans he has to update that guidance. [171395]

Mr. MacShane: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office issued its latest guidance to diplomatic posts on bribery overseas on 5 April 2004. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office plans to update this guidance annually. The update may be brought forward should a change in circumstances warrant it. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office will place a copy of this guidance in the Library of the House. We will also place a copy of the new UK bribery and corruption law leaflet in the Library, as soon as it is republished.

China

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which individual cases were included in the list provided by the EU to the Chinese Government during the EU and China Human Rights dialogue in Dublin on 26 to 27 February. [165265]

Mr. Rammell: The EU considers the list to be confidential. I cannot, therefore, independently put the list into the public domain. There were, however, 76 names on the list.

The individual cases raised with the Chinese in connection with last year's UK China Human Rights dialogue were: Wang Youcai; Li Wangyang; Jampel Changchub; Phuntsog Nyidron; Qin Yongmin; Zhang Shanguang; Gedhun Choekyi Nyima; Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche; Sonam Dondrub; Zhu Ruixiang; Lu Genjun; Xu Zerong; Jiang Shurang; Bishop James Su Zhimin; Shi Enxiang; Huang Qi; Yang Zili; Xu Wei; Zhang Honghai; Jin Haike; Li Jiaqing; Wang Yulan; Li Haihe; Luo Gang; He Ping; Jiang Weiping; Liu Jingsheng; Shan Chengfeng; Yan Peng; Mu Chuanheng; Zhu Baolian; Qi Yanchen; Yao Fuxin; Xiao Yunliang; Chadrel Rinpoche; Namdrol; Jiang Qisheng; Jelil Turdi; Rebiya Kadeer; Abitjan Obulkasim; Nurhahmat Yusup; Tohti Tunyaz; Jelil Turdi; Tursunjan Emet; Ablat Pasar; Iminjan; Abdushukur Abliz (Abdushukur Haji); Ahmed; Rahmatjan; Karim Sadiq; Yasim Kari; Abla Karim; Liu Weifang; Yeshe Gyatso; Liu Di; Yin Lirong; Ning Shuncheng; Zhou Yudan; Zhou Guicheng; Fan Xiaohong; Tang Ren'er; Choi Yong-hun; Rev. Choi Bong-il; Kim Hee-tae; Nima Choedron; Champa Chung-lags; Li Dexian; Wang Zhiwen; Phuntsok Legmon; Jigme Yangchen.

Coalition Provisional Authority

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what arrangements are in place for *(a)* information sharing and *(b)* joint decisions between Paul Bremer and his American staff at the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) and the United Kingdom representation in the CPA. [173346]

Mr. Straw: Formally Ambassador Bremer, the Administrator, is responsible for all CPA decisions. There is close daily contact and regular consultation, however, between the American and British staff at the CPA and the Office of the United Kingdom Special Representative.

Colombia

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 18 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 872W, on Colombia, if he will list the projects *(a)* currently run by the Child Protection Alliance in the Gambia and *(b)* run by the Child Protection Alliance in the Gambia in the last three years; what funding was provided by his Department through the High Commission in Banjul in each case; and if he will make a statement. [175524]

Mr. Mullin: Since the Child Protection Alliance (CPA) was founded in 2001 it has undertaken the following projects, some of which are still continuing:

Radio/Television programmes to discuss issues related to Child Protection.

Printing and distributing a quarterly newsletter.

National HIV/AIDS writing competition for children.

An assessment of all member organisations.

A monthly "Bantaba" (Talking/Meeting Point) for relevant organisations/children.

Printing and dissemination of the National Training Manual on Child Protection.

Production of information materials on child protection issues.

Sensitisation workshops on Child Sex Tourism and Commercial Exploitation of Children for stakeholders in the tourism industry.

Training workshops for journalists on developing an ethical code of conduct for reporting issues involving children.

Training workshop on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children for managers of hotels, guesthouses and tour operators.

Training workshop on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children for front desk staff of hotels etc.

Sensitisation workshop for hotel security guards on HIV/AIDS and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.

Summer camp for children on Child Rights, HIV/AIDS and Life Skills.

National Membership Workshop on Child Rights promotion and protection in The Gambia.

Development of a Resource Centre for CPA member organisations and researchers.

Sensitisation workshop for Health and Social Workers on HIV/AIDS and the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.

Over the last three years the British High Commission in Banjul has provided a total of £3,465 to fund a capacity building project, information campaign on child protection issues, and an assessment of member organisations.

EU Constitution

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he expects the changes made to the draft Constitutional Treaty to give the Commission strategic control over oil supplies; how he interprets strategic control in this context; and what he estimates the effect will be on the British oil industry. [174948]

Mr. MacShane: The Government was content with the amendments to the Energy Chapter (Article III. 157) put forward by the Italian Presidency in document CIG 60/04 ADD 1 (published on 9 December and placed in the Library of the House). These made it clear that the member states retained the right to choose how to exploit their natural resources and to ensure security of supply during emergencies. The Irish Presidency's latest package of amendments (in document CIG 76/04 published on 13 May and placed in the Library of the House) proposed the deletion of the Energy Chapter and removed energy from the list of shared competences in the draft Constitutional Treaty. The Government are also content with this approach which would reflect the position in the existing Treaties.

Ferry Accident (West Africa)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what contribution the Government is providing to the search for the ferry stranded off the West African coast since 18 May carrying Liberian refugees from Nigeria and Ghana; and if he will make a statement. [175499]

Mr. Mullin: None. The French navy rescued the stranded ship 'Dona Elvira', 250 kms off the Ivorian coast on 20 May. The ship contained over 300 returning Liberian refugees who are now in the care of the UN High Commission for Refugees.

Guantanamo Bay

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with his counterpart in the United States concerning the disapplication of the Geneva Convention in respect of the detainees held in Guantanamo Bay. [173004]

Mr. Mullin: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has regular contact with his US counterpart on a wide range of issues, including Guantanamo Bay.

The focus of the Government's discussions with the US authorities about Guantanamo Bay has been on how to resolve the position of the British nationals held there, as well as their welfare.

The Government's position is that the British detainees should either be tried fairly in accordance with international law or they should be returned to the UK. Our hope, however, is that the issues we have raised will be reflected in the treatment of other countries' nationals detained at Guantanamo Bay too.

We have made very clear to the US that the British detainees at Guantanamo Bay are entitled to be treated humanely. British officials have visited Guantanamo Bay on seven occasions to check on the welfare of the British detainees, most recently in March. We have raised any concerns we might have about their welfare with the US authorities.

Iraq

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs who within the Iraqi Coalition Provisional Authority has responsibility to monitor and ensure that Geneva Convention requirements are met by coalition forces; how often such monitoring is conducted; and to whom the individual or individuals report their findings. [173451]

Mr. Straw: The Coalition Provisional Authority itself is not responsible for monitoring the application of the Geneva Conventions. Instead, it is coalition military commanders in theatre who are responsible for ensuring that the requirements of the Geneva Conventions are met.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many of the oral and written concerns made by the International Committee of the Red Cross Coalition forces during 2003 were received by his Department; and what action was taken. [173201]

Mr. Straw: Throughout 2003, once it was clear that there was a possibility of UK troops becoming involved in Iraq, there were regular and co-operative discussions between Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Ministers and officials and the ICRC on Iraq.

During these meetings, the ICRC briefed on the general humanitarian situation in Iraq and reminded us of our international humanitarian law obligations concerning detainees. Our records do not indicate that any specific oral or written concerns about coalition forces were passed to the FCO in 2003. As is standard practice, they would have been passed in the first instance to the authorities directly responsible for the treatment of detainees. I have no reason to doubt that the UK military authorities responsible for detainees in Iraq took appropriate action in response to any ICRC concerns. As my hon. Friend the Minister of State for the Armed Forces (Mr. Ingram) made clear in the House on 13 May, HMG co-operates fully with the ICRC. It is offered full access to the detention facilities that we operate and each concern that it brings to our attention is treated very seriously and investigated fully.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he was informed that the International Committee of the Red Cross report of February 2004 had been received by his Department; and when he asked to see it. [173220]

Mr. Straw: As I said in the House on 11 May, I was made aware of the ICRC report during the weekend of 8–9 May 2004.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action has been taken by the Coalition Provisional Authority to investigate the allegations of brutality and illegality by Iraqi police, contained in the International Committee of the Red Cross report of February 2004. [173221]

Mr. Straw: As part of its responsibilities the Coalition Provisional Authority created within the Iraqi Ministry of Interior an internal affairs department that is tasked with leading on all such investigations. A team of international police advisers supports and monitors the progress and work of this department.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the United States Secretary of State, Mr.Colin Powell, concerning the International Committee of the Red Cross report of February 2004. [173222]

Mr. Straw: I have regular discussions with Secretary Powell during which a wide variety of issues concerning Iraq are discussed. It is not our practice to make public the detail of those discussions under exemption 1 *(b)* of Part 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government information.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions took place, upon receipt of the International Committee of the Red Cross report of February 2004, between British and US officials of the Coalition Provisional Authority. [173244]

Mr. Straw: British officials attended a meeting between Ambassador Bremer and the ICRC on 26 February at which the ICRC report was handed to Ambassador Bremer. Follow-up discussions with US officials confirmed the previous US announcement that the US military investigation had begun as soon as the allegations about mistreatment at Abu Ghraib were brought to light in January.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs for what reason Sir Jeremy Greenstock's Office did not immediately forward to his Department the International Committee of the Red Cross report of February on receipt. [173264]

Mr. Straw: The ICRC report was formally presented to the Coalition Provisional Authority Administrator in Baghdad by a representative of the ICRC at a meeting on 26 February. UK officials attended. A report of the meeting was sent to London by telegram within 24 hours. A copy of the report had already been passed to Permanent Joint Headquarters. The Office of the UK Special Representative was assured that investigations had already been launched into allegations involving US forces. The office sought and received confirmation that allegations involving misconduct by UK forces were also already under investigation.

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what *(a)* instruction and *(b)* guidance his (i) officials and (ii) Ministers were following prior to the decision not to make the February International Committee of the Red Cross report available to him as soon as it became available to his Department. [173572]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 19 May 2004]:* Ministers and officials follow standard procedures to ensure that the UK's obligations under international law are fully respected. As has been made clear, action was already in hand on the allegations concerning UK forces.

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what *(a)* written and *(b)* oral briefing was provided by officials in his Department to inform (i) him and (ii) his Ministers of the contents of the International Committee of the Red Cross report and actions taken (A) as a result of officials having read the report and (B) prior to the full report being made available to him. [173575]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 19 May 2004]:* Officials in Baghdad took appropriate action as soon as the report was received in February to pass it back to Permanent Joint Head Quarters for confirmation that action on all those areas concerning UK forces was already in hand. Officials in Baghdad were also assured that investigations had already been launched into allegations involving US forces.

My hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs was made aware of the report (though not given a copy) at a meeting in Geneva on 18 March with Dr. Kellenberger, President of the ICRC. On his return to London, Mr. Rammell discussed the concerns raised by Dr. Kellenberger with officials, and was satisfied that action was in hand to deal with the allegations concerning UK troops. I became aware of the ICRC report on the weekend of 8–9 May.

My noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, Minister of State at the FCO, was briefed in general terms on detainee issues on 27 April in advance of taking a question in the House of Lords on the Amnesty International report "Iraq: One Year On". The ICRC was not covered.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which member of the Government was first informed of the International Committee of the Red Cross Report on the treatment by coalition forces of prisoners of war in Iraq and its contents; and when this was. [173424]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* I understand that my right hon. Friend the Minister of State, Ministry of Defence, was the first Minister to be made aware of the report which as he has already made clear was in February. My right hon. Friend had already been aware for some months of two substantive issues raised in respect of UK forces, and of the action taken.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his oral answers of 11 May 2004, on Iraq, when the International Committee of the Red Cross Report was received at the Foreign Office; and what action was taken. [173426]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* A copy of the ICRC report was obtained by a Foreign and Commonwealth Office official during a visit to Baghdad on 19 March. It was not marked for Ministers' attention as MOD action was already in hand on the allegations concerning UK forces.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his letter placed in the Library on 11 May concerning the handling of the International Committee of the Red Cross report and the telegram sent to London by the office of the UK Special Representative for Iraq on 27 February, which office received the telegram; to which Department and to which Ministers and senior officials the telegram was subsequently distributed; and when the telegram was distributed. [173677]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* According to records in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Communications Centre the telegram referred to was received on 27 February 2004 in the FCO and other relevant Government Departments. Records indicate that it was distributed at official level to private offices. It was not marked for ministerial attention. Action was already in hand on the allegations concerning UK forces.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with *(a)* his United States counterpart and *(b)* the United States Secretary of Defence in respect of the use by the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq of private contractors to (i) conduct interviews and (ii) otherwise manage detainees. [174013]

Mr. Straw: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Tooting (Tom Cox) today (UIN 173074).

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether funds generated from oil assets in Iraq are ring-fenced for that country's domestic use; and if he will make a statement. [174018]

Mr. Rammell: United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1483 of 22 May 2003 decided that all proceeds from sale of Iraq's oil should go into the Development Fund for Iraq to meet the needs of the Iraqi people and the costs of economic reconstruction and civilian administration.

UNSCR 1483 also decided that Iraq's oil wealth should be ring-fenced from external attachment and legal proceedings and calls upon member states to take all necessary steps to assure this protection.

The only exception to this is that 5 per cent. of proceeds from oil should be deposited in the United Nations Compensation Fund for Kuwait established in accordance with UNSCR 687 of 1991 and subsequent relevant resolutions. As outlined in UNSCR 1483 this latter requirement will be binding on an internationally recognised sovereign government of Iraq unless that government and the Governing Council of the United Nations Compensation Commission decide otherwise.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 11 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 199W, on Iraq, how many Iraqis are being consulted through the process being led by UN Special Envoy Lakhdar Brahimi; and what the UK Government's policy is on his recommendations on *(a)* the structure and personnel of the Interim Government and *(b)* the best method of selecting delegates to the planned National Conference. [174103]

Mr. Rammell: The UN Secretary General Adviser on Iraq, Lakhdar Brahimi continues to consult a large number of Iraqis in Baghdad and elsewhere in Iraq in his efforts to help forge Iraqi consensus on the formation of the Interim Government. We warmly welcome Brahimi's initial proposals and look forward to Iraqi agreement on the way forward by the end of May.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs from what source of funds the money for bounties for the capture of wanted individuals in Iraq comes; and if he will make a statement. [174189]

Mr. Rammell: Her Majesty's Government does not offer bounties for the capture of wanted individuals in Iraq.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) between what dates the September 2002 source upon which the Government based its claim that Iraq sought to procure uranium from Africa indicated that the attempted procurement took place; [175478]

(2) whether the documentary evidence reported in June 2002, referred to in Paragraph 89 of the Intelligence and Security Committee report, Cm 5972, upon which the Government did not rely to back up its claim that Iraq sought to procure uranium from Africa, was found to be *(a)* forged and *(b)* the same as any of the documents described as forged by the International Atomic Energy Agency on 7 March 2003; [175493]

(3) whether the Government have established the origin and history of the documents referred to as still under consideration in Paragraph 4 of the Further Supplementary Memorandum from the Foreign and

Commonwealth Office, Iraqi Attempts To Procure Uranium, of July 2003, Written Evidence to the Foreign Affairs Committee, Ninth Report, HC 813-II. [175494]

Mr. MacShane: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer that my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary gave on 6 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1733W.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Intelligence and Security Committee *(a)* requested and *(b)* saw the intelligence (i) upon which the Government based its claim that Iraq sought to procure uranium from Africa and (ii) considered by the International Atomic Energy Agency to be forged which was released to the Secret Intelligence Service by the third party in question and referred to in paragraph 92 of the ISC report, Cm 5972. [175479]

Mr. MacShane: I have nothing to add to the Intelligence and Security Committee's account of their inquiry into this matter, given in paragraphs 87–93 of their report (Cmnd 5972).

International Cricket

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions his Department has had with the International Cricket Council regarding the rules operated by the ICC in respect of cricket tour cancellations. [175486]

Mr. Mullin: There have been no such discussions.

Israel

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the report by Amnesty International, "Israel and the Occupied Territories—Under the rubble: House demolition and destruction of land and property", published on 18 May. [175287]

Mr. Straw: We share Amnesty International's concerns about deteriorating housing conditions in the Occupied Territories and the wider human rights and humanitarian consequences of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In a press statement on 17 May I expressed my concern at the demolition of Palestinian homes in Rafah. These actions are contrary to Israel's commitments under the roadmap and are unacceptable. And on 19 May, I expressed my profound concern about the deaths of Palestinian civilians demonstrating against house demolitions. Copies of both my statements are available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website: www.fco.gov.uk/policy/news/press-releases. Demolitions are provocative, exacerbate tension and undermine ongoing efforts to bring about an end to violence and a return to negotiations. Israel must act within international law and refrain from using excessive force and taking actions which amount to collective punishment. The UK voted for UNSCR 1544 which condemned Israel's actions on 19 May 2004.

Kenya

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has held with the new Kenyan Government since the general election in Kenya in December 2002; and what issues were discussed. [175168]

Mr. Mullin: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary met the Kenyan Foreign Minister, Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka in February 2003. Issues discussed were the priorities for the new Kenyan government, Iraq, Zimbabwe and terrorism.

On 29 April 2004, I met the Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Kiraitu Murungi, to discuss Constitutional and other reforms, including anti-corruption, and Julie Ward. In June 2003 I met the then Vice-President, Michael Wamalawa, and in October 2003, Foreign Minister Musyoka and a delegation of Kenyan Ministers. In October 2003 I visited Kenya, meeting President Mwai Kibaki and members of his government.

My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister and I met President Kibaki on 9 October 2003.

Victor Bout

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will support the freezing of assets owned by Mr. Victor Bout; and if he will make a statement on the reasons for the UK removing Mr. Bout's name from a list of individuals to be targeted by United Nations sanctions. [175566]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 25 May 2004]:* The UK has consistently supported international efforts to end Victor Bout's illegal activities, and UK Ministers have publicly welcomed action taken against his sanctions-busting activities. Our commitment to dealing with arms traffickers/sanctions busters is second to none, and a matter of public record.

I am unable to comment on specific nominations under discussion in the United Nations Security Council for the asset freeze imposed by UNSCR 1532. To do so would risk capital flight.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what investigations the Department has carried out into the activities of Victor Bout. [174769]

Mr. Rammell: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does not have investigative authority/powers. We pass any information we receive concerning alleged breaches of arms embargoes and sanctions regimes to the appropriate investigative authorities.

FCO Ministers have publicly stated our position on Victor Bout and his sanctions-busting activities. On 7 November 2000 my right hon. Friend the then Minister of State at the FCO said in the House that Victor Bout is "the chief sanctions buster, and is a merchant of death . . . " *Official Report*, column 156. On 2 May 2002, my hon. Friend the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the FCO said in the House, "I hope that . . . increased international pressure on Bout will finally result in the end of his sanctions-busting activities and that he will be brought to justice. The UK has played a leading role in drawing international attention to Bout's illegal activities . . . " *Official Report*, column 929W.

Qualified Majority Voting

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the occasions when the UK has been outvoted when Qualified Majority Voting in the European Council has applied in every year since 1992, stating in each case the issue concerned; and if he will make a statement. [175286]

Mr. Straw: The European Council does not take decisions by Qualified Majority Voting (QMV), but agrees Presidency conclusions by consensus. The Council of Ministers does take decisions by QMV on legislation where the legal base so provides. Since January 2001, details of voting in the Council of Ministers have been published by the Council Secretariat in its monthly summaries of Council acts. These can be accessed on the Council's internet site at: http://ue.eu.int/cms3_applications/showPage.asp?id = 551&lang = :en&mode = g.

Sudan

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions have taken place between the UK Government and the Government of Sudan regarding reports of ethnic cleansing in the Darfur region of Sudan; and if he will make a statement. [175905]

Mr. Mullin: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to my right hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham Ladywood (Clare Short) on 25 May 2004 (UIN 175841).

Travel Costs

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the travel costs incurred *(a)* by his Department and *(b)* by each Minister within his Department, for each of the last 10 years. [175645]

Mr. Straw: I refer the hon. Member to my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister's answer on 16 July 2003 *Official Report*, column 328W. A figure for the financial year 2003–2004 will be published as soon as possible.

In addition, since 1999 the Government has published an annual list of all visits undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. Details for the financial year 2003–2004 will be published as soon as possible. Copies of these lists can be found in the Library of the House.

PRIME MINISTER

Iraq

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 12 May, *Official Report*, column 385W, on Iraq, whether the employment of civilian contractors and interpreters in Abu Ghraib prison was *(a)* known to and *(b)* sanctioned by the Coalition Provisional Authority. [174329]

The Prime Minister: The employment of civilian contractors and interpreters in Abu Ghraib prison is a matter for the US authorities.

Ministerial Visits

David Davis: To ask the Prime Minister (1) if he will list the travel costs incurred by his Office for each of the last 10 years; [175657]

(2) how much his Office spent on ministerial travel by *(a)* car, *(b)* train, *(c)* aeroplane and *(d)* helicopter, in each of the last 10 years. [175660]

The Prime Minister: For travel costs prior to 2002, I refer the right hon. Member to the answer my right hon. Friend, the Minister for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Alexander) gave to the hon. Member for Arundel and South Downs (Mr. Flight) on 13 November 2003, *Official Report*, columns 397–398W.

For information for 2002–03, I refer the right hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Warwick and Leamington (Mr. Plaskitt) on 16 July 2003, *Official Report*, columns 327–328W.

Travel costs for 2003–04 are currently being collated and will be published in the normal way before the summer recess. Copies for previous years are available in the Library of the House.

I travel making the most efficient and cost-effective arrangements. My travel arrangements are in accordance with the arrangements for official travel set out in Chapter 7 of the Ministerial Code, and the accompanying guidance document, "Travel by Ministers".

David Davis: To ask the Prime Minister how many journeys he made by helicopter in each of the last 10 years; and what the journey length was in each case. [175739]

The Prime Minister: On average, I have made around twenty trips by helicopter in each year since May 1997, all of varying length.

I travel making the most efficient and cost-effective arrangements. My travel arrangements are in accordance with the arrangements for official travel set out in chapter 7 of the Ministerial Code, and the accompanying guidance document, "Travel by Ministers".

NORTHERN IRELAND

Irish Culture

6. **David Burnside:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the amount of public money spent by his Department since 1998 on the promotion of *(a)* Irish culture and language and *(b)* Ulster Scots culture and language. [174926]

Angela Smith: Under the arrangements for North South Bodies the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure is providing £1,277,000 to the Ulster Scots Agency and £3,224,000 to the Irish Language Agency. This does not include additional funding provided from the Department's mainstream programme to projects which may have an Irish or Ulster Scots cultural or language dimension.

Organised Crime

7. **Mr. Savidge:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken to tackle organised crime in Northern Ireland. [174927]

14. **Mr. Ben Chapman:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on measures to combat organised crime in Northern Ireland. [174935]

Mr. Pearson: The Organised Crime Task Force continues to set the strategic direction for a multi agency approach to tackling organised crime in Northern Ireland. The 4th annual Threat Assessment and Strategy which was published by the Task Force on 11 May describes in detail both the extent of the problem, the successes that the law enforcement agencies have had against organised criminals, and the objectives of the Task Force.

I pay tribute to the PSNI, HM Customs and Excise and the Assets Recovery Agency for their on-going commitment and effectiveness.

People Trafficking

8. **Rev. Martin Smyth:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many representations he has received since January 2002 concerning the trafficking of people in Northern Ireland. [174928]

Mr. Pearson: I am aware that the hon. Gentleman has shown an interest in this matter. The UK Immigration Service continues to liaise closely with the PSNI and the authorities in the Republic of Ireland with a view to apprehending offenders and prosecuting those who facilitate the entry of immigration offenders.

Prisoners (Early Release)

9. **Mr. Trimble:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions he has had recently with the Irish Government on the provisions of the Belfast agreement on the early release of prisoners. [174929]

Mr. Paul Murphy: I have not discussed the issue in recent weeks with the Irish Government.

Racism

10. **Mr. Gordon Prentice:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to tackle racism in Northern Ireland. [174930]

Mr. Spellar: The Government have frequently put on record their abhorrence of all forms of intolerance and racism.

We have published draft legislation to give courts stronger sentencing powers for "hate crimes". Enforcement action by the PSNI will be the key to tackling racism alongside our Community Safety Strategy and measures being taken through education, housing, health and social policy.

Peace Process

11. **Dr. Palmer:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the peace process. [174931]

Mr. Paul Murphy: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave earlier today to the hon. Member for Bracknell (Mr. Mackay).

Good Friday Agreement

12. **Helen Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on changes in the Northern Ireland economy since the Good Friday Agreement. [174932]

Mr. Gardiner: Official statistics show that since 1998, when the Good Friday Agreement was signed, the Northern Ireland Economy has performed remarkably well. Employment is at record levels, increasing by 61,540 jobs since March 1998 and the current unemployment rate of 5.2 per cent. is 2.8 percentage points below the EU 15 average. Since 1998 growth in Gross Value Added of 19.1 per cent. makes Northern Ireland one of the fastest growing UK regions.

While these headline figures are encouraging, manufacturing employment has declined and the levels of economic inactivity remains high relative to other UK regions.

Kevin Brennan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent discussions he has had with political parties in Northern Ireland on restoring the Good Friday Agreement institutions. [174933]

Mr. Paul Murphy: Discussions with the parties took place on 27 April and 4 May as part of the Review of the Belfast Agreement. There is now a break in formal Review talks for the period of the European election campaign, although informal contacts continue with the parties. Formal Review activity will recommence after 10 June, and we hope to engage soon after in a period of intensive dialogue.

Sinn Fein

13. **Mr. Robathan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what further action he intends to take against Sinn Féin in the light of the Independent Monitoring Commission's finding that Sinn Fein has responsibility for paramilitary violence. [174934]

Mr. Paul Murphy: We have already taken steps to implement the IMC recommendation in respect of both Sinn Féin and the PUP by suspending their entitlement to block financial assistance for a period of 12 months. Clearly we will wish to see significant progress by the time of the next IMC report in October. If there is not, we shall need to consider what steps might then be appropriate.

Average Earnings

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average earnings in Northern Ireland are; and if he will make a statement. [175639]

Mr. Gardiner: Average gross weekly earnings of all full-time adult employees in Northern Ireland was £404.50 at April 2003.

Beef

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of beef sold in Northern Ireland in 2003 was *(a)* locally produced and *(b)* imported from Great Britain. [175916]

Mr. Pearson: Trade in beef is governed by EU single market principles. Statistical information is therefore not available to distinguish beef sales in NI between locally produced and imported beef. Discussions with the industry, however, have indicated that the majority of such sales would be from locally produced animals, with only a small amount relating to GB imports or imports directly from Third countries.

Cancer Treatment

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the *(a)* average waiting time and *(b)* longest time an individual has been waiting for a mammogram is at each of the Province's cancer units. [175167]

Angela Smith: This information is not collected centrally.

Dentistry

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many dentists commenced practice in the province in each year since 1990; how many were full-time in each case; and if he will make a statement. [175221]

Angela Smith: The information requested is not readily available for historic dental practitioner registrations prior to October 2002 when the dental list database was replaced. For the 2003 calendar year the figure was 58. There is no split available by full-time and part-time for dental practitioners. The figure includes new fully qualified dentists, dentists who have moved/returned to the province from Great Britain/Republic of Ireland and dentists who have returned to work after a career break. The figure excludes assistants who are employed directly by a dentist and work under the dentists' contract.

During a year there are also 24 Vocational Dental Practitioners who serve a year working with an established dental practitioner prior to starting working under their own contract within Northern Ireland.

Diabetes

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which of the Crest recommendations on diabetes care *(a)* have been implemented and *(b)* will be implemented within the next 12 months. [175215]

Angela Smith: The Crest Taskforce report on the development of services for people with diabetes contains a wide range of recommendations covering the full spectrum of the condition, from screening for people with a higher risk of developing the disease to the prevention and treatment of diabetes. The report acknowledged that implementation of the framework would require a time frame of 5–10 years.

The Department has allocated an additional £1 million for the development of diabetes services in 2004–05. Priorities for Action requires Health and Social Services Boards to take forward the recommendations of the Taskforce, on a prioritised basis, within a framework to be agreed with the Department by the end of May 2004.

Equal Opportunity Complaints

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many equal opportunity complaints have been lodged with industrial tribunals in Northern Ireland in the last five years; and how many of these were *(a)* rejected initially, *(b)* settled, *(c)* heard and upheld and *(d)* heard and rejected. [175903]

Mr. Gardiner: This information is not readily available and will take some time to collate. I will write to the hon. Lady with details as soon as possible. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library.

Fibromyalgia

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to fund alternative treatment of fibromyalgia in the national health service in Northern Ireland. [175528]

Angela Smith: There are no specific plans to fund alternative medicine for the treatment of fibromyalgia in the HPSS. Alternative medicine and therapies may be provided within available HPSS resources if the clinician considers that these are the most appropriate treatments for an individual patient.

Private Health Care

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the impact of Agenda for Change on the private sector in health care in Northern Ireland. [175212]

Angela Smith: The new HPSS pay system, Agenda for Change, has been designed around jobs within the NHS across the UK, and when implemented it will only directly be applied to jobs that are within the range of NHS organisations. It is acknowledged however, that any amendment to the terms and conditions of employment of HPSS personnel could have implications for the terms and conditions of staff employed within the private or voluntary health sector.

While the setting of pay rates and defining of terms and conditions for such employees is a matter for the individual independent employers concerned, my Department recognises the financial pressures facing independent sector nursing and residential homes and has made provision for above inflation increases in the regional tariffs over the past three years. This has meant for example an increase of almost 20 per cent. in the weekly fee paid by Trusts for a nursing home place for an elderly person since 2001–02.

The Department has also commissioned PricewaterhouseCoopers to undertake research into the specific costs of providing nursing, residential home and domiciliary care in Northern Ireland. The consultants

are expected to present their final report in June 2004, in time for the research to inform budget decisions from April 2005

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people on Northern Ireland waiting lists have had medical treatment in other parts of the United Kingdom in each of the last five years. [175532]

Angela Smith: The following table shows the number of patients from Northern Ireland who have received medical treatment in other parts of the United Kingdom, in the years 1999–2000 to 2003–04, as part of waiting list initiatives.

	Number of patients transferred to UK for treatment
1999–2000[1]	90
2000–01	145
2001–02	268
2002–03	269
2003–04	164

[1] Eastern Health and Social Services Board and Northern Health and Social Services Board were unable to provide figures for 1999–2000.

Source:
Health and Social Services Boards.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many trained nursing staff from outside the United Kingdom are working in Northern Ireland's hospitals. [175533]

Angela Smith: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Strangford (Mrs. Robinson) on 18 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 943W, Question Reference 173742.

Maternity Services

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on *(a)* the frequency of epidural use in deliveries in Northern Ireland and *(b)* changes in that frequency in the last 30 years. [175175]

Angela Smith: The information is as follows.

(a) In 2003, the latest year for which figures on pain relief in deliveries are available, there were 5,632 births delivered in Northern Ireland using epidural as a form of pain relief.

(b) In 1994, the earliest year for which data on pain relief in deliveries are available, there were 3,917 births delivered in Northern Ireland using epidural as a form of pain relief.

Over this 10-year period, the proportion of births occurring to Northern Ireland residents in Northern Ireland where epidural was used as a method of pain relief increased from 16 per cent. in 1994 to 26 per cent. in 2003.

The rise in uptake is driven by a number of factors including increased availability and mothers' choice. Mothers are given information antenatally on the forms of pain relief available. Information on epidural is one of the options discussed. Mothers can then make an informed choice as to the method of pain relief they desire during delivery.

Neighbourhood Renewal

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on progress on neighbourhood renewal; what the timescale is for each stage of the process; and when money will be released for each stage. [175233]

Mr. Spellar: The Department for Social Development launched the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, "People and Place" in June 2003. The Strategy did not specify detailed implementation arrangements, indicating instead that an engagement process would be undertaken to agree implementation arrangements for Belfast, Derry/Londonderry and Regional Towns and Cities. This exercise is now complete and the findings from these consultation exercises will be published in the near future.

In addition, interim funding arrangements have been put in place from 1 April 2004 to ensure the continuation of over 100 community projects, which are deemed important to the implementation of Neighbourhood Renewal.

To support the Strategy a Ministerial Working Group on Neighbourhood Renewal was established to oversee the implementation of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy. This group has met on two occasions.

The Ministerial Group has approved the timetable for the establishment of the Neighbourhood Partnership Boards. The Department's aim is to have Neighbourhood Partnership Board, established in the selected areas, by July 2005, with the majority in operation well before this. Funding will be made available to these groups to enable them to develop their Neighbourhood Action Plans. It is the intention of the Department to have all Neighbourhood Action Plans approved by May 2006, again with the majority approved well in advance of this date.

I am also pleased to say that, in March 2004, Department for Social Development launched a scheme under the Neighbourhood Renewal banner, to provide financial assistance to Post Offices in deprived urban areas, which are under the threat of closure.

Recycling

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made in Northern Ireland during the last three years to reach Government recycling targets. [175530]

Angela Smith: The Waste Management Strategy for Northern Ireland set targets for the recovery of household waste (25 per cent. by 2005–06) and a reduction in the landfilling of industrial and commercial waste (to 85 per cent. of 1998 levels by 2005).

The household waste recovery rate has increased steadily since 1998–99 when it was 4.9 per cent. The following table shows year on year figures. The 2003 figures are still being collated and will be available in June 2004. These however are expected to show a further improvement. The 2002 survey of industrial and commercial waste arisings indicated a 36.8 per cent. reduction in landfilling of industrial and commercial waste since 1998.

percentage

	Household recovery rate (recycling and composting)
1998–99	4.9
1999–2000	6.6
2001	8.9
2002	9.8
2003	[1]—

[1] Not available until June 2004.

Residential Homes

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on changes in the cost of care at residential homes. [175211]

Angela Smith: Residential homes may charge individual residents different amounts based on the type and extent of care needed and the standard of facilities and accommodation provided. For those residents who are not self-funding, Health and Social Services Trusts will normally pay agreed regional tariffs for the appropriate standard placement for each class of resident. In recognition of the increased pressures faced by the independent care home sector, the Department has made significant additional resources available to provide for increases above inflation. Above inflation increases have been made in each year since 2001–02 and the additional money this year has enabled Health and Social Services Trusts to increase rates paid for an elderly residential home place from £230 in 2001–02 to £273 in 2004–05, an increase of around 16 per cent.

Special Schools

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the costs of educating every child currently in a special school in Northern Ireland in a mainstream school. [175222]

Mr. Gardiner: I have not made an estimate of this kind. The forthcoming Special Educational Needs and Disability Order aims to strengthen the right of children with special educational needs to be educated in mainstream schools. Any costs arising from this will be dependent on the nature and extent of the exercise of this right over time, and will depend on the needs of the individual child. Educational provision will continue to be tailored to meet these needs, whether in mainstream schools, special units attached to mainstream schools, or special schools. I anticipate that special schools will continue to play a vital role in supporting pupils with significant and complex needs, in accordance with parental wishes and professional advice, and that they are likely to develop their role further in the future in the provision of specialist advice and support to mainstream schools.

The Government's investment of significant capital funding in the schools estate will continue to improve disabled access. In particular, all new and recently built or refurbished schools will comply with the requirements for physical access contained in the draft Special Educational Needs and Disability Order.

Teenage Pregnancy

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what plans he has for youth development programmes to reduce teenage pregnancy rates; [175158]

(2) if he will introduce a young people's development programme similar to that launched by the Departments of Health and Education and Skills. [175170]

Angela Smith: A multi-agency Implementation Group is overseeing and driving forward the 21 actions set out in the Teenage Pregnancy and Parenthood Strategy and Action Plan. One of the action points in the plan is the further development, particularly in areas of socio-economic deprivation and rural areas, of community based teenage personal development programmes that incorporate sexual health issues and risk taking behaviour. These programmes are being taken forward by Health and Social Services Boards and Trusts in partnership with the voluntary and community organisations and are tailored to the needs of our population.

The young people's development programme in England is a three year pilot exercise which is the subject of on-going evaluation. The findings are unlikely to be available until April 2007. Officials here will be liaising with colleagues in the Department of Health to monitor developments.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many females aged between 11 and 19 years were fitted with contraceptive implants in Northern Ireland in each year since 2000, broken down by age. [175224]

Angela Smith: The information requested is not available.

Transmitter Masts

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what information he has collated in relation to health risks associated with the provision of transmitter masts in residential areas. [175527]

Angela Smith: The Independent Expert Group on Mobile Phones (IEGMP) published a report on the subject of mobile phone technology in May 2000. It concluded that the balance of evidence indicated that there was no general risk to the health of people living near the base stations on the basis that exposures were expected to be small fractions of the guidelines of the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP).

This position has been confirmed through the ongoing random audit of base stations being undertaken by the Radiocommunications Agency (now part of the Office of Communications—Ofcom). In the course of this audit programme almost 20 surveys were conducted at sites here in Northern Ireland during 2001 and 2002, mainly at schools and two at hospitals. Measurement of emissions in every case showed these to be hundreds and sometimes thousands of times below the ICNIRP guidelines.

In January 2004 in a report made to the National Radiological Protection Board, the Advisory Group on Non-Ionising Radiation (AGNIR), having reviewed the evidence for health effects especially in work published since the IEGMP Report, concluded that

"exposure levels from living near to mobile phone base stations are extremely low, and the overall evidence indicates that they are unlikely to pose a threat to health."

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Computer File Formats

Mr. Allan: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his Department's policy is in respect of the computer file formats used for the *(a)* distribution and *(b)* archiving of publicly available documents. [173360]

Yvette Cooper: All documents published on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website, both current and archived, are in either HTML and/or PDF format, with the exception of some statistical data which are available in Excel spreadsheet format.

Departmental Staff

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many staff were employed in the Department to work in the communications field and what the total expenditure on communications for the Department was, broken down by *(a)* Government Information and Communication Service staff and *(b)* other staff, broken down by (i) press officers, (ii) special advisors and (iii) others, in (A) 1994–95, (B) 1996–97, (C) 1997–98 and (D) 2001–02. [168673]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was created on 29 May 2002. Information for periods prior to this date is not available.

Extra Care Housing

Dr. Whitehead: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what definition of extra care housing his Department uses in collecting Supporting People mapping data. [175249]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not issued a specific definition of extra care housing for the purposes of Supporting People mapping data. The relevant guidance does, however, include a definition of very sheltered housing for older people as:

"sheltered accommodation for physically or mentally frail older people, with on-site support and enhanced communal facilities, specialist design features and the capacity to offer a range of care and support services".

Most extra care housing would, in practice, fall within this definition.

High Hedges

Mr. Spring: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when the findings of the public consultation in England on the measures in the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 dealing with high hedges will be published. [175550]

Yvette Cooper: The public consultation on implementing Part 8 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 runs until 30 June. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects to report the results of the consultation and to bring the legislation into operation towards the end of 2004.

Housing Stock Transfer

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much his Department *(a)* expects to spend in this financial year and *(b)* spend in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) 2003–04 on writing off overhanging debt for local authorities that transfer their housing; and from which budget this sum is allocated. [176275]

Keith Hill: Payments to meet local authorities' overhanging debt are made where the value of the housing stock is less than a local authority's associated housing debt. It is estimated that if all the housing transfers programmed to transfer in 2004–05 secure a positive ballot and transfer this financial year then the 2004–05 provision for making Overhanging Debt payments of £616 million would be used in full. £548.2 million was paid in 2002–03 and £90.9 million in 2003–04. The payment reflects the liability the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister would otherwise have to pay continuing subsidy on a local authority's housing attributable debt. It is not possible to use this resource for capital purposes.

Information and Communication Technology

Mr. Simon: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his budget is for staff training in information and communication technology in this financial year. [173720]

Yvette Cooper: Basic information and communication technology (ICT) training is given to all staff of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Specific supplementary courses of training are available depending on the needs of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and those of individual members of staff.

Each business unit is responsible for its training budget, and the information technology (IT) element is not identified separately.

Mr. Simon: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his targets are for improving the information and communication technology (ICT) skills base of staff within *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies; and what method he uses to certify the competence levels achieved by staff receiving training in ICT. [173721]

Yvette Cooper: To improve specialist skills and capability in information and communication technology (ICT), the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is establishing an e-Implementers Group to promote and disseminate and develop best practice to staff working on ICT and e-Business projects. We will also start piloting the European Computer Driving Licence in June 2004. This is an internationally recognised qualification that enables people to demonstrate their computer skills.

The improvement of ICT skills forms part of the Office of the Deputy Prime Ministers Development and Training Strategy, providing the skills, knowledge and competencies needed for particular roles. This process is managed and monitored through the Performance Management process.

Local Authority Planning Enforcement Officers

Mr. Sayeed: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of whether local authority planning enforcement officers have sufficient *(a)* manpower resources and *(b)* funding adequately to control developers to ensure that the residents of communities are not put at risk by the acts or omissions of developers. [175880]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not made such an assessment. We have, however, received a number of responses to our consultation on the review of the Planning Enforcement system expressing the view that local authorities do not put sufficient resources into enforcement. We are making £350 million of additional funding available to local planning authorities through the planning delivery grant. The grant is not ring-fenced and local planning authorities may use it to make staff and financial resources available for planning enforcement.

Rail Freight Sites

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the proposed siting of rail freight interchanges and freight villages in St. Albans and Park Street village green belt areas. [175347]

Keith Hill: The Government have received no firm proposals concerning the siting of a rail freight interchange in St. Albans and Park Street village green belt areas. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is aware that a developer is considering putting forward such a proposal, but it would be inappropriate to comment on the proposal at this stage as it may come before the Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister for determination. Should such a proposal be brought forward it would need to go through the usual planning procedures relating to green belt areas.

Telecommunications Installations

Colin Burgon: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he next intends to meet the Mobile Phone Operators Association to discuss the workings of their voluntary code in relation to the T-Mobile installation at Bardsey in the Elmet constituency. [174943]

Yvette Cooper: It would be inappropriate for any Minister in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to discuss an individual planning case in any circumstances because of the appellate function of the First Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many staff in her Department and its agencies were seconded from the *(a)* private and *(b)* academic sector in each of the last three years. [175367]

Mr. Caborn: There have been no secondments to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport or its Agency from the private or academic sectors in the last three years.

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people have left employment in her Department because of *(a)* anxiety, *(b)* stress, *(c)* depression and *(d)* other mental health reasons in each year since 1997. [175674]

Mr. Caborn: Records are not maintained by DCMS which enable the identification of the reason for leaving the Department to be broken down into anxiety, stress, depression and other mental health reasons.

DCMS has a legal obligation to provide a safe working environment for employees and guidance is available for all staff on how to manage stress effectively.

New Opportunities Fund

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money from the New Opportunities Fund was allocated to Blackpool, North and Fleetwood in each year since 1997. [175888]

Estelle Morris: The New Opportunities Fund began making grants in 1999. The awards to Blackpool, North and Fleetwood are shown in the table.

Financial Year	*Amount (£)*
1999–2000	28,577
2000–01	354,326
2001–02	360,495
2002–03	489,523
2003–04	525

The information is freely available from the Department's searchable Lottery award database at: www.lottery.culture.gsi.gov.uk which uses information supplied by the Lottery distributors.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Anti-crime Initiatives (Blackpool, North and Fleetwood)

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in *(a)* overall recorded crime, *(b)* recorded violent crime, *(c)* burglaries and *(d)* vehicle theft in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood has been since 1997. [175884]

Ms Blears: The information requested is not available centrally. Blackpool is a Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) area. Data at CDRP level has only been published from 1999–2000 onwards. Detailed statistics at CDRP level are available for 2002–03 on the new Home Office website: http://www.crimestatistics.org.uk

Bribery/Corruption

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the National Crime Squad

has *(a)* been involved in investigations and *(b)* conducted investigations of its own into bribery of foreign public officials. [174030]

Caroline Flint: The National Crime Squad (NCS) has not yet been involved in investigations or conducted investigations of its own into bribery of foreign public officials.

The National Crime Squad is one of the agencies that is party to the Memorandum of Understanding on overseas corruption. Under this agreement, the NCS may provide assistance where there is clear need for pro-active policing techniques or where support is needed by local forces.

Car Parking/Clamping

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether car park operators are to be licensed by the Security Industry Authority; and if he will make a statement. [174162]

Ms Blears: The Private Security Industry Act (SIA) 2001 sets out details of conduct prohibited without a licence. If the duties of a car park operator include as part of their routine duties any such activity, they will require the relevant SIA licence.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) whether the Security Industry Authority plans to set up a system *(a)* to license individual wheel clampers and *(b)* to license the land on which they may clamp; [174163]

(2) whether the Security Industry Authority's licensing system for wheel clamping will be backed up by a mandatory code of practice relating to *(a)* size of fines, *(b)* warning signs, *(c)* uniforms and *(d)* methods of payment; [174165]

(3) how many licences for wheel clampers on private land have been issued since 1 April 2003. [174179]

Ms Blears: Vehicle immobilisers will be licensed by the Security Industry Authority (SIA) under the authority of the Private Security Industry Act 2001, from the end of 2004. There are no powers within the Act to license the land on which clamping operations take place. The SIA will shortly publish its competency requirements for licensing purposes. These are likely to include training in requirements as to such matters as the proper use of warning signs, uniforms and methods of payment. The SIA is currently examining what role, if any, a code of practice might play in licensing.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the towing away of vehicles will be brought into the licensing remit of the Security Industry Authority. [174164]

Ms Blears: In light of the Regulatory Impact Assessment undertaken last year, we have accepted the Security Industry Authority's recommendation that the towing away of vehicles should be a licensable activity and regulations to give effect to this will be introduced in due course.

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) when he intends to reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, dated 5 April 2004, with regard to Iqbal Hussain; [172257]

(2) when he will reply to the letter to him from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, dated 5 April 2004, with regard to Iqbal Hussain; [174147]

(3) when he will reply to the letter to him from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, dated 5 April 2004, with regard to Iqbal Hussain. [175616]

Mr. Blunkett: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 25 May 2004.

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the hon. Member for Rochford and Southend, East's letter to his Department of 26 September 2003, relating to Mr.Ronald Douglas Hall, ref H1091318/4 and PO 731213; and for what reasons the letter was dealt with in the manner it has been. [173102]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* I wrote to the hon. Member on 26 May. The delay in responding was partly due to the need to ensure that all avenues had been explored before providing a comprehensive response.

Crime (North Yorkshire)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the rates were of *(a)* recorded offences, *(b)* detected offences and *(c)* cases brought to justice for burglaries in North Yorkshire in (i) April 1997, (ii) April 2000 and (iii) April 2003. [173410]

Ms Blears: Monthly recorded crime is not published. The available information is for annual and calendar year data and is given in the table.

North Yorkshire	*All burglary offences recorded*	*Recorded burglaries detected by Police*	*Burglary offences brought to justice*
1997	11,359	2,165	[1]—
2000–01	11,658	976	615
2002–03 [2]	11,511	1,211	[3]683

[1] Not available.
[2] Figures for 2002–03 will have been affected by the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard on 1 April 2002.
[3] Provisional.

Departmental Computers

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his policy is on the disposal of computers formerly used by his Department. [175284]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* The majority of the computers used within the core Home Office are supplied as part of a managed service by Sirius (the Home Office's IT supplier) and as such are not assets owned by the Authority. Although Sirius are contractually obliged to ensure the erasure of any Home Office data held on their assets, the responsibility for the disposal of obsolete or surplus assets belonging to Sirius lies solely with them.

Those core Home Office assets not covered by the Sirius contract are managed by the Information Management Technology Unit (IMTU) and responsibility for dispersal of assets rests with their Out of Scope Team.

To reduce budget costs, if possible the assets are re-deployed elsewhere within the core Home Office. If not and as Government Accounting rules require Departments to ensure the best possible price is obtained when disposing of surplus IT equipment, a registered GCat supplier for the provision of ethical and environmentally friendly disposal services are asked to dispose of the assets on their behalf.

While the Home Office pays for this service, should the assets be sold on the Home Office receives 75 per cent. of the sale price.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the role of Fujitsu in providing computer services for the Home Office. [175285]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* Fujitsu is the main contractor supplying infrastructure and desktop services to the core Home Office including the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) and the Youth Justice Board as a result of being awarded the IT2000 Contract in 2000. IT 2000 is a 10 year Public Finance Intiative contract establishing a private public partnership between the Home Office (excluding agencies and parts of IND covered by the Siemens caseworking service).

These services range from support for software including application management (e.g POEMS) and standard toolsets (e.g. Adobe Acrobat) to hardware devices including desktop and remote access laptops.

They also manage the supply of voice services to the core Home Office (excluding IND) via their sub-contractor Global Crossing.

Departmental Procurement

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of the *(a)* crockery, *(b)* cutlery and *(c)* glassware procured by his Department over the last five years is of British manufacture. [170802]

Fiona Mactaggart: It is Government policy that all procurement decisions are taken on the grounds of value for money.

The percentage of crockery, cutlery and glassware, which is of British manufacture, procured by the Department in 2002–03 is as follows:

	Percentage
Crockery	65
Cutlery	25
Glassware	7.5

Information on the percentage of crockery, cutlery and glassware procured prior to 2002 and its origin of manufacture is not available and could only be obtained by incurring disproportionate costs.

Early Retirement (Police)

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the costs of early retirement of police officers for each force in England and Wales in 2003–04. [173568]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* The information is not centrally available in the form requested. The cost of early retirement on ill-health grounds is mitigated to an extent by the fact that the retired officer will normally be replaced, either directly or indirectly, by a recruit on a lower salary who can perform all the ordinary duties of a member of the force. A broad indicator of the cost to forces in any year is the aggregate of the cash lump sums they pay to officers retiring on ill health grounds. Based on the estimated number of ill-health retirements for 2003–04 published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy the Government Actuary's Department estimate that the total cost of ill-health pension lump sums in England and Wales is about £50 million.

Gas Cartridge Weapons

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will place in the Library the advice he received on the feasibility of converting self-contained gas cartridge weapons to use conventional ammunition. [175482]

Caroline Flint: We do not think it right to do so, thus making more widely available details of the methods of conversion identified so far. The Forensic Science Service identified a number of different ways in which such revolvers and pistols were used with ammunition other than air cartridges. These varied considerably in their effectiveness and ease of conversion and with one exception were not specific to one particular model. Having discussed the problem with the manufacturers of the air cartridge system and an independent engineer it was concluded that the main problem was with the air cartridge system itself which could not be modified to remove the danger.

Ministerial Meetings

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he next expects to meet representatives of the *(a)* National Black Police Association and *(b)* Police Federation. [175049]

Ms Blears: I meet the National Black Police Association as necessary to discuss particular issues. I have regular bilaterals with the Chairman of the Police Federation.

During the period March 2002 to March 2003 Lancashire Constabulary strength increased by 35 to 3,339. At the end of December 2003 Lancashire had record strength of 3,549—an increase of 210 officers.

Police

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage change there has been in the number of full-time police officers in Bootle since 1997. [175488]

Ms Blears: Bootle is part of the Sefton Basic Command Unit (BCU). Information on strength at BCU level is collected annually and reflects the position at the end of March. Information on BCU strength is only available from 2002.

Between March 2002 and March 2003 police strength for the Sefton BCU increased by 0.5 per cent. (from 431 to 433). The deployment of officers to BCUs is a matter for the Chief Constable (Norman Bettison QPM) and within the Sefton BCU deployment of officers is a matter for the Divisional Commander.

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in full-time police officers in Manchester, Central has been since 1997. [174276]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* Information on strength at Basic Command Unit (BCU) level is collected annually and reflects the position at the end of March. Information on BCU strength is only available from 2002.

Manchester, Central constituency is part of the North Manchester (A) Division. Between March 2002 and March 2003 police strength for the Manchester Division increased by 2 per cent. (from 725 to 740). The deployment of officers to BCUs is a matter for the Chief Constable (Michael Todd) and within the North Manchester Division deployment of officers is a matter for the Divisional Commander.

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department by what date he expects police radios to work while on the London Underground. [175058]

Ms Blears: The British Transport Police, who are responsible for policing the London Underground, already have radios that work in that environment. Contractual discussions are underway on the extension of Airwave, the new police radio system, to the London Underground. The estimated completion date is 2007.

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in full-time police officers in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood has been since 1997. [175881]

Ms Blears: Information on strength at Basic Command Unit (BCD) level is collected annually and reflects the position at the end of March. Information on BCD strength is only available from 2002.

Blackpool, North and Fleetwood constituency is part of the Western (A) Division. Between March 2002 and March 2003 police strength for the Western Division decreased 1.4 by per cent. (from 501 to 494). The deployment of officers to BCUs is a matter for the Chief Constable (Paul Stephenson QPM) and within the Western Division deployment of officers is a matter for the Divisional Commander.

Ms Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average length of suspension of police officers was in each of the last five years; and what estimate he has made of the average cost of suspensions. [175472]

Ms Blears: Suspension of a senior police officer is a matter for his or her police authority and suspension of other ranks is a matter for the Chief Constable. Information on lengths of suspension of police officers is not held centrally. I have made no estimate of the average cost of suspensions as to do so would require making a request for information from individual forces and therefore would involve a disproportionate cost.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has made to Customs and Excise regarding the VAT status of Centrex. [168437]

Ms Blears: No representation has been made to Her Majesty's Customs and Excise on behalf of Centrex in respect of their VAT by the Home Office arrangements. This is an internal matter, which has been satisfactorily resolved in discussion between Centrex and Customs and Excise.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much in grant was paid to National Police Training and the Central Police Training and Development Authority in each year from 1997–98 to 2004–05. [168443]

Ms Blears: Centrex has only been in receipt of grant-in-aid from the Home Office since 2002–03, when it became an executive non-departmental public body. Before that time, as National Police Training, it was a unit of the Home Office.

The grant-in-aid paid to Centrex (millions) is as follows:

£ million

	Capital	*Resource*
2002–03	78.6	14.9
2003–04	87.3	18.7
2004–05	74.8	18.7

Small additional payments were made to fund additional work programmes.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what throughput of police recruits he expects at Stage 2 training during 2004–05; and what throughputs were achieved in each of the last three years. [168444]

Ms Blears: Total bids for Stage 2 places at Centrex for the year 2004–05 stands at 7,184, of which 242 are from non-Home Office forces. This figure excludes the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) whose probationers are trained in force and those forces currently running trials of the modernised delivery of Stage 2.

During the year 2003–04 Centrex target to have delivered 8,701 Stage 2 places, of which 200 were taken by non-Home Office forces. Again this excludes the MPS and forces which ran Stage 2 trials.

During the year 2002–03 a total of 7,977 Stage 2 places were delivered by Centrex, of which 148 were taken up by non-Home Office forces. This figure excludes the MPS.

During the year 2001–02 a total of 7,578 Stage 2 places were delivered by Centrex, of which 149 were taken up by non-Home Office forces. Again this figure does not include the MPS.

Pre-charge Photographs

Mr. Grieve: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidelines he sets for the police on the publication of pre-charge photographs of alleged criminals taken at the time of arrest where the police has facilitated the presence of journalists at the scene of arrest. [175513]

Ms Blears: The Home Office does not issue guidance on these matters. Arrangements for handling the media at police operations are for the senior officer in command, under protocols agreed by the Chief Officer. The general position is set out in advice to all Chief Officers issued by the Association of Chief Police Officers in October 2003. One key consideration is that the publication of any image taken at the time of arrest may interfere with an individual's right to a fair trial under the Human Rights Act 1998.

Public Bodies

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the *(a)* members, *(b)* reports produced by and *(c)* dates of meetings in 2003 of (i) the National Crime Reduction Task Force, (ii) the Insurance Cover Working Group, (iii) the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs, (iv) the Correctional Services Accreditation Panel, (v) the Animal Procedures Committee, (vi) the Criminal Records Bureau Consultative Panel, (vii) the Police Advisory Board for England and Wales and (viii) the Technical Advisory Board. [174269]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* Advisory Non-Departmental Bodies (NDPBs) provide independent expert advice to ministers on particular topics. Also members of the Board are public appointees and the Board itself is supported by staff from their Sponsoring Department.

(i) Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs has the following list of members for 2003.

Re-appointed Members:

Sir Michael Rawlins
Mr. Norman Bettison
Reverend Martin Blakeborough
Mr. Raj Boyjoonauth
Ms Vivienne Evans
Dr. Laurence Gruer
Mr. Russell Hayton
Mr. Peter Housden
Mr. Roger Howard
Mr. Alan Hunter
Professor David Nutt
Mrs Kay Roberts
Mrs Patricia Roberts
Dr. Roy Robertson

Newly appointed members:

Dr. Dima Abdulrahim
Lord Victor Adebowale
Dr. Margaret Birtwistle
Dr. Cecilia Bottomley
Ms Carmel Clancy
Professor Iiana Crome
Ms Robyn Doran
Mr. Robert Eschle
Professor Hugh Edmondson
Professor C Robin Ganellin FRS
Mr. Paul Haves
Mr. Andrew Hayman
His Honor Judge Thomas Joseph
Dr. John Marsden
Mr. Peter Martin
Mr. Richard Pates
Mr. Trevor Pearce
Mr. Arthur Preddy
Dr. Mary Rowlands
Dr. Polly Taylor
Ms. Monique Tomlinson

In June 2003, the Advisory Council published "Hidden Harm—Responding to the needs of children of problem drug users".

The Advisory Council met twice in 2003, on 15 May 2003 and 6 November 2003.

(ii) The Animal Procedures Committee had the following list of members in 2003:

Rev Prof Michael Banner, Chairmen
Prof Robin Dunbar
Mr John Gregory
Prof John Martin
Prof Christopher Atterwill
Prof Donald Broom
Dr. Michael Festing
Dr. Robert Hubrecht
Dr. Tim Morris
Dr. David Clark
Dr. Maggy Jennings
Dr Gill Langley
Prof Grahame Bulfield
Prof Stephen Clark
Prof Alan Holland
Prof Alan McNeilly
Prof Genevra Richardson
Graham Moore

Newly appointed member:

Prof Dawn Oliver (March 2003)

Retired member:

Robert McCracken (August 2003)

In 2003, the Committee produced a report "A Review of Cost-Benefit Assessment in the Use of Animals in Research" and its 2002 Annual Report.

The full Committee met five times in 2003, on 12 February 2003, 9 April 2003, 25 June 2003,8 October 2003 and 19 December 2003. In addition there were many meetings of sub-committees and working groups.

(iii) Correctional Services Accreditation Panel (CSAP) had the following list of members in 2003:

Sir Duncan Nichol (Chair)
Prof Donald Grubin
Prof Michael Gossop
Ms Sylvia Hikins
Mr. David Kennard
Prof Friedrich Lösel

Prof Mike Maguire

Dr. Janice Marques

Dr. Mary McMurran

Dr. William Murphy

Dr. Frank Proporino

Dr. Barbara Rawlings

Prof Peter Raynor

Mr. Colin Roberts

The CSAP produced an Annual Report for 2002–2003.

The full Panel met in 2003 from 24 March 2003 to 28 March 2003 and from 13 October 2003 to 17 October 2003. A sub-group called the Drugs Sub-Panel met from 13 May 2003 to 15 May 2003 and from 4 June 2003 to 6 June 2003. There were also one or two smaller meetings during the course of that year.

(iv) Technical Advisory Board (TAB) consists of six representatives of the communications industry and six representatives of the intercepting agencies. The names of the intercepting agencies are not made public but the names of the Chair and the communications industry representatives for 2003 are as follows:

Liam Strong (Chair)

Derek Cobb

Jim Cottrell

Jessica Hendrie-Liano

Tom Phillips

Mike Short

Robert Temple

In 2003 the TAB had no meetings and did not produce any reports.

(v) The Police Advisory Board for England and Wales has the following as members in 2003. Two representatives of the Association of Chief Police Officers of England and Wales (ACPO) to include the Metropolitan Commissioner, one representative of the Chief Police Officers' Staff Association (CPOSA), two representatives of the Police Superintendents' Association of England and Wales (PSAEW), five representatives of the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) and members nominated by the Home Secretary. There is an Independent Chair, John Randall and a Deputy Chair, Mark Baker.

An Annual Report was produced on the work of the Police Advisory Board by the Independent Chair. This was issued on 16 June 2003.

The Police Advisory Board meets quarterly. In 2003 it met on 30 January 2003, 16April 2003, 28 October 2003 and 23 December 2003.

Task Forces and Ad hoc Advisory groups are essentially Home Office working groups. They have a short-term focus and when their work comes to an end they are disbanded. These groups give expert advice to the Department on a specific issue.

(vi) The National Crime Reduction Task Force has not met since 2000.

(vii) The Insurance Cover Working Group (ICWG) is a Home Office working group. In 2003, the following were members of the ICWG:

Stephen Bourne (Chair and Co-ordinator)

David Tyler

Helen Rice

Ian Egginton-Metters

Tom Flood

Celia Webber

John Stratton

Anne-Marie Piper

Merran Buchanan

Sophie Chapman

Tim Humphreys

Anne Armstrong

Laura Baird

Mark Pratt

Jim Neilson

Paul Lewis

Hilary Dalton

Paula Reynolds

Tony Jeeves

Martin Elliott

Steve Wyler

David Evans

Brain Garcia

John Parker

John Barton

Douglas Ellis

Jim Lugton

Bob Elam

Neil Surman

Anita Varey

Michael Swann

Charlotte Edward

Janet Howe

The following are listed as Observers:

Lucy French

David Bishop

Rebecca Leete

Nick Munn

Vedi Sanjiv

Elaine Warner

Miles Burger

David Sinclair

Anthony Hammill

Claire Crawley

Ilyas Malick

Alex Sienkiewicz

In 2003 the ICWG produced the following reports, "Research into Insurance Cover for the Voluntary and Community Sector in England" in July 2003 and " Report for Ministers" in December 2003.

The ICWG met three times in 2003, that is on 23 January 2003, 10 June 2003 and 8 October 2003.

(viii) The Criminal Records Bureau Consultative Panel (CRBCP) is an Ad hoc Advisory group. The Panel is made up of Customer Groups, Regulatory Authorities,

Government Departments, CRB Stakeholders and CRB Senior Managers. In 2003, the following were members of the CRBCP:

Vince Gaskell
Anita Varey
Mark Favager
Barbara Hockey
Rob McGreal
Bob Wright
Michelle Wise
Steve Boocock
Tim Humphreys
Stephen Adams
Neil Wallace
Neil Bentley
Jean Pugh
Gordon Fleck
James Walsh
Rob Heiser
Clare Smith
Gareth Crossman
Mervyn Barrett
Peter Martin
Sally Nunn
Andy Forster
Irish Davies
Sean Risdale
Ann Russell
Euan Eddie
Chris Atkinson
Debbie Akinfe
Sarah Veale
Nicola Foulds
Roy Haley

The CRBCP does not produce reports. It was designed as a method for the Criminal Records Bureau to communicate and consult with its customer base and for the customer base to raise issues with the Bureau.

The CRBCP meets quarterly. In 2003 the CRBCP met on 12 March 2003, 27 June 2003, 26 September 2003 and December meeting was held over until 14 January 2004.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the *(a)* budget and *(b)* administration costs in 2003 were of (i) the National Crime Reduction Task Force, (ii) the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs, (iii) the Correctional Services Accreditation Panel, (iv) the Animal Procedures Committee, (v) the Criminal Records Bureau Consultative Panel and (vi) the Police Advisory Board for England and Wales. [174270]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* Advisory non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) do not have a separate resource budget. Their secretariat and administration costs are borne directly by the Department.

(i) The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) has no resource budget. The Home Office provides secretariat and administrative support. The ACMD had an expenditure/costs for the Financial Year 2003–04 of £137,793.27.

(ii) The Animal Procedures Committee (APC) consists of 20 members including a Chairman. All Board members are public appointees. The Chairman received £10,000 in remuneration and £28,000 for members' expenses. £280,000 went on research. The total budget of £318,000. APC had an estimated administration cost for the Financial Year 2003–04 of £5,185.

(iii) The Correctional Services Accreditation Panel (CSAP) had a budget for the Financial Year 2003–04 of £195,000 and an estimated administration cost of £60,112.

(iv) The budget allocation for the Police Advisory Board for England and Wales (PABEW) is combined with that of the Police Negotiating Board (PNB). The PABEW and the PNB combined budget figure for the Financial Year 2003–04 was £54,633 and their combined figure for administration costs was £50,582.14.

Task Forces and ad hoc advisory groups are essentially Home Office working groups. They do not have a separate budget or administration costs.

(v) The Criminal Records Bureau Consultative Panel had an estimated budget and administration cost of £5,000.

(vi) The National Crime Reduction Task Force is no longer operating and no meetings or activity occurred in the Financial Year 2003–04.

Royal Society (Decontamination Report)

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his response is to the recommendations made in the recent Royal Society report on the detection and decontamination of chemical and biological agents. [174617]

Mr. Blunkett: The Government have welcomed the Royal Society's report and has written to the President of the Royal Society setting out its response.

I have today placed in the Library a copy of the Government's response to the Royal Society report, and undertake to send the hon. Member a copy.

Security Industry Authority

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the *(a)* budget and *(b)* staffing levels of the Security Industry Authority are. [174177]

Ms Blears: The level of grant funding for the Security Industry Authority (SIA) for 2004–05, as published in the Treasury Main Supply Estimate (HC 466), is £25,700,000. This expenditure will be largely offset by licence fees. The maximum staffing level of the SIA is projected to be 122.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the work the Security Industry Authority has carried out since 1 April 2003. [174178]

Ms Blears: During this period the Security Industry Authority (SIA) has undertaken a considerable programme of work preparing itself and the security industry for the introduction of regulation. This has included work on licensing, compliance and investigation, communications, strategic development, and corporate services. Full details of the work undertaken by the SIA will be published in their Corporate and Business plan in due course.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Crown Prosecutors

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Solicitor-General what the average total cost was of employing each grade of Crown Prosecutor, including pension and holiday provision, and other benefits associated with such employment, in each financial year since 1 May 1997 for which figures are available. [167302]

The Solicitor-General: The average total cost of employing each grade of crown prosecutor in real terms, including pension and holiday provision, and other benefits associated with such employment, in each year since 1997, was as follows:

£

	Chief Crown Prosecutor	*Band E*	*Band D*	*Band C*
1997–98	94	67	58	45
1998–99	95	68	58	46
1999–2000	71	70	60	48
2000–01	91	73	61	49
2001–02	96	77	63	52
2002–03	105	77	64	52
2003–04	120	77	67	51

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Solicitor-General what arrangements are made for each grade of Crown Prosecutor to qualify for high court advocacy rights; and how much time has been spent on average by each qualified Crown Prosecutor on higher courts advocacy during each financial year since 1 May 1997 for which figures are available. [167305]

The Solicitor-General: an opportunity each year to apply for a place on a Higher Court Advocacy programme which is run by the Crown Prosecution Service in partnership with the Nottingham Law School.

The time spent on higher court advocacy by qualified crown prosecutors from 1999 to 2003 is shown in Table A. 1999–2000 was the first full year for which figures were collated.

Table A

Number of sessions average hours per session	*1999–2000*	*2000–2001*	*2001–2002*	*2002–2003*
Number of sessions	2,718	4,075	7,186	6,839
Ave hours per session	5.29	4.84	4.89	5.15

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bedouins (Negev)

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what assistance his Department provides to the Bedouins in the Negev; [175204]

(2) what discussions he has held with the Israeli Government about the situation of the Bedouins in the Negev. [175202]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Negev desert is part of Israel. DFID does not work in Israel because it is not a developing country. DFID's mandate for poverty reduction requires us to focus our efforts on development and humanitarian assistance in developing countries. DFID has had no discussions with the Israeli Government about the situation of Bedouins in the Negev.

Belize/Guatemala

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the projects his Department has supported in Belize over the past 20 years that have been classed as successful. [175239]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: I shall arrange for a copy of a document entitled "Department for International Development/Official Development Assistance in Belize" to be placed in the Libraries of the House.

The list shows all DFID/ODA projects funded in Belize since 1986 (the year to which project records for Belize date back). Performance scoring of projects began in 1992; all listed projects since then have been classed as partially or wholly successful.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what role the UK Government have played in resolving the border disputes between Belize and Guatemala. [175240]

Mr. Rammell: I have been asked to reply.

The UK continues to support fully the Organisation of American States (OAS)-facilitated process between Belize and Guatemala as the best means to secure a permanent solution to their territorial dispute. I underlined this to both governments when I visited Belize and Guatemala from 14 to 17 January, and I have recently written to Vice-President Stein of Guatemala and Prime Minister Musa of Belize. We have also lobbied both countries to agree a long-term extension to the Confidence Building Measures Agreement, which is due to expire in June, at the next OAS meeting between Belize and Guatemala in Washington in June.

We are also supporting the OAS-sponsored Confidence Building Measures in Belize and Guatemala through the FCO/DFID/MOD Global Conflict

Prevention Pool. £1.5 million has been allocated this financial year. Our projects are aimed at reducing tensions, encouraging co-operation between security agencies and addressing the underlying causes of conflict.

Computer File Formats

Mr. Allan: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his Department's policy is in respect of the computer file formats used for the *(a)* distribution and *(b)* archiving of publicly available documents. [173366]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Material is produced and distributed using a range of industry standard formats: Hypertext Mark-Up Language (html), Portable Document Format (pdf) and Microsoft Word (doc) as recommended in the "Guidelines for UK Government Websites"—as appropriate to the publication. According to the e-Government agenda, DFID is developing an Electronic Documents and Records Management System which will include a policy on the archiving of electronic files.

Darfur

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what action he has taken to secure access to Darfur for humanitarian relief; and if he will make a statement. [175839]

Hilary Benn *[holding answer 25 May 2004]:* I am gravely concerned about the situation in Darfur and the difficulties of ensuring humanitarian access to a displaced population of over 1 million.

I will be tabling a written ministerial statement on Thursday 27 May 2004.

Gambia

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* monetary aid, *(b)* aid in kind and *(c)* logistical aid his Department has (i) pledged and (ii) delivered to the Child Protection Alliance in The Gambia in each year since 2000; and if he will make a statement. [175477]

Gareth Thomas: DFID has not directly funded or been involved in the activities of the Child Protection Alliance in The Gambia. However through DFID's Small Grants Scheme, which is administered by the British High Commission in Banjul, we have provided £3,465 over the past three years to the Child Protection Alliance. This helped to support a capacity building project, an information campaign on child protection issues, and an assessment of member organisations.

Gaza Strip

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent assessment he has made of the *(a)* nutritional needs of and *(b)* the supply of clean water to residents in the Gaza Strip. [175349]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: A food security assessment conducted by the Food and Agriculture Organisation and World Food Programme during 2003 found that approximately 41 per cent. of the population of the Gaza Strip are "food insecure", with a further 28 per cent. at risk of becoming so. Another nutritional assessment done in 2002 by Johns Hopkins and Al-Quds Universities looked at children six to 59 months, and found that in the Gaza Strip, 13.3 per cent. had acute malnutrition (wasting), and 17.5 per cent. had chronic malnutrition (stunting). The United Nations Relief and Works Agency provides emergency food aid to an estimated 128,000 families.

Palestinians have very low water consumption. Per capita Palestinian water consumption in Gaza is 88 litres/day, compared with a World Health Organisation recommended basic minimum for developing countries of 100 litres/day. The United States Aid to International Development (USAID) is leading a major programme of activities to increase the quantities of water available for water supply in Gaza. This includes protection and management of the coastal aquifer, which is the only local source of freshwater in Gaza. USAID has also agreed to fund the construction of a desalination plant that will purify up to 20 million cubic metres of sea water each year, equivalent to nearly 40 per cent. of Gaza's current municipal consumption. A main water pipeline the length of Gaza will also be constructed to distribute high-quality water throughout the Gaza Strip.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what funds are being made available to send aid to Gaza Strip following recent Israeli action. [175350]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: A UN-led needs assessment in Rafah is currently being finalised. DFID will look closely at this when judging if and how we should respond.

Iraq

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what changes he has made to international aid budgets since the decision to take military action in Iraq. [175205]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: I refer the my hon. Friend to the answer given by the Secretary of State to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs Spelman) on 3 November 2003, *Official Report*, column 493W and the answer that I gave to the hon. Member for Buckingham (Mr. Bercow) on 3 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 50W.

Funding for the reconstruction of Iraq did not affect planned DFID expenditure for other countries during 2003–04. During 2004–05 and 2005–06, funding for the reconstruction of Iraq includes £50 million reallocated from planned programmes, together with DFID contingency funding of £115 million and contributions from other Departments. In addition, in response to the increased amounts needed for Iraq, which is classified as a middle income country, DFID has adjusted forward plans to move a further estimated £50 million from other middle income country programmes to low income country programmes. This is needed to maintain our commitment to our Public Service Agreement target of raising the share of our bilateral programme going to low income countries to 90 per cent. by 2005–06.

Details of the middle income countries affected by these changes can be found in the written statement provided to Parliament by the Secretary of State for International Development on 6 November 2003, *Official Report*, column 42WS. The revised allocations for 2004–05 and 2005–06 are set out in the DFID Departmental Report 2004. DFID will also continue to provide substantial assistance to middle-income countries through multilateral institutions.

These reallocations should be seen in the context of a development assistance budget that will increase by £900 million over the current Spending Review Period 2003–06.

Israel

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps the Government are taking to provide humanitarian aid to those affected by Israel's demolition policy. [174517]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: A UN-led needs assessment in Rafah is currently being finalised. DFID will look closely at this in judging if and how we should respond.

During the past 18 months DFID has provided a technical management team to oversee the reconstruction and repair of demolished and damaged housing in Jenin Refugee Camp. In addition DFID made a £5 million contribution in March to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency's Emergency Appeal, which provides a range of emergency humanitarian support to Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This includes emergency shelter, food and health services in Rafah.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Carbon Dioxide Emissions

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry by how much she estimates prices of *(a)* gas and *(b)* electricity for (i) domestic consumers and (ii) industry have changed as a result of Government policy on reducing emissions of carbon dioxide; and what her forecasts are for future price changes. [172528]

Mr. Timms: The Government have put in place a range of measures for reducing emissions of carbon dioxide.

For domestic customers, electricity prices have increased as a result of the introduction of the Non-Fossil Fuel Obligation (NFFO), the Renewables Obligation (RO) and the Energy Efficiency Commitments. The European Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) will also have an upward impact on domestic electricity prices. Gas prices have been affected by the Energy Efficiency Commitments.

For business consumers, gas and electricity prices have been affected by the introduction of the Climate Change Levy (CCL) in 2001. Electricity prices have been affected by the NFFO and the Renewables Obligation. The introduction of the ETS in 2005 will also have an effect on electricity prices and the costs of using gas for business consumers.

Projecting future price increases is highly uncertain. Such impacts will depend on the operation of markets as well as policy measures. The estimates in the following tables are made on particular assumptions and can be indicative only.

Estimated impacts to date and forecasts for the period to 2010 are shown in the following tables:

Domestic gas prices

Percentage

	Impact to date	*Impact 2004–10*
Energy Efficiency Commitments	1	1
Total	1	1

Industrial gas prices

Percentage

	Impact to date	*Impact 2004–10*
CCL—with Climate Change Agreement (CCA)	4	0
CCL—without CCA	19	0
Emissions Trading	0	8
Total (with CCA)	4	8
Total (without CCA)	19	8

Domestic electricity prices

Percentage

	Impact to date	*Impact 2004–10*
NFFO/Renewables Obligation	2	3
Energy Efficiency Commitments	1	2
Emissions Trading	0	3
Total	3	8

Industrial electricity prices

Percentage

	Impact to date	*Impact 2004–10*
NFFO/Renewables Obligation	3	7
CCL—with Climate Change Agreement (CCA)	3	0
CCL—without CCA	15	0
Emissions Trading	0	6
Total (with CCA)	6	13
Total (without CCA)	18	13

Notes:

1. Impact of Emissions Trading Scheme is on gas costs as users of gas will need to hold emission allowances. Not all business users of gas are covered by the EU ETS and those that are will receive an initial free allocation of allowances that will largely cover their projected emissions.

2. Estimates for renewables include the impact of the Non-Fossil Fuel Obligation, which has already impacted on electricity prices.

3. Average impact from Energy Efficiency Commitments. For those benefiting from energy efficiency measures, bills should fall. It is estimated that the average annual on-going financial gain for consumers benefiting from measures in the 2005–08 period, in lower energy bills or increased comfort, would be around £15 a year for the lifetime of the measures. The annual benefit from cavity wall insulation in a standard three bedroom house is likely to be £80 to £100.

4. Impact of Climate Change Levy estimated for those with a Climate Change Agreement who receive an 80 per cent. reduction in the rate of levy and for those without a CCA who pay the full levy. Impact of emissions trading based on a price of €5 per tonne of carbon dioxide.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many chronic obstructive pulmonary disease claimants medically examined so far have also been diagnosed to be suffering with *(a)* pneumoconiosis, *(b)* asbestosis, *(c)* mesothelioma and *(d)* asthma, broken down by (i) age and (ii) coalfield area. [174768]

Nigel Griffiths: Nearly 184,000 medical assessments have been carried out with a resulting fit for purpose Medical Assessment Process (MAP) report. Of this number, over 64,000 MAP reports show a condition other than chronic obstructive pulmonary disease that is impacting on the claimant's respiratory function.

Under the respiratory disease Claims Handling Agreement, ERISC are not required to record these separate co morbid conditions.

Clean Coal

Mr. Kevin Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much her Department spent on Clean Coal projects in each year since 2000 broken down by project; and what the estimated spending for 2004 is. [175587]

Mr. Timms: Spend on clean coal (R&D) programmes since 2000 is indicated as follows:

	£000 (Accruals)
2000–01	1,889
2001–02	1,702
2002–03	1,979
2003–04	1,090
2004–05 estimated	1,168

The following table shows the breakdown by project.

Projects (R&D)

Cleaner coal R&D programme (cash flow)	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*Total*
Pulverised fuel meters—split control	—	—	65,155	—	—	65,155
Advanced materials, modelling and lifting technologies for gas turbine components	188,410	—	211,854	145,210	163,540	709,014
Development of a combustor strategy to cover a wide range of calorific values	—	—	219,365	—	94,140	313,505
Novel gas cleaning/heat recovery system	—	28,560	24,762	—	47,900	101,222
Materials for gasifier heat exchangers	—	9,390	25,275	—	15,290	49,955
Concurrent measurements of temperature and soot concentration of coal fired combustion flames	31,910	—	38,091	—		70,001
Coal mineral transformations—effects on boiler ash	—	99,300	33,100	—	66,200	198,600
Advanced monitoring using imaging for combustion in power station boilers	—	—	68,546	—	45,910	114,456
Advanced coal modelling	—	37,600	—	10,506	—	48,106
Improved materials for advanced PF boilers and steam turbines	—	210,940	536,103	129,957	310,970	1,187,970
Optimisation of furnace design for in-furnace NOx reduction	—	50,590	76,195	—		126,785
Combustion of low volatile coals in wall fired plant	—	97,620	—	—	—	97,620
Optimisation of furnace mixing to enhance combustion efficiency in advanced low NOx systems	—	97,500	—	—	—	97,500
Improvement in combustion efficiency in utility boilers	—	—	239,428	—	201,770	441,198
Advanced optimisation of coal fired power plant operations	3,100	7,347	—	—	20,550	30,997
Techno-economic evaluation of cleaner coal fired plant operability	—	17,280	—	15,030	17,690	50,000
Modelling of particulate and vapour deposition in gas turbines fired on coal derived gases	—	—	19,926	13,653	56,710	90,289
Fabricated turbine rotors for advanced steam turbines	—	27,690	102,364	34,630	—	164,684
Metallic filters for hot gas cleaning	—	—	7,690	—	21,310	29,000
Advanced characterisation property database for Chinese and Indian (and other Asian) coals	—	—	34,722	—	64,670	99,392
Advanced near burner flame diagnostics for ignition and stability studies on full scale pulverised coal flames	—	—	26,584	—	22,000	48,584
UK collaboration with Netherlands and Australian NOx reduction research using overfire air staging	—	—	14,123	—	15,300	29,423
Improving the efficiency and environmental performance of small scale combustion plant for increased export opportunities	—	5,840	23,247	—	20,910	49,997
Application of CFD modelling to mill classifier design	—	—	139,300	31,100	—	170,400
Predictive methods and remedial measures for particle impact erosion and abrasion wear in cleaner coal energy conversion techs	—	—	30,000	70,000	17,500	117,500
Once through the boiler with vertical tube furnace	—	81,710	54,471	45,395	—	181,576
Advanced modelling and testing of thick section welded HCM2S	—	25,810	—	39,650	39,830	105,290
"FOURCRACK" development of advanced coal fired plant steels to avoid premature failure by weld "Type IV" cracking	—	—	13,000	—	122,500	135,500
Carbon burnout—coal fitness effects	—	—	56,400	14,950	27,530	98,880
Development of nitrogen stable isotope ratio measurements to apportion fuel and thermal NOx in coal conversion	—	—	58,750	51,250	—	110,000
Enhanced Efficiency Steam Turbine Blading for Cleaner Coal Plant	—	—	—	19,848	246,460	266,308
Advanced (700C) PF Power Plant	—	—	—	—	81,360	81,360
Virtual Plant Demonstration	—	—	22,990	—	—	22,990
Real time Efficiency Measurements for Utility Boilers	—	—	—	81,632	28,370	110,002
Demonstration of Co-firing Biomass at an Existing Coal Fired Power Station	—	—	—	140,000	—	140,000
Demonstration of Co-firing Biomass at an Existing Coal Fired Power Station	—	—	—	—	755,460	755,460
Assessment of Ash Refiring and Mineral Addition on Plant Performance and Ash Disposal	—	—	—	—	154,000	154,000

Projects (R&D)

Cleaner coal R&D programme (cash flow)	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*Total*
On-line Fuel Tracking by Advanced Flame Monitoring	—	—	13,500	10,500	75,000	99,000
Combustion of Low Volatile Coals in Wall Fired Plant—Phase 2	—	—	—	81,188	78,240	159,428
Minimising Particulate Emissions through the Application of Neural Network Technology and Monitoring Systems	—	—	—	—	118,000	118,000
Improved Methods for Coal and Waste Utilisation	—	—	15,181	—	—	15,181
Former Cleaner Coal Programme						
Development of Coal-over-Coal Reburn	62,680	0	0	0	0	62,680
The Fate of Trace Elements in PF Combustion Systems	9,063	0	0	0	0	9,063
Improvement of Combustion Efficiency in Low-NOx Combustion Systems	0	101	0	0	0	101
Advanced Gas Turbine Compressor Project—Phase 3	121,409	0	0	0	0	121,409
Model-based Plant Optimisation Utilising Trends from Operational Instrumentation	14,833	0	0	0	0	14,833
Fabrication of Steels for Advanced Power Plant	23,073	24,942	0	9,450	0	57,465
Gasifier Developments and the Air Blown Gasification Cycle	3,068	0	0	0	0	3,068
Total projects (R&D)	457,546	822,220	2,170,122	943,948	2,929,110	7,322,946
CC R&D Programme Accruals (£000)	1655	1677	1979	1081	1168	7560
Former CC Programme Accruals (£000)	234	25	0	9	0	269
Total Accruals R&D Projects	1889	1702	1979	1090	1168	7829

Commission for Equality and Human Rights

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights' budget will be spent on financial grants to supporting organisations; and what framework is in place to choose these organisations. [175152]

Ms Hewitt: Funding for the proposed Commission for Equality and Human Rights is still under discussion and is subject to the Government process for financial planning for the next three years.

However, our White Paper, "Fairness for All" has given a commitment to maintain levels of grant funding for local equality work for the foreseeable future.

The Commission will be subject to the same government accounting framework as other non-departmental public bodies, including those processes for making grants.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what measures will be taken to ensure effective liaison between existing advisers to small businesses and the Commission for Equality and Human Rights. [175154]

Ms Hewitt: The Commission for Equality and Human Rights will provide the opportunity to achieve the more joined-up approach to equality and human rights that business, and especially small business, has called for strongly.

The White Paper, "Fairness for All", makes clear that it will be essential for the CEHR to respond to the specific needs of small businesses and liaise effectively with small business advisers. In developing these effective measures, the CEHR will consult and work closely with small business on all key areas of its work to recognise and address their specific needs.

Evidence shows that small businesses' information needs are often different from those of large organisations, which centre on basic information on compliance and legal obligations. Many small businesses prefer to seek this advice from their existing advisers.

The CEHR's services will need to support these advisers and intermediaries and enable the provision of joined-up information that small business wants.

The CEHR will respond to the preferred ways of working of small business. It will be expected to work with and through other existing bodies such as regional development agencies, the Small Business Service, business representative organisations and sector-based professional bodies.

The Government will continue to express their strong commitment to ensuring liaison between existing small business advisers and the CEHR throughout the White Paper consultation period and beyond.

We are especially grateful to Lorraine Gradwell of the Small Business Council for her work as a member of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights Task Force and her support for promoting the interests of small business.

Convenience Market

Jim Dowd: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what meetings she has had with independent and small retailers or their representatives to discuss the implications of consolidation in the convenience market. [175762]

Mr. Sutcliffe: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is aware of the concerns of independent and small format retailers about consolidation in the convenience sector. However, the independent competition authorities are responsible under the Enterprise Act 2002 for decision-making in merger cases against an explicit competition test, and parties with concerns about the effects of mergers in this sector are encouraged to contact the Office of Fair Trading to put forward their views. Ministers have no role in this process, and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has not, therefore, met with those in the convenience sector to discuss any concerns.

Domestic Heating

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the annual cost of heating an average domestic property in Great Britain by *(a)* electricity, *(b)* solid fuel and *(c)* natural gas. [175856]

Mr. Timms: Figures on the cost of providing space and water heating in typical dwellings for Great Britain appear in "Salkent's Comparative Heating Costs" publication. The October 2003 edition of this shows costs as indicated in the table.

Typical annual costs of space and water heating for a three bedroom semi-detached house

Fuel type	*Annual cost (£)*
Electricity (Economy 7)	625
Solid fuel (Anthracite grains)	566
Gas (conventional boiler)	463

Liquefied Natural Gas

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what reserve storage facilities for liquefied natural gas the Government have for use during emergency interruptions of gas supplies. [174714]

Mr. Timms: National Grid Transco own and operate five LNG storage facilities. These are used, at the commercial judgment of NGT, to meet winter peaks in gas demand. The gas industry has emergency arrangements in place for managing a supply shortfall.

National Minimum Wage

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many workers have benefited from the national minimum wage in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood. [175890]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to provide estimates specifically for the constituency of Blackpool, North and Fleetwood. However, based on the Office for National Statistics' Low Pay data released in 2003, the DTI estimates that around 140,000 people in the North West stood to benefit from the introduction of the national minimum wage in April 1999. Between 130,000 and 160,000 people were expected to have benefited from the October 2003 uprating of the national minimum wage.

Oil and Gas Production

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the quarterly totals of *(a)* oil and *(b)* gas produced in the British sector of the North Sea were in the last 10 years. [175935]

Mr. Timms: Information on production of oil and gas from the UK and UK Continental Shelf over the last 10 years is set out as in the table. The Department publishes information on production on its website. Total quarterly production of oil from 1995 is at www.dti.gov.uk/energy/inform/energy_stats/oil/3_10oilproduction-ettab13.xls and quarterly production of gas from 1996 at www.dti.gov.uk/energy_stats/gas/4_2gasproductionettab11.xls

UK production of oil and gas

	Quarter	*(a) Oil and Natural Gas Liquids (Million tonnes)*	*(b) Gross gas (GWh)*
1994	1	30,187	255,201
1994	2	30,825	155,320
1994	3	31,380	118,951
1994	4	34,150	221,665
1995	1	33,446	274,685
1995	2	29,596	168,762
1995	3	32,401	125,591
1995	4	34,451	253,804
1996	1	32,557	318,349
1996	2	31,260	201,669
1996	3	31,310	159,895
1996	4	34,523	298,539
1997	1	33,045	314,124
1997	2	29,320	212,947
1997	3	31,557	176,785
1997	4	34,045	294,488
1998	1	33,185	308,503
1998	2	31,735	226,684
1998	3	32,599	188,236
1998	4	34,974	324,963
1999	1	34,389	342,857
1999	2	33,061	245,617
1999	3	34,328	215,756
1999	4	35,321	347,919
2000	1	34,221	376,669
2000	2	30,803	295,244
2000	3	30,426	242,910
2000	4	30,587	345,345
2001	1	29,196	362,755
2001	2	28,339	289,959
2001	3	28,328	248,206
2001	4	30,814	329,613
2002	1	29,653	333,547
2002	2	29,531	295,520
2002	3	26,484	235,677
2002	4	30,276	339,969
2003	1	28,748	350,858
2003	2	25,849	282,958
2003	3	25,012	244,189
2003	4	26,478	317,988

Paid Leave

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of Blackpool, North and Fleetwood qualify for paid leave entitlement. [175887]

Mr. Sutcliffe: All workers resident in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood qualify for paid annual leave entitlements; at least four weeks as set out in the Working Time Regulations. While all women are entitled to 26 weeks ordinary maternity leave, only those who meet the eligibility criteria will be able to claim statutory maternity pay for that period.

All employees in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood who are eligible will be entitled to take statutory paternity leave with pay and statutory adoption leave with pay.

Post Office (Election Materials)

Tony Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the ability of the Post Office to provide a satisfactory service for the delivery of election materials for the elections on 10 June. [175563]

Mr. Timms: Royal Mail is fully aware of the importance of ensuring that it provides a reliable service during the pilot postal elections in June. This could affect just over 14 million people and DTI Ministers

have received assurances from Allan Leighton that Royal Mail will be giving the handling of the ballot papers the highest priority.

The Department of Constitutional Affairs, which is overseeing the elections, has had several meeting with Royal Mail to discuss the development of national and detailed local plans for the all-postal pilot elections. It has ensured that there are robust plans in place for the delivery and return of electoral mail in June.

The Department of Constitutional Affairs project team will monitor Royal Mail's performance in the run up and during the election period and are in regular contact with Royal Mail to ensure that everything runs smoothly.

Public Bodies

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people are employed by the *(a)* Commission for Racial Equality, *(b)* Equal Opportunities Commission and *(c)* Disability Rights Commission. [174705]

Ms Hewitt: The full-time equivalent staff complement for the commissions is:

	Number
Commission for Racial Equality	187
Equal Opportunities Commission	139
Disability Rights Commission	192

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the current annual budget is of the *(a)* Commission for Racial Equality, *(b)* Equal Opportunities Commission and *(c)* Disability Rights Commission. [174702]

Ms Hewitt: The budgets for the commissions for 2004–05 are:

Commission for Racial Equality—£20,085,000

Equal Opportunities Commission—£8,255,000

Disability Rights Commission—£15,497,000.

Regional Development Agencies

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which of the regional development agencies have established a science council; and what the annual budget for 2004–05 is of each. [174696]

Jacqui Smith: Regional Science Councils—or equivalent bodies—have been established in the North West, the North East, the South East and London. All of the RDAs have agreed to have a council in place by the end of 2004. Although subject to local variations, the Science Councils are generally tasked with exerting influence through the strategic direction of SET funding within their region, rather than holding specific budgets.

Research and Development

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what has been the research and development spending per capita in each UK region in each of the last six years. [174695]

Jacqui Smith: Spending on research and development is tracked regionally through a series of ONS surveys of private business, central Government and higher education establishments. Figures on research and development spending per capita in each UK region in each of the last six years is on the following table.

£s spent on research and development per head of resident population[1]

Region	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*
North East	118	110	112	110	115	105
North West	218	218	224	266	267	281
Yorkshire and the Humber	112	109	113	126	129	134
East Midlands	225	225	239	259	287	297
West Midlands	184	188	201	208	183	177
Eastern	496	540	534	573	622	659
London	245	231	233	255	277	268
South East	425	440	463	509	516	548
South West	229	237	282	274	272	295
England	267	273	285	309	319	331
Wales	85	89	100	134	120	117
Scotland	160	160	184	204	213	246
Northern Ireland	97	87	89	105	133	141

[1] Population as at mid-year 2002.

Source:

Office for National Statistics.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much money *(a)* the Government, *(b)* the private sector and *(c)* higher education establishments has spent on research and development in each region of the UK in each of the last six years. [174699]

Jacqui Smith: Spending on research and development is tracked regionally through a series of ONS surveys of private business, central government and higher education establishments. Figures available for the last six years are provided in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

Table 1: Estimated Government Office Region breakdown of expenditure on Intramural R&D performed within Government establishments 1997 to 2002

£ million

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
United Kingdom	*2,018*	*2,079*	*2,072*	*2,134*	*1,829*	*1,750*
North East	17	3	2	2	4	6
North West and Merseyside	88	58	56	57	66	67
Yorkshire and the Humber	55	31	46	48	50	63
East Midlands	69	51	56	56	68	65
West Midlands	185	182	191	196	65	50
Eastern	250	256	247	259	277	286
London	205	203	230	258	238	234
South East	685	700	645	635	515	459
South West	257	330	300	307	254	225
England	1,811	1,814	1,771	1,816	1,537	1,455
Wales	33	51	55	65	49	42
Scotland	163	201	232	238	226	238
Northern Ireland	12	12	14	15	16	15

Table 2: Estimated Government Office Region breakdown of expenditure on Intramural R&D in the business sector 1997 to 2002

£ million

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
United Kingdom	*9,556*	*10,133*	*11,302*	*11,510*	*12,336*	*13,110*
North East	162	178	164	164	119	128
North West and Merseyside	1,157	1,216	1,476	1,451	1,512	1,661
Yorkshire and the Humber	255	287	309	304	298	357
East Midlands	708	775	838	933	951	1,063
West Midlands	647	708	724	576	662	695
Eastern	2,381	2,367	2,559	2,758	2,916	2,741

Table 2: Estimated Government Office Region breakdown of expenditure on Intramural R&D in the business sector 1997 to 2002

£ million

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
London	667	643	735	810	738	950
South East	2,335	2,497	2,916	2,964	3,317	3,268
South West	758	898	887	867	1,025	1,274
England	9,071	9,569	10,607	10,827	11,538	12,138
Wales	113	125	203	144	136	182
Scotland	291	358	393	400	512	640
Northern Ireland	81	81	99	139	150	149

Table 3: Estimated Government Office Region breakdown of expenditure on Intramural R&D performed within higher education institutes 1996 to 2001

£ million

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
United Kingdom	2,792	2,893	3,040	3,324	3,648	4,034
North East	95	101	105	112	123	142
North West and Merseyside	227	228	238	259	289	322
Yorkshire and the Humber	216	229	241	269	285	317
East Midlands	146	151	159	181	205	224
West Midlands	154	156	167	179	193	207
Eastern	203	214	211	253	325	366
London	700	730	775	833	899	979
South East	416	434	460	491	518	562
South West	124	129	138	147	160	178
England	2,282	2,374	2,494	2,723	2,996	3,296
Wales	105	111	113	129	139	155
Scotland	348	357	375	408	442	510
Northern Ireland	57	52	57	64	70	73

Note:
2002 statistics are not yet available.

Research and Development Grants

Albert Owen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on steps she has taken to encourage small businesses to take up research and development grants in the United Kingdom. [174065]

Nigel Griffiths: Following the review of its business support the Department introduced Grant for Research and Development in England in June 2003 to build upon the success of the popular Smart scheme. For each category of grant the maximum amount available was increased in the transition to the new product. In the year April 2003 to March 2004 over 900 individuals and small and medium sized businesses were offered grants to help with the costs of researching and developing new, technologically innovative products and processes. The popularity of the grants has increased in each of the last three.

We have also made it easier for businesses to access all DTI business support. We have replaced the confusing array of schemes with a small suite of products, produced clear marketing brochures including one on succeeding through innovation, put in place the Business Support Directory to help customers identify the most appropriate forms of support and are building the Business Link brand to enhance its position as an easy to use gateway to useful information, analysis, advice and support.

The Scottish Executive, Welsh Development Agency and Invest Northern Ireland are responsible for their own Smart and Spur schemes.

Aluminium

Mr. Page: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the energy consumption is per unit of aluminium produced from *(a)* raw materials and *(b)* scrap. [174976]

Jacqui Smith: According to the Aluminium Federation, primary production in the UK uses about 14,500 kWh/tonne to electrolyse the alumina into molten primary aluminium. Recycling requires approximately 780 kWh/tonne, including all of the energy required to pre-process the low grade scraps prior to melting.

Mr. Page: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the price of scrap aluminium per tonne is; and what the average price was in 1997. [174978]

Jacqui Smith: "Metal Bulletin" quotes low and high prices, representing an evaluation of the market at the time that particular issue of "Metal Bulletin" goes to press. Monthly averages are not published. UK market prices are published for many different categories of aluminium scarp and ingot foundries. Data for three examples are shown below. Prices in 1997 generally exceeded the May 2004 level, except at the very start of the year.

£ per tonne (low and high prices)

Product	*8 January 1997*	*30 December 1997*	*19 May 2004*
Aluminium Scrap and Foundry Ingots:			
United Kingdom market			
Commercial cast	595–605	670–690	635–670
Group 1 Litho (baled)	785–805	875–895	800–830
Mixed alloy/Old Rolled cuttings	575–595	675–695	595–615

Mr. Page: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps are taken to ensure that scrap aluminium exported from the UK is sent to Integrated Pollution Preventative and Control Directive Approved processing plants. [175427]

Mr. Timms: As a member of the European Community, the United Kingdom is not able to take unilateral action on trade matters. Decisions which impact on or affect the European Community's commercial policy are taken collectively by the European Commission and member states working closely together. There are no plans at present for the Commission to introduce proposals which would restrict the export of aluminium scrap to processing plants that meet certain standards of environmental performance. Any such measures would have to be compatible with WTO rules.

Spending Review 2002 Targets

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the progress her Department has made towards meeting the Spending Review 2002 targets *(a)* to increase the number of people considering going into business and *(b)* to improve the overall productivity of small firms. [174713]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in

England and Wales in the last quarter of 2003. The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before.

Data from the Office for National Statistics' Annual Business Inquiry shows that during the period 1999 to 2001, the productivity (gross value added per employee) of small firms (those with fewer than 250 employees) has risen at a faster rate every year than the productivity of all firms in the UK. In 1999, SMEs were 93 per cent. as productive as large firms, and by 2001, they were 96 per cent. as productive. The latest figures show that SMEs' productivity increased by 5.9 per cent. (basic prices) between 2000 and 2001, while all firms' productivity increased by 4.5 per cent. (basic prices).

Progress against the targets set in 2002 was published on 28 April 2004 in the 2004 DTI Departmental Report.

Unfair Commercial Practice Directive

Mr. Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what progress was made at the Competitiveness Council held on 17 to 18 May on the Unfair Commercial Practice Directive and the Irish Presidency's proposal to delete the Internal Market Clause. [R] [175821]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Competitiveness Council on 17 to 18 May reached political agreement to a common position on the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive based on a compromise package from the Irish Presidency, the main element of which was the deletion of Article 4(1) and the "country of origin" principle. The Commission stressed that this was only acceptable in the light of the full harmonisation which the Directive would provide, and tabled a minutes statement to this effect. The United Kingdom, Netherlands, Luxembourg and Estonia also tabled a joint minutes statement expressing their regret at the deletion of Article 4(1) and noting that traders who comply with the laws in the member state where they are established should ordinarily be presumed not to be in breach of the laws in other member states.

The Government welcome the Directive which will be a major enhancement of the UK's consumer protection regime by plugging gaps in the existing legal framework that unscrupulous traders exploit, and by setting standards against which new practices will automatically be judged. It will make an important contribution to achieving my Department's Public Service Agreement Target

"to have a consumer protection regime that is among the best in the world by 2006".

Victor Bout

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what investigations her Department has carried out into the activities of Victor Bout. [175582]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

Customs is responsible for investigating any suspected breaches of UN sanctions in the UK, or by UK persons overseas, involving exports or certain brokering activities.

It is not Customs policy to comment on the existence or nature of any such investigations, but Customs notes that recent media reports concerning Mr. Bout do not refer to any matters that would fall to be investigated by them.

Wind Farms

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment the Government have made of the *(a)* energy and *(b)* carbon costs of wind farms including (i) the concrete content of foundations, (ii) losses in transmission and (iii) infrastructure such as access roads. [174802]

Mr. Timms: While there are some carbon emissions associated with the construction of wind farms and their associated infrastructure these are very small compared to the carbon emissions saved by the wind farm over its lifetime of operation. Wind Energy Fact Sheet 14, which can be found on the DTI website (www.dti.gov.uk/energy/renewables/publications/pdfs/windfs14.pdf) provides further information on the life cycle emissions from wind farms relative to fossil fuel electricity generating technologies.

In relation to transmission losses, these will affect all forms of electricity generation in a similar manner related to the distance transferred, type of power cable transferred through etc. Overall losses in the England and Wales transmission system are approximately 1.5 per cent. but no estimate has been made of what proportion of this energy loss is attributable to wind energy.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how the Government's energy policy takes account of the problems of grid security and stability caused by large-scale remote wind generation; [174803]

(2) how the Government's energy policy of large-scale wind farm development, particularly in remote parts of the UK, will affect the risks of large-scale electricity blackouts in the UK. [174806]

Mr. Timms: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave her on 6 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1098W.

Large-scale blackouts are very rare events in the UK. For example, in England and Wales, the amount of energy not supplied by NGT due to transmission failures over the last 12 years is an extremely small proportion to total system throughput, averaging less than 0.0001 per cent. This compares very favourably with other transmission network operators.

The Government are working closely with the electricity industry to ensure that all necessary reinforcements required by the integration of renewable generation will be completed expeditiously. In addition, the industry is working to ensure that wind and other renewable generation connection to the system in future will have the characteristics necessary to maintain the integrity of the electricity networks. The Government in conjunction with the electricity industry, are also exploring possible means of further mitigating the effects of intermittency and unpredictability, for example by the application of additional electricity

storage. DTI and Ofgem will continue to monitor electricity security issues through the Joint Electricity Security of Supply working group.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many miles of new power lines will be needed in *(a)* Yorkshire and *(b)* other parts of England to accommodate the grid development identified by Ofgem as necessary to implement the Government's energy policy for wind farms. [174805]

Mr. Timms: The plan for remodelling the transmission grid to accommodate new renewable energy generation is currently being prepared by National Grid Transco, Scottish Power and Scottish and Southern Electricity.

(a) There are no planned upgrades of the transmission system required in Yorkshire.

(b) For the rest of England there will be a need to upgrade transmission lines but the final plans have not been presented.

Ofgem have now issued their second consultation on how to fund the costs of upgrades and the first of the transmission developments required to facilitate the delivery of our renewables targets, a new transmission line from Beauly to Denny in Scotland, is currently the subject of a pre-statutory consultation by Scottish and Southern. They hope to submit an application for section 37 consent this autumn.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adult Education

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the extent to which impartial advice and guidance about learning and work is available to adults over 19 in England. [175846]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Impartial advice about learning and work is available free of charge to all adults in England aged 20 and over through the learndirect telephone helpline and website, and through the local Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) Partnerships managed by the Learning and Skills Council. Advice involves helping individuals to access and interpret information taking into account their personal needs and circumstances. Guidance, which involves helping clients to explore their options in greater depth, is not universally available free of charge. However, universities and colleges have careers services offering impartial information, advice and guidance to their students, and there are many private career consultancy firms providing guidance commercially for those people who are able and willing to pay for it.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how he plans to ensure that in all 47 learning and skills council local areas adults over 19 seeking a career change or a skills update will be able to access impartial advice and guidance informed by the changing labour markets. [175847]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In December 2003, the Department for Education and Skills published The National Policy Framework and Action Plan for Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) for Adults. This set out a core range of information and advice services to be made available free of charge to all adults aged 20 and over. They include access for individuals to information and advice informed by labour market trends at national, regional and local levels. Individuals will access these services through an integrated IAG service linking the learndirect telephone helpline and website with the local Information, Advice and Guidance Partnerships. The integrated IAG service will be launched in August 2004.

BACS

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress his Department has made to manage the changeover from the Bank Automated Clearing System to the new BACSTEL-IP system for electronic payments. [164316]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Department for Education and Skills recognise that we must upgrade to BACSTEL-IP well before the December 2005 deadline. We are in the process of upgrading our central finance system, with an expected "go live" date of 5 July 2004. The BACSTEL-IP upgrade was excluded from the scope of that project as we did not want to introduce unnecessary additional risk. It will, however, be taken forward with Barron McCann (our current BACS software provider) as a priority upgrade towards the end of this calendar year.

Education Building Development Conference

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will place in the Library the presentation made by Mr. Robert Osborne at the Conference for the Education Building Development Officer Group in 2003. [173137]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* Copies of the presentation made by Mr. Robert Osborne at the Conference for the Education Building Development Officer Group in 2003 have been placed in the House Libraries.

Further Education

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time places there were for 16 to 19-year-olds in London further education colleges in each of the past five years. [175208]

Alan Johnson: Information on the number of available places in Greater London further education colleges is not held centrally. Information on learners is held centrally however, though only for 16 and 17-year-olds.

The numbers of 16 and 17-year-old learners in further education colleges, living in London, from end 1997 to end 2001 (the latest available year) are given in Table 1. The numbers shown in the table are snapshot information as at the end of the calendar years.

Table 1

Greater London	*End 1997*	*End 1998*	*End 1999*	*End 2000*	*End 2001*
Full-time education					
Sixth form colleges	12,400	12,500	13,200	13,300	13,600
Other further education colleges[1]	41,200	40,600	40,100	40,700	41,800
Part-time education					
Sixth form colleges	200	200	200	200	300
Other further education colleges	8,000	7,600	7,900	7,800	7,500

[1] These figures include those participating in government supported work-based learning (WBL).

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people in *(a)* Taunton and *(b)* Somerset he expects to stay on in education as a result of the introduction of the Education Maintenance Allowance. [175621]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We estimate there will be about 2,800 extra 16-year-olds in the South West Region in further education this September who would not be participating without EMA. We are unable to provide forecasts of the number of EMA students down to constituency level.

Mr. Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate he has made of the number of people in Ryedale that he expects to remain in full-time education as a result of the introduction of the Education Maintenance Allowance. [175817]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We estimate there will be about 2,800 extra 16-year-olds in the Yorkshire and Humberside Region in further education this September who would not be participating without EMA. We are unable to provide forecasts of the number of EMA students down to constituency level.

Mr. Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will bring levels of funding for 16 to 19-year-old students at further education colleges in North Yorkshire up to the level of funding for such students at schools in the county. [175815]

Alan Johnson: The Government have set out their investment plans for 2003–04 to 2005–06 to support their Success for All strategy to reform further education and training. These plans enable the Learning and Skills Council to increase funding for further education significantly. For the academic year 2003/04, core funding rates per qualification increased by 3 per cent. for school sixth forms and 4.5 per cent. for further education colleges (setting aside the impact on rates of changes to targeted funds for pay and staff training and teachers' pension funding). Our expenditure plans to 2005–06 should see that trend continue.

Mr. Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will provide extra funding to further education colleges in North Yorkshire to support increases in student numbers resulting from the introduction of the Education Maintenance Allowance. [175816]

Alan Johnson: The Department allocates funds for education and training in the post-16 learning and skills sector to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The LSC decides on allocations at individual college and regional level. Information about these allocations is not collected by the Department. This is a matter for the LSC. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to the hon. Gentleman with this information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the House Library.

Mr. Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to provide funding to further education colleges in North Yorkshire to help them to refurbish and rebuild college buildings. [175818]

Alan Johnson: All of the Department's post-16 learning and skills sector capital investment is allocated to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The Department does not provide a specific budget to the LSC for rebuilding and refurbishing property in further education colleges at either the local or regional levels. It is for the LSC to determine for itself the right level of capital investment in further education colleges. Mr. Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to the hon. Member on this matter. A copy of his reply will be placed in the House Library.

School Access Fund

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much of the School Access Fund was spent on improving *(a)* physical access to school buildings and *(b)* access to the curriculum in the most recent year for which figures are available. [175237]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* This information is not collected centrally. It is for local education authorities to decide which of the capital projects proposed by their schools should be supported in the light of local needs and circumstances detailed in their Accessibility Strategy.

Local authorities' accessibility strategies and schools plans should cover all three strands of the planning duties they have under part 4 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995: to improve the physical environment of the school; increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum and improve the delivery of information to disabled pupils. Local authorities have a duty to make their strategies available for inspection to interested parties at reasonable times and maintained schools also have a duty to publish their accessibility plans in their governor's report to parents.

When Ofsted inspects schools, they report on how well they include all pupils within the school and how well they carry out their statutory duties, including accessibility planning under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance has been issued to *(a)* local education authorities and *(b)* schools on the use of the School Access Fund. [175238]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* Guidance has been issued to local education authorities to indicate the scope of the capital projects they should support to improve the accessibility of the mainstream schools for disabled pupils. Information on the Schools Access Initiative, including the guidance, is also available on our website www.teachetnet.gov.uk/accessibleschools.

It is for local education authorities to determine how they will allocate the funding made available to them in the light of local needs and circumstances detailed in their Accessibility Strategy and make that information available to the schools they are responsible for.

As part of the implementation of the SEN Strategy: Removing Barriers to Achievement, the Department is developing a self-review and development tool to help local authorities review their accessibility strategies in partnership with pupils, parents and schools and identify ways of further improving the quality of their planning and significantly increasing access to education for disabled pupils.

Secondary Schools

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what his policy is on the most appropriate size of a secondary school to deliver an acceptable level of subject choice to pupils; and what guidance he has issued to local education authorities on this. [174565]

Mr. Miliband: We do not prescribe an appropriate size of secondary school to deliver an acceptable level of subject choice to pupils, and we have not issued any guidance to local education authorities on this. What is important is that secondary schools provide a high quality, broad and balanced curriculum as set out in sections 78 to 96 of the Education Act 2002. Schools can collaborate with other schools and colleges to broaden the range of options available to their pupils.

Student Fees

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to his answers of 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1549–50W, to the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight, if he will list *(a)* for each higher education institution and *(b)* in total (i) the number of students who were UK nationals, (ii) the number of non-EU students and (iii) the number of EU students from countries other than the United Kingdom; if he will list for each total the (A) aggregate fee-income and (B) average fee-income per student; and what the (1) aggregate fee-income foregone and (2) average fee-income per student foregone was *(y)* at cost to the institution and *(z)* at cost to the public purse through treating EU students from outside the UK in the same way as students from the UK. [171206]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* It is not possible to calculate what the change in income to higher education institutions would be if EU students ceased to be treated in the same way as UK students for fees and funding purposes. This is because the change in income will depend on the courses that these students are following and institutions' decisions about the fee levels for those courses. Fees for non-EU overseas students are not regulated and institutions determine the amount they charge depending, for example, on the costs of the course offered. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) provides funding for EU students but not for non-EU overseas students. The amount paid by HEFCE will also depend on the type of course the student is taking. Information for each HE institution showing student numbers and fee income received is published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) in "Students in Higher Education Institutions and Resources of Higher Education Institutions" respectively, copies of which are available from the House Library.

Teachers

Mr. Watts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teachers have retired over the last four years. [174845]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested has been published in table 40 of the School Workforce in England volume, 2003 edition. A copy of this has been placed in the House of Commons Library. The volume can also be accessed from the following URL: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/VOL/v000443/index.shtml

Test and Examination Costs

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the initial total cost was, including production, printing, marking and moderation of *(a)* KS1 SATS, *(b)* KS2 SATS, *(c)* KS3 SATS, *(d)* GCSE, *(e)* AS, *(f)* A Level and *(g)* A2 for all schools for 2002–03. [175404]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* The breakdown of expenditure for the Key Stage 1, 2 and 3 National Curriculum tests (commonly referred to as SATS) for all schools for 2002–03 are shown in the table.

£ million

Area of work	*KS1*	*KS2*	*KS3*
Test development, pre-testing and level setting	0.6	1.35	1.5
Paper and printing	0.5	0.75	1
Test distribution	0.5	0.6	0.6
Marking	—	9.4	9
Data collection	—	0.9	0.9
Total	1.6	13	13

Notes:
1. Key Stage 1 tests are marked and moderated locally and so the figures are unavailable for that expenditure.
2. Moderation at Key Stage 2 and 3 is involved in the marking costs—it is not possible to disaggregate the figure.
3. The figure for marking at Key Stage 2 is higher than Key Stage 3 as there are approximately 5 per cent. more pupils.
4. The figures relate to the test cycle and not a financial year.

As part of the work to modernise the examinations systems, announced by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State on 17 November 2003, *Official Report*, column 25WS, we are seeking to improve our understanding of costs of the examinations system. Work to estimate the total costs incurred by the awarding bodies, rather than simply the fees they charge, shows that they spend a total of some £280 million a year on general examinations (principally GCSEs and GCEs) taken by students in schools and colleges in England.

DEFENCE

Air-Sea Rescue Service

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has for the future of the UK Air-Sea Rescue Service. [171736]

Mr. Ingram: The United Kingdom Search and Rescue services will continue to be provided by Royal Navy and Royal Air Force Sea King helicopters (alongside the Maritime Coastguard Agency) until the Support Amphibious Battlefield Rotorcraft Search and Rescue enters service.

Defence Analytical Services Agency

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the role and performance of the Defence Analytical Services Agency. [173936]

Mr. Ingram: The role of the Defence Analytical Services Agency (DASA) is to provide economic and statistical information, analysis and advice to the Ministry of Defence and to provide Parliament, other Government Departments and the public with defence-related statistics and analytical information.

DASA's main products and services are:

defence National Statistics (available at www.dasa.mod.uk);

statistics, analysis and interpretation on a wide range of defence activity for use within MOD (personnel, financial, logistics, commercial, health, and equipment);

forecasting to support the Department's financial and personnel planning appraisal and evaluation policy, scrutiny and advice to support the Department's investment decisions;

and consultancy services, advice and research including modelling, economic and statistical analyses, surveys and problem solving.

More detail about DASA can be found on its website.

In 2003–04 DASA met seven out of its eight key targets. In addition, DASA met the work-life balance standard (a key target carried over from 2002–03) and won the National Council for Work Experience award in the public sector category for the quality of the placements it offers to students. Further information on DASA's performance will be contained in DASA's Annual Report and Accounts which are due to be laid before Parliament before the summer recess.

Defence Scientific and Technology Laboratory

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence to what extent the Defence Scientific and Technology Laboratory plans to increase its revenue from sources other than Government departments. [169389]

Mr. Ingram: The Defence Scientific and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) currently has no plans for increasing the revenue it receives from sources outside the public sector, except in the area of IPR exploitation, where it generates revenue through the setting up of joint ventures and the licensing of IPR from defence technology. In this role, Dstl, as a Public Sector Research Establishment, complies with the recommendations of the Baker Report in that it takes opportunities to protect, license and otherwise exploit the IPR generated from public funds for the wider benefit of the United Kingdom.

Departmental Executive Agencies

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will place in the Library copies of the *(a)* operating cost statement, *(b)* statement of recognised gains and losses, *(c)* balance sheet, *(d)* cash flow statement and *(e)* fixed assets register for financial year 1997–98 for the (i) Defence Dental Agency, (ii) Defence Estate Organisation, (iii) Defence Intelligence and Security Centre, (iv) Defence Vetting Agency and (v) RAF Logistic Support Services; [172119]

(2) if he will place in the Library copies of the *(a)* operating cost statement, *(b)* statement of recognised gains and losses, *(c)* balance sheet, *(d)* cash flow statement and *(e)* fixed assets register for (i) RAF Logistic Support Services for financial year 1999–2000 and (ii) the Defence Clothing and Textiles Agency for the period April to October 2000. [172120]

Mr. Ingram: No accounts were published in financial year 1997–98 by the Defence Estate Organisation, the Defence Intelligence and Security Centre, the Defence Vetting Agency and RAF Logistic Support Services. No accounts were published in financial year 1999–2000 by RAF Logistic Support Services as the organisation ceased to be an agency on 31 March 2000. For that year, no accounts direction was given by HM Treasury and accordingly the agency did not produce a set of annual report and accounts. In respect of the Defence Clothing and Textiles Agency no accounts were produced for the period April to October 2000 or for the year 2000–01 as the organisation ceased to be an agency on 1 October 2000. An operating cost statement, statement of recognised gains and losses, balance sheet and cash flow statement are thus not available.

For the Defence Dental Agency, I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Aldershot (Mr. Howarth) on 19 November 2003, *Official Report*, column 961W.

Fixed Asset Registers could be published only at disproportionate cost in view of the substantial volume of MOD assets.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* resource provision and *(b)* outturn for his Department's executive agencies was for financial years (i) 1999–2000, (ii) 2000–01, (iii) 2001–02 and (iv) 2002–03. [172121]

Mr. Ingram: For financial years 1999–2000 to 2001–02, I refer the hon. Member to the letter I sent to the hon. Member for North Essex (Mr. Jenkin) (reference: D/Min(AF)Al 4656/04C of 30 March 2004) copies of which are available in the Library of the House. This provides the "resource outturn" (net operating cost after interest in the Operating Cost Statement) for all agencies which are also Management Groupings or Top Level Budgets. Agency net operating costs may otherwise be found in the Operating Cost Statement of their Annual Report and Accounts, copies of which are available in the Library of the House. Technical differences in the way in which agency and consolidated departmental accounts must be prepared may result in a variance between the net operating costs figure shown in agency accounts and that shown in the equivalent consolidated departmental breakdown.

I will write to the hon. Member to provide the corresponding information for financial year 2002–03 and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

I am unable to provide resource provision below Top Level Budget. The setting of budgets below this level is for internal management control purposes only as lower-level budgets may be redistributed over the financial year to take account of in-year cost pressures or programme changes.

Interrogation Techniques

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps were taken following the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in Ireland *v.* United Kingdom (1978) to outlaw the use of the five techniques of interrogation found to be in breach of Article 3 of the European Convention. [174550]

Mr. Ingram: In 1978 the Government's presentation to the European Court of Human Rights set out that the then Prime Minister had declared on 2 March 1972, *Official Report*, columns 743–44, that "the techniques ... will not be used in future as an aid to interrogation" and that directives expressly prohibiting the use of the techniques for interrogation, whether singly or in combination, had been issued in April 1972. The Government also gave the Court an unqualified undertaking that the techniques of hooding, wall standing, sleep deprivation, food deprivation, and white noise would not in an any circumstances be reintroduced as an aid to interrogation.

Given that the necessary directives had been issued in April 1972, no further steps were deemed necessary following the Court's judgment.

Iraq

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what role was played by the *(a)* SAS and *(b)* SBS in restoring stability to Fallujah. [175048]

Mr. Ingram: I am withholding details under Exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 663W, on Iraq, if he will give the cause of death entered on the death certificates of the 16 individuals whose deaths involved alleged ill treatment by members of UK armed forces. [175750]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 25 May 2004]:* Of the 16 cases involving alleged ill treatment of Iraqi civilians by United Kingdom armed forces, 10 resulted in the death of a civilian. As the cases are still under investigation, it would not be appropriate for me to comment further.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the discovery of a shell filled with sarin nerve agent in Iraq by United States forces. [175200]

Mr. Ingram: On 15 May 2004, an improvised explosive device, discovered by United States forces, was found to be an artillery shell probably containing the nerve agent sarin. Two members of US forces suffered symptoms consistent with nerve agent poisoning and initial tests revealed the presence of sarin. Additional testing will now be performed outside Iraq.

It is not clear whether the maker of the device knew that it contained nerve agent or whether the shell was being used for its explosive properties.

Marchwood Military Port

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the impact on Marchwood Military Port of the decision to reject the proposed new container terminal at Dibden Bay. [175060]

Mr. Ingram: The Sea Mounting Centre, Marchwood Military Port (MMP) is unaffected by the decision to reject the proposed new container terminal at Dibden Bay. It will continue to undertake its essential role in the operational deployment of the Joint Rapid Reaction Force (JRRF) as well as the regular and more routine movements of ammunition.

The Ministry of Defence will continue to consult with Associated British Ports (ABP) and evaluate any future proposals for the development of the Dibden Bay site.

Merlin Helicopters

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Royal Navy Merlin helicopters have been involved in accidents which were *(a)* insufficient and *(b)* sufficient to put them out of service. [174865]

Mr. Ingram: Merlin helicopters have been involved in two accidents, both of which were sufficient to put the aircraft out of service. Merlin flights have been halted pending further investigations.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the lessons learned from the accident investigations and other inquiries into *(a)* operational failures, *(b)* accidents and *(c)* equipment malfunctions of the Royal Navy Merlin helicopter. [174866]

Mr. Ingram: Following the Merlin accident at RNAS Culdrose on 30 March 2004, a Service Board of Inquiry and a technical investigation by the Royal Navy Flight Safety and Air Accident Investigation Centre have been commissioned. Neither has yet reported. The Military Air Accident Summary for the Merlin crash near the Kyle of Lochalsh on 29 October 2000 was placed in the Library of the House in June 2002.

Non-human Primates

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 13 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 539W, on experiments on non-human primates, if he will list the primate type and number of primates used in each experiment; when each experiment was conducted; and what was done with the primates on the completion of each experiment. [175145]

Mr. Ingram: In 2001, Dstl Porton Down used eight Rhesus Macques to help assess the effects and significance of human exposure to nerve agents.

Additionally, other studies that did not involve testing the effects of weapons have been conducted with non-human primates. The following table lists all of the studies undertaken at Dstl Porton Down which have involved the use of non-human primates. These studies form an integral part of the overall research programme to provide the UK and its armed forces with safe and effective protection in the event of chemical or biological weapons being used and are conducted under the terms of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986.

Study	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Effects and significance of exposure to nerve agents	8 Rhesus	—	—
Gulf War vaccine interactions programme	54 Marmosets	4 Marmosets	—
Development of medical countermeasures	—	12 Rhesus 6 Marmosets	7 Marmosets
Provision of blood/tissue samples for in-vitro studies.	2 Rhesus 4 Marmosets	10 Rhesus 10 Marmosets	11 Rhesus 5 Marmosets

The majority of the animals were killed humanely at the completion of the studies using Schedule 1 procedures in accordance with the Home Office guidelines. The remainder of animals from which only small blood samples had been taken were returned to their respective breeding colonies. The numbers of procedures involving non-human primates are included in the Dstl annual return to the Home Office.

Osama Bin Laden

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what information he has received on the whereabouts of Osama bin Laden. [174519]

Mr. MacShane: I have been asked to reply.

We have received a number of reports concerning Osama bin Laden. It is the practice of successive governments not to comment on intelligence matters. The Security and Intelligence Agencies are outside the scope of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information (Paragraph 6, Part I). However we and our partners in the campaign against international terrorism will continue to use all means at our disposal to bring Osama bin Laden and other Al Qaeda leaders to justice.

Qinetiq

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the balance of benefits and detriments arising from the sale of QinetiQ. [173858]

Mr. Ingram: In February 2003, the Ministry of Defence sold a minority equity interest in QinetiQ to the Carlyle Group as a first step towards preparing the company for a future flotation on the stock market. QinetiQ's Annual Report and Accounts, due to be published in the next few months, will set out the performance of the company in its first full year under these arrangements. The Ministry of Defence as both owner and principal customer of QinetiQ has benefited from the investment of private sector resource in the company which this public private partnership has enabled.

Sarin Nerve Agent

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the United Kingdom retains quantities of sarin nerve agent for use in prophylactic research purposes. [175176]

Mr. Ingram: The Chemical Weapons Convention prohibits the use of any toxic chemical except for permitted purposes. The United Kingdom, as a state party to this Convention, is permitted to hold an aggregate of up to one tonne of Schedule 1 chemicals (those that pose the highest risk to the Convention) at any one time, for research, medical, pharmaceutical or protective purposes.

As part of this holding, the UK does possess an amount of the chemical sarin, which is used for protective purposes, namely those purposes directly related to protection against toxic chemicals and to protection against chemical weapons, and for research purposes.

Typhoon Programme

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much has been spent to date by the United Kingdom on the Typhoon programme, including the Experimental Aircraft Programme; and what expenditure is planned in each of the next 10 years, in cash terms. [175342]

Mr. Ingram: The United Kingdom Ministry of Defence spend on Typhoon up to 31 March 2004 is some £9 billion. This excludes expenditure on the Experimental Aircraft Programme (EAP), which was a precursor to the Eurofighter programme. These costs are not readily available and I will therefore write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Funding is allocated for in-year expenditure only. Provision for future years' expenditure is made in the annually revised Equipment Plan. In the case of Typhoon, the allocation for equipment acquisition for 2004–05 is £783 million.

UN Operations

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what information he has received on the number of Iraqi civilians killed since the United States coalition forces began their attack on Falluja this month. [167610]

Mr. Ingram: I am aware of a number of organisations who have published their estimates of the numbers of Iraqi civilians killed since coalition operations began.

There is no reliable means of accurately ascertaining numbers of civilian fatalities. It is not always possible to confirm whether fatalities have occurred, as Iraqi injured or dead are sometimes removed from the scene of incidents by their compatriots. The Coalition always

takes great care to minimise the risks to civilians. However, I cannot comment in detail as Fallujah is in the United States' area of operations.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what changes he plans to the number of British Forces in Iraq following the handover of power on 30 June 2004. [169387]

Mr. Hoon: We always keep the size and composition of forces in Iraq under close review. Along with our coalition partners we continue to consider the levels and dispositions of forces that may be appropriate for the period following 30 June. If any decision is taken significantly to alter the British military contribution I will inform the House in the normal way at the earliest opportunity.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women Iraqi prisoners were being held by UK military forces in Iraq on 10 May. [174355]

Mr. Ingram: Data on the number of detainees held by UK forces in Iraq is reported to the Permanent Joint Headquarters three times a week. The Ministry of Defence does not have a figure for the number of detainees held on 10 May 2004. We do have a figure for 11 May 2004 when UK forces held 118 internees. All were male.

HEALTH

Alzheimer's Disease

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what plans he has to increase his Department's budget allocation to genetic research into the causes of Alzheimer's in the current financial year; [173265]

(2) what percentage of his Department's budget has been allocated to genetic research into the causes of Alzheimer's in each year since 2000. [173268]

Dr. Ladyman: The Medical Research Council (MRC) is the largest public funder of biomedical research in the United Kingdom and receives its grant in aid from the Office of Science and Technology. Available figures since 2000 for MRC spend on research into the genetic causes of Alzheimer's disease are shown in the table.

£ million

	Research into the genetic causes of Alzheimer's disease	*Total expenditure*
2002–03	1.8	430
2001–02	1.6	418
2000–01	0.8	370

Source:
Medical Research Council

The MRC does not allocate funds to particular topics. Research proposals in all areas compete for the funding available and awards are made according to their scientific quality and importance to human health.

Ashford Hospital

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the deadline is for concluding contractual negotiations with Capio for the creation of an independent sector treatment centre at Ashford hospital, Middlesex. [175546]

Mr. Hutton: An initial contract was agreed with Capio UK on 13 May for the group of independent sector treatment centres called "the spine chain". However, because of a number of technical issues it was agreed with national health service sponsors and the strategic health authority that, to avoid delay for the majority of the chain, West Surrey would not be included in that contract. It has been agreed that a further period of up to 120 days will be allowed to enable the contract discussions to reach conclusion. We are hopeful of agreement within that period, and that if reached quickly, it shall not have an impact on the opening date of the treatment centre at Ashford, which is still expected to open by April 2005.

Bowel Cancer Screening

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will reduce the waiting time from four to two weeks for bowel cancer screening for symptomatic patients, as recommended in the pilot report of the first bowel cancer screening programme. [173835]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The final report of the evaluation of first phase of the United Kingdom colorectal cancer screening pilot, published in May 2003, stated that, ideally, waiting times for symptomatic patients should be reduced to two to four weeks before commencement of screening. This, along with other recommendations of the report, is being taken into account as we develop a national screening programme for bowel cancer and improve symptomatic services as part of the national health service bowel cancer programme.

Breastfeeding

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to develop a breastfeeding strategy. [174623]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Government do not currently have any plans to develop a breastfeeding strategy. We have a commitment in the NHS Plan to increase support for breastfeeding and we have set a target in the Priorities and Planning Framework (2003–06) to increase breastfeeding initiation rates by two percentage points, focusing particularly on women from disadvantaged groups. The Commission for Health Improvement has set an indicator, which will look at progress towards meeting the target.

Bronzefield Prison

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the expected cost is to the North Surrey Primary Care Trust of providing health services to Bronzefield Prison, Ashford, Middlesex during 2004–05; and what additional funds are being made available. [175549]

Ms Rosie Winterton: When Her Majesty's Prison Bronzefield opens in June 2004, primary health care will be provided by the contractors, UKDS.

Within the framework set out in the NHS Plan and the "Shifting the Balance of Power" initiative, decisions about funding for local health services are made by primary care trusts in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders.

Clinical Trials

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to review the parameters used for clinical trials. [172793]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Government's policy is to foster scientific innovation and strengthen the evidence base for modern health care in partnership with universities, charities and industry. High quality clinical trials are an important means of testing pharmaceutical and other innovations. Through the new clinical research collaboration announced by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health in March, the Government aim to increase opportunities for people to take part in clinical research. There is now a legal framework across the European Union to ensure that clinical trials with medicines are conducted to internationally agreed principles and standards of safety.

The randomised controlled trial is one of a range of research techniques that generate benefits for patients and users of health and social care. As a research funder the Department takes independent expert advice on the design and methods that are most appropriate for a particular question. Accordingly, research supported by the Department has covered the full range of qualitative and quantitative, randomised and non-randomised research methodologies.

The national health service research and development methodology programme promotes the identification, development and use of appropriate research methods so that health and social care can be built on the best possible evidence base. Publications from this programme have included reports on the following areas of particular relevance to the question:

Evaluating non-randomised intervention studies (2003).

Can randomised trials rely on existing electronic data? A feasibility study to explore the value of routine data in health technology assessment (2003).

Using routine data to complement and enhance the results of randomised controlled trials (2000).

These documents are available from the health technology assessment programme website at www.hta.nhsweb.nhs.uk. Details of the methodology programme are available at www.publichealth.bham.ac.uk/nccrm/index.htm.

Dentistry

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the number of dentists in England. [175220]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There were 23,229 national health service dentists in September 2003, an increase of 3,249 dentists since September 1996. This includes dentists working in the general dental service, personal dental service, community dental service, and the hospital and community dental service.

Mr. John Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to introduce free dental care for persons in receipt of incapacity benefit. [174994]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* We have no plans to do so. It is departmental policy to offer help with health costs based on a person's income, for example, to those receiving income support. As incapacity benefit is not income-based, it will not entitle a person to free dental care automatically, but recipients may be entitled to help by making a claim under the national health service low income scheme.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists ceased providing treatment for patients on the NHS in each year since 1997, broken down by month; and if he will make a statement. [173558]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of dentists leaving the general dental service (GDS) or personal dental service (PDS) is shown in the tables for England and Wales in each year since 1997, broken down by month. Leavers count dentists in their first month of absence. The number of entrants is also provided.

The number of dentists in the national health service is increasing; in all years since 1997, there have been more dentists entering the NHS than leaving.

Dentists can leave the NHS for a variety of reasons. These include retirements, short-term absence, leaving for other employment as well as dentists leaving the NHS dental services to practise wholly privately.

Number of dentists leaving and joining the GDS or PDS in England and Wales broken by month

	1997		1998		1999		2000	
	Leavers	Entrants	Leavers	Entrants	Leavers	Entrants	Leavers	Entrants
January	87	142	93	144	119	141	102	131
February	87	104	91	135	103	139	98	156
March	72	68	98	100	95	99	103	118
April	151	83	109	77	114	95	134	90
May	98	71	90	77	98	95	107	93
June	98	88	89	83	78	78	121	72
July	77	110	81	124	87	111	120	136
August	151	568	188	651	193	694	191	656
September	146	157	188	191	203	177	231	189
October	105	100	97	175	125	153	146	198
November	86	98	91	106	122	128	120	108
December	78	63	78	69	88	74	106	69
Total	1,236	1,652	1,293	1,932	1,425	1,984	1,579	2,016

	2001		2002		2003		2004	
	Leavers	*Entrants*	*Leavers*	*Entrants*	*Leavers*	*Entrants*	*Leavers*	*Entrants*
January	132	160	134	140	141	129	117	125
February	116	153	128	100	109	101	89	102
March	95	112	104	107	106	119	110	96
April	131	134	126	127	117	79	—	—
May	92	81	93	87	114	89	—	—
June	90	87	138	82	112	150	—	—
July	102	142	114	156	225	631	—	—
August	260	722	292	618	209	200	—	—
September	216	175	215	187	125	106	—	—
October	140	135	133	129	127	107	—	—
November	119	126	114	107	94	82	—	—
December	104	63	83	61	151	156	—	—
Total	1,597	2,090	1,674	1,901	1,630	1,949	316	323

Notes:
1. The figures will include a large number of dentists who have had very short breaks in contracts as leavers and entrants, perhaps many times over the period.
2. These figures do not cover other NHS dental services, for example, community dental services and hospital dental services, for which information is not collected centrally.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans his Department has to recruit dentists from abroad; and if he will make a statement. [174480]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We are exploring several options for recruitment of dentists from abroad, including building on our established links with European Union countries and we also expect applications from dentists in the new EU accession states. We are developing a comprehensive dental workforce action plan and will be in a position to provide further information in due course.

Drug Rehabilitation

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action he is taking to reduce waiting times for drug rehabilitation treatment in Chorley; what the budget is for the drug action team in Chorley; how many people have been seen by the drug action team in each of the last three years; and what his latest estimate is of waiting times for drug rehabilitation treatment in Lancashire. [165394]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not available centrally as Chorley is only one of the constituent parts of the Lancashire drug action team (DAT). There were 2,874 people receiving drug treatment in Lancashire in 2000–01. This is the latest available data. Information on waiting times at DAT level is not currently available, but the National Treatment Agency's programme to reduce waiting times has successfully achieved falls in waiting times across the country. The latest average waiting time reported for residential rehabilitation is four weeks.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in Bootle are receiving drug treatment. [175911]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Bootle is part of Sefton drug action team (DAT). There were 396 people receiving drug treatment in Bootle in 2000–01. This is the latest available data. Data broken down by DAT for 2001–02 and 2002–03 has not yet been finalised and published.

Eye Tests (Blackpool, South)

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many residents of Blackpool, South aged over 60 years have benefited from the abolition of charges for eye tests. [173071]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data for the number of sight tests by constituency or by the number of senior citizens is not collected centrally.

The total number of sight tests paid for by Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority in the year 2002–03 for those aged 60 and over was 189,100.

The total number of eligible for a free eye test for those aged 60 and over was 429,300. Sight tests cannot be equated to the number of patients.

Source:

Department of Health Statistics.

Health Services

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time for eye operations in Liverpool was in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [166948]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

In-patients waiting time, waiting list and booked cases combined median waiting time in days for selected primary operations by selected trust in national health service hospitals in England 1997–98 and 2002–03—Eye Operations (C01-C86 OPCS 4R)

	Finished in-year admissions	*Mean*	*Median*
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust			
1997–98	2,080	38	25
2002–03	2,824	102	68
Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen Hospital NHS Trust			
1997–98	5,156	106	61
2002–03	4,555	137	81

Notes:
1. Time waited statistics from hospital episode statistics (HES) are not the same as the published waiting list statistics. HES provides counts and time waited for all patients admitted to hospital within a given period whereas the published waiting list statistics count

those waiting for treatment on a specific date and how long they have been on the waiting list. Also, HES calculates the time waited as the difference between the admission and decision to admit dates. Unlike published waiting list statistics, this is not adjusted for self-deferrals or periods of medical/social suspension.

2. The main operation is the first recorded operation in the HES data set and is usually the most resource intensive procedure performed during the episode. It is appropriate to use main operation when looking at admission details e.g. time waited, but the figures for "all operations count of episodes" give a more complete count of episodes with an operation.

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes there have been in NHS waiting list times for the residents of *(a)* Manchester, Blackley and *(b)* the City of Manchester in the last seven years. [175011]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not collected on a constituency basis but at national health service trust level. Data for the relevant NHS trusts is shown in the table.

Patients waiting for elective in-patient admission

			Patients waiting for admission by months waiting						
Month-end		*Total number of patients waiting for admission*	*Less than 3 months*	*3–5 months*	*6–8 months*	*9–11 months*	*12–14 months*	*15–17 months*	*18+ months*
March 1997	Central Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	12,313	5,778	2,622	1,920	1,223	616	133	21
March 1997	Manchester Children's Hospitals NHS Trust	2,801	952	728	528	510	79	4	—
March 1998	Central Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	12,531	5,813	2,454	1,676	1,217	885	486	—
March 1998	Manchester Children's Hospitals NHS Trust	3,260	985	908	617	666	74	10	—
March 1999	Central Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	11,266	5,654	2,191	1,614	975	622	210	—
March 1999	Manchester Children's Hospitals NHS Trust	2,742	849	753	542	472	118	8	—
March 2000	Central Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	11,040	5,026	2,489	1,703	1,039	533	250	—
March 2000	Manchester Children's Hospitals NHS Trust	2,639	801	687	523	370	218	40	—
March 2001	Central Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	10,742	5,056	2,432	1,451	826	606	371	—
March 2001	Manchester Children's Hospitals NHS Trust	2,634	831	603	552	373	231	44	—
March 2002	Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust	13,213	6,028	3,333	2,136	1,216	500	—	—
March 2003	Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust	10,822	5,605	2,832	1,701	684	61	0	0
February 2004	Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust	9,176	6,487	2,316	373	—	—	—	—

Source:
DH form KH07 and Monthly Monitoring

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many NHS patients waited for more than six months for operations within Nottinghamshire health authorities areas in each year since 1997; [173522]

(2) how many NHS patients waited more than nine months for operations within Nottinghamshire health authority areas in each year since 1997. [173551]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is shown in the table.

Health authorities (HAs) of treatment—North Nottinghamshire HA and Nottingham HA. Method of admission—elective (waiting list and booked cases). Counts of finished in-year admission episodes with and operation by time waited grouping national health service hospitals, England 1998–99 to 2002–03[1]

	North Nottinghamshire HA			*Nottingham HA*		
	0 to 6 months	*6 to 9 months*	*more than 9 months*	*0 to 6 months*	*6 to 9 months*	*more than 9 months*
1997–98	21,356	2,486	2,089	54,469	3,713	6,145
1998–99	22,470	2,320	2,507	56,961	3,573	5,701
1999–2000	21,666	1,871	1,784	54,750	2,630	4,614
2000–01	18,949	1,899	2,008	43,361	2,648	5,202
2001–02	11,094	1,159	2,120	42,490	3,116	4,308
2002–03[1]	10,469	1,298	2,993	42,060	4,524	5,022

[1] 2002–03 figures based on 2001–02 HAs.

Notes:
1. A finished in-year admission is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider, excluding admissions beginning before 1 April at the start of the data-year. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
2. All operations count of episodes—these figures represent a count of all finished consultant episodes—a procedure was mentioned in any of the 12 (four prior to 2002–03) operation fields in a HES record. A record is included only once in each count, even if an operation is mentioned in more than one operation field of the record.
3. Time waited statistics from hospital episode statistics (HES) are not the same as the published waiting list statistics. HES provides counts and time waited for all patients admitted to hospital within a given period, whereas the published waiting list statistics count those waiting for treatment on a specific date and how long they have been on the waiting list. Also, HES calculates the time waited as the difference between the admission and decision to admit dates. Unlike published waiting list statistics, this is not adjusted for self-deferrals or periods of medical/social suspension.
4. Figures are grossed for both coverage and missing/invalid clinical data, except for 2001–02 and 2002–03, which are not yet adjusted for shortfalls.
Source:
HES, Department of Health.

Missed Appointments

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients failed to attend *(a)* hospital appointments and *(b)* general practitioner appointments in Chorley in each year since 2000; and what the estimated cost of missed appointments was in each case in each year. [173854]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data on the number of missed general practitioner appointments and the estimated cost of missed appointments are not collected by the Department.

The number of consultant out-patient missed appointments for national health service organisations serving the Chorley constituency are shown in the table.

	NHS trust	*Total attendances: seen*	*did not attend*
2000–01	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	102,526	13,656
2000–01	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	222,707	25,698
2001–02	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust[1]	318,370	38,709

[1] The Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust was merged with the Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust on 1 August 2002 to form the Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust.
Source:
Department of Health dataset KH09.

National Programme for IT

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what timescale his Department has set for the implementation of the national programme for IT in general practice. [160664]

Mr. Hutton: The concept of national health service national care records service and the national programme is to provide integrated clinical information systems across the whole care continuum. Support for delivery of care by general practitioners and other primary care practitioners is an integral part of the programme.

There are some specific systems relevant to GP practices and the general medical services payments project. They cover payments for practices and primary care information management systems and are currently being tested for conformance to standards and operation with existing GP systems. Once the technical testing has been successfully completed, a programme to roll out the new systems will begin from September 2004, with guidance, training and support being delivered alongside.

As stated in our policy document, "Delivering 21st Century IT Support for the NHS", published in June 2002, the programme will be implemented in phases, with phase one—the national bookings service, the national prescriptions service, and the NHS care record service—to be implemented by the end of 2005. Phase two covers implementation by 2008, to include a richer NHS care record service, with core data and reference links to local electronic patient record systems for full record access.

An additional third phase is planned for implementation between 2008 and 2010 to provide ambulance telemonitoring implemented in all emergency response vehicles, home telemonitoring in all homes requiring it, and a unified health record that includes all appropriate social care information.

There will be full implementation of person-based electronic health records, as set out in "Information for Health", published in 1998. The national programme will be building on this to create substantial additional functionality in the period up to 2010.

NHS Costs

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the latest estimated annual costs incurred by the NHS as the result of *(a)* alcohol, *(b)* tobacco and *(c)* other drug use are. [172740]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The estimated annual cost of alcohol misuse to the national health service is around £1.6 billion in England.

The latest figures available indicate that smoking costs the NHS up to £1.7 billion a year in England.

Information on the total cost of drug misuse to the NHS is not available. However, in 2003–04, the Government's pooled budget totalled £243.6 million for the treatment of drug misusers. It is estimated that a further £200 million of mainstream funds was spent on the treatment of drug misuse.

Patient Involvement Activity

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list for each year since 1997 the amount of money spent on *(a)* community health councils, *(b)* the

Commission for Public Patient Involvement, *(c)* patients forums, *(d)* the Independent Complaint and Advocacy services and *(e)* other patient involvement activity. [172701]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table. The data relating to the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health (CPPIH) and patients' forums is shown as a single amount because there is no separate budget for patients' forums and the CPPIH is responsible for allocating funds to them. It is not possible to quantify how much is being spent on other patient involvement activities as these are primarily undertaken by and funded by the national health service locally.

£ million

	Community Health Councils	*CPPIH and patients' forums*	*Independent Complaints Advocacy Services*
1997–98	22.561	n/a	n/a
1998–99	22.561	n/a	n/a
1999–2000	23	n/a	n/a
2000–01	23	n/a	n/a
2001–02	23	n/a	n/a
2002–03	23	3.27	n/a
2003–04	15	30.192	4.4

Public Bodies

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation intends to republish its Green Book; and whether it will be made available online. [175333]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Work on the new edition of the "Green Book" is being actively undertaken at present and as each chapter is completed and agreed by the joint committee on vaccination and immunisation it will be put on the web. These chapters are water-marked 'Draft', as they will be subject to sub-editorial changes when they are published as a complete volume.

The current work involves a complete re-drafting of all of the contents. When all of the chapters and the final editing is completed, the book will be issued in hard copy form. We are aiming to publish the new edition by the end of the year.

The draft chapters now available can be found on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/greenbook.

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent on the Patient Information Advisory Group in the last financial year for which figures are available; how many times a year this group is scheduled to meet; and when it last met. [175264]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The patient information advisory group spent £150,000 in 2003–04. The group is scheduled to meet four times a year, but has flexibility to meet more frequently if required. The group last met on 28 April 2004.

Sativex

Mr. Godsiff: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when Sativex will be licensed; and what restrictions will be placed on its prescription. [172788]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) will grant a licence for Sativex only when satisfactory data have been provided to demonstrate that the product is efficacious, safe and of adequate quality for its intended use.

In accordance with the Government's undertaking given in 1998 to the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee, the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001 would be amended to permit Sativex to be prescribed by doctors, if it is successful in gaining a marketing authorisation from the MHRA.

The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs has recommended that if Sativex is authorised, it should be placed in Schedule 4 Part I of these regulations. It would also attract prescription-only-medicine status, but the scheduling would impose no additional restriction upon prescribing. If authorised, manufacturers and wholesalers would be required to be licensed to produce and supply the product, and would have to comply with the regulatory requirements on record keeping and destruction.

TREASURY

Gun Trafficking

Ms Abbott: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the level of priority given to gun trafficking by HM Customs. [175542]

John Healey: In the Government's response to the All Party Parliamentary Group's report, "Combating the Threat of Gun Violence", published in March, we said that HM Customs and Excise's prioritisation would be addressed as part of a joint action plan. Customs deploy their resources on the basis of risk assessment driven by intelligence, which maximises their impact in enforcing a range of prohibitions and restrictions, including those relating to firearms. They respond to all specific intelligence on firearms. Strategic threat assessments produced by NCIS and Customs will inform future action. Meanwhile Customs are working with NCIS and other partners in the ACPO Strategic Criminal Use of Firearms Group to improve intelligence gathering and assessment and to contribute to activity under the joint action plan.

Stroke Deaths

Andy King: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many deaths occurred in the last year due to stroke in *(a)* Rugby and Kenilworth and *(b)* England; [174962]

(2) how many deaths occurred in the last year due to peripheral vascular disease in *(a)* Rugby and Kenilworth and *(b)* England. [174964]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from John Pullinger to Mr. Andy King, dated 26 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent questions concerning the number of deaths due to peripheral vascular disease and stroke in the last year in *(a)* Rugby and Kenilworth and *(b)* England. I am replying in his absence. (174964, 174962)

The latest year for which figures are available is 2002. Figures in the attached table are provided for the local authorities of Rugby and Warwick. The parliamentary constituency of Rugby and Kenilworth contains the whole of Rugby local authority and part of Warwick local authority. To protect against the release of potentially disclosive information, figures have not been provided for the constituency as its electoral ward boundaries are not coterminous with the local authority boundaries.

Cause of death has been defined using the International Classification of Diseases. Within this there is a clearly agreed definition of stroke deaths but not of peripheral vascular disease. Following medical advice, the numbers provided in the table below are for all deaths from diseases of arteries, arterioles and capillaries, excluding thoracic aortic aneurysms.

Deaths from diseases of arteries, arterioles and capillaries, and from stroke[1]: England, and Rugby and Warwick local authorities[2], 2002–03

Number of deaths

Area	*Diseases of arteries, arterioles and capillaries*	*Stroke*
England	11,806	55,239
Rugby	19	88
Warwick	41	152

[1] The cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10).
[2] Usual residents of these areas.
[3] Deaths in the calendar year 2002.
The codes used were as follows:
ICD-10 170–178—Diseases of arteries, arterioles and capillaries:
170—Atherosclerosis
171—Aortic aneurysm and dissection, excluding:
171.1—Thoracic aortic aneurysm, ruptured
171.2—Thoracic aortic aneurysm, without mention of rupture
172—Other aneurysm
173—Other peripheral vascular diseases
174—Arterial embolism and thrombosis
177—Other disorders of arteries and arterioles
178—Diseases of capillaries
ICD-10160–169—Cerebrovascular disease (Stroke).

Airport Tax

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much airport tax was raised by passengers using Northern Ireland's three main airports in the latest financial year for which figures are available. [175855]

John Healey: The information is not available in the format requested. Revenue figures for air passenger duty are collected for the UK as a whole and are not broken down by devolved country or region. Air passenger duty revenue figures can be found in table 2.1 D of "Financial Statistics", published by the Office for National Statistics.

Bribery

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps the Inland Revenue has taken to identify economic sectors with a high incidence of trading with developing countries in which there would be an increased risk of companies seeking tax relief on illegal payments. [175939]

Dawn Primarolo: The UK does not allow tax relief for bribes. These payments are most likely to be distinguished in the profit and loss account as fees, commissions and entertaining, and therefore, would come to light through local initiatives looking at companies with large fees and commission entries plus evidence of business with countries where bribery can occur.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether overseas bribery is one of the risk factors taken into account when the Inland Revenue considers which tax returns to examine in detail. [175940]

Dawn Primarolo: For obvious reasons, the Inland Revenue does not publicise its risk assessment criteria.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps the Inland Revenue has taken to ensure that *(a)* UK companies do not claim bribes paid overseas as tax deductible and *(b)* its staff are trained to detect bribes paid overseas in UK company tax returns. [175941]

Dawn Primarolo: The UK does not allow tax relief for bribes. Claims to bribes would be detected as part of our normal risk assessment programme. The legislation covering non-deductibility of illegal payments is at section 577A of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act. Training on detection of bribes paid overseas by UK companies is included in the Inland Revenue's basic training for new tax inspectors and in the programme of technical updates for existing inspectors. In addition, extensive guidance is available in the "Business Income Manual", together with instructions for submitting suspect cases to Revenue Policy, Business Tax for advice.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many instances of overseas bribery the Inland Revenue has detected since February 2002; and what action it has taken. [175942]

Dawn Primarolo: Section 577A of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 disallows the deduction of any payment, the making of which would constitute the commission of a criminal offence in the UK. If the payment is made outside the UK, it is also disallowed if the same payment made in the UK would have been a criminal offence.

Where a claim for such expenditure is discovered, the amount would be added back in the tax computation and the additional tax would be recovered together with interest and penalties where due.

The Inland Revenue, as with many classes of expenditure, does not keep central records of expenditure disallowed under this provision.

Correspondence

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he expects a reply to be made to the letter to the Economic Secretary to the Treasury, dated 6 April 2004, from the hon. Member for Banff and Buchan, regarding import tax and antiques. [176135]

John Healey: I replied to the hon. Member on 14 May 2004.

E-Government

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many management consultants have been employed on the Inland Revenue e-Government programme; from what dates they were employed; and what the cost to the Inland Revenue of the consultants has been to date. [174028]

Dawn Primarolo: Consultants have been employed for varying periods since the formal establishment of the Inland Revenue 'e' services programme in April 2001 to bring in specialist skills in 'e' as well as for the strategic development and management of its programme. There are now 39 consultants employed on either a part-time or full-time basis.

The estimated cost of consultants to date is £13.5million.

Head Teachers

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his Budget Statement of 17 March 2004, if he will make a statement regarding the 2005–06 payment to headteachers of secondary schools and its relationship to planned increases in Schools Standard Grant and Devolved Formula. [174628]

Ruth Kelly: In his Budget statement, the Chancellor said that in 2005–06, heads would receive direct payments that sum to £55,000 for a typical primary and £180,000 for a typical secondary school. These totals are the combination of the School Standards Grant and Devolved Formula Capital. The Chancellor also announced that, in the UK, we will be spending on education an additional £8.5 billion in 2007–08 compared to 2005–06.

Income Tax (Pensioners)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of pensioners aged over 80 years pay income tax. [175230]

Dawn Primarolo: Around 32 per cent. of pensioners aged over 80 years pay income tax. This estimate is based upon the 2001–02 Survey of Personal Incomes and ONS 2001 and 2002 mid year population estimates.

Museums

Jim Knight: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will extend the VAT Refund Scheme to include private museums that hold national designated collections, for the purpose of recovering VAT on expenditure incurred in National Lottery-funded projects. [174972]

John Healey: Like any other business, private museums can recover VAT incurred on buying goods and services providing those purchases relate to their taxable business activities. This would be the case where a museum is providing museum entry where admission charges are taxable at the standard rate of VAT.

Under the normal VAT rules provided for in the European Sixth VAT Directive, VAT incurred on goods and services relating to non-business activities, such as providing free entry to museums, cannot be recovered. This is also the case where VAT is incurred on exempt business activities, such as providing museum entry where no VAT is applied to admission charges under the VAT exemption for cultural bodies. The source of such an organisation's funding cannot be used to determine its VAT position.

However, since September 2001, the Government have provided a refund scheme that allows the main national museums and galleries which do not charge for admission to recover VAT they incur on related purchases. This scheme removes the obstacle VAT was creating to the delivery of our 1997 manifesto commitment that there should be free access to the main national museums and galleries.

That commitment has been an outstanding success. In this year's Budget, the Chancellor announced that, building on that success and on the recommendation of the Goodison Review, we are considering in the context of the forthcoming Spending Review extending the free access commitment for the main national museums and galleries, and the VAT refund scheme that has helped to deliver it, to university museums.

For bodies in receipt of National Lottery funding, irrecoverable VAT can be included as eligible project expenditure for lottery support. By funding this cost, the Heritage Lottery Fund's grant assessment process ensures that lottery-funded projects are not disadvantaged if they incur VAT on their expenditure. Any VAT recovered under a refund scheme should, therefore, be excluded from any grant awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Payroll Adjustments

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the *(a)* upward and *(b)* downward payroll adjustments an employer may have to make as a result of the policies of his Department. [175178]

Dawn Primarolo: All employers have to run a payroll to ensure their employees receive the right amount of wages or salary. It might require upwards or downwards adjustment to reflect changes to an employee's Pay As You Earn (PAYE) tax codes, National Insurance Contributions or working tax credit.

Portable Appliance Testing

Mr. Flight: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how often his Department and its associated public bodies undergo portable appliance testing; and what the cost of testing is. [175979]

Ruth Kelly: Portable appliance testing is carried out in my Departments and agencies on the basis of regular programmes in accordance with guidelines issued by the Health and Safety Executive. For HM Treasury, Customs and Excise, Inland Revenue, the Valuation Office and the Office for National Statistics, the costs of testing fall within the building management charges and are not separately available. For the other Departments, the total combined approximate annual cost is £20,000.

Science and Innovation Committee

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the membership of the cross-departmental committee on the 10-year investment framework on science and innovation is; on what dates it has met; if he will publish the minutes of the meetings; and if he will make a statement. [173554]

John Healey: The development of a 10-year investment framework for science and innovation is overseen by a Ministerial Committee chaired by the Chief Secretary to the

Treasury and attended by Lord Sainsbury, Minister for Science and Innovation, and Alan Johnson, Minister for Higher Education. The Director General of the Research Councils, the Government's Chief Scientific Adviser and senior officials also attend. This group met on 10 March, and is meeting again on 20 May. An official-level group supports the ministerial group and has met on three occasions so far. Representatives at both official and ministerial level on both groups are also members of other committees with overlapping policy interests.

Minutes of the ministerial meeting constitute internal discussion and advice and are therefore not published: Exemption 2 of the Open Government Code applies. However, the conclusions of these meetings will be reflected in the Government's science and innovation investment framework document, which will be published alongside the Spending Review this summer.

Secondments

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many staff in his Department and its agencies were seconded from the *(a)* private and *(b)* academic sector in each of the last three years. [174818]

Ruth Kelly: The following table provides the number of people identified through central records that have been seconded into the Chancellor's Department and agencies from the private and academic sectors during each of the last three financial years.

	2001–02		*2002–03*		*2003–04*	
	Private	*Academic*	*Private*	*Academic*	*Private*	*Academic*
HM Treasury	1	1	5	0	8	0
Inland Revenue	11	0	8	0	3	1
Customs and Excise	1	0	1	0	0	0
Royal Mint	0	0	1	0	1	0
Valuation Office	0	0	0	0	0	0
Debt Management Office	0	0	0	0	0	0
National Savings and Investments	3	0	3	0	0	0
Office of National Statistics	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
Government Actuaries Department	0	0	0	0	0	0
Office of Government Commerce	0	0	2	0	3	0
Office of Government Commerce Buying Solutions	0	0	0	0	1	0

[1] The ONS do not distinguish its inward secondees by private and academic sectors and cannot provide this information.

Sickness Absence

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many days' sick leave were taken by employees of *(a)* Customs and Excise and *(b)* the Inland Revenue in each year since 2000; and what the estimated cost was in each year. [165423]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 20 April 2004]:* The information is as follows:

(a) The number of sickness absence days taken by employees of Customs and Excise since 2000 are:

Calendar year	*Average working days sickness absence per staff year*
2000	9.0
2001	8.7
2002	9.0

(b) The number of sickness absence days taken by employees of the Inland Revenue since 2000 are:

Calendar year	*Average working days sickness absence per staff*
2000	10.9
2001	9.5
2002	10.5

Reliable information on the cost of sickness absence is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. Statistical information for 2003 has not yet been published. Sickness absence targets for Customs and Excise and the Inland Revenue are reported in the relevant Departmental and Annual Reports. Both Departments are currently reviewing their sickness absence management policies.

Tax Rates

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much was raised in *(a)* business rates, *(b)* corporation tax and *(c)* taxation from (i) the renewable sector, (ii) the creative arts sector, (iii) the financial sector and (iv) research companies in each of the last five years. [174872]

Dawn Primarolo: The information on business rates and total taxation for the four sectors specified in the question is not available.

Corporation Tax figures for the financial sector are available at www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/corporate_tax (Table 11.7). Figures for earlier years are published in "Inland Revenue Statistics 2000". The figures include companies classified as banking, finance and insurance.

It is not possible to separately identify the creative arts sector for Corporation Tax purposes. However, figures for 'recreational services', which include certain creative arts companies, are given in the following table.

Recreational services

	Corporation tax payable (£ million)
1997–98	360
1998–99	375
1999–2000	354
2000–01	314
2001–02	317

It is not possible to separately identify companies in the renewable sector nor research companies from central Corporation Tax records.

Teenage Pregnancy

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many conceptions there were for women aged between 11 and 19 years since 2000 in the Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Avon Strategic Health Authority, broken down by age. [176120]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. David Drew, dated 26 May 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question on conceptions. (176120)

The information you requested on conceptions was given in answer to a recent question from David Amess MP, which appears in the Official Report of Monday 24 May, No. 91, Column 1201W–1208W.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Adult Disadvantages

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will re-calculate the figures on adult disadvantages set out in the answer of 20 March 2003, *Official Report*, column 911W, to include retirement on 31 December 2003. [174026]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not currently available. We expect the information to be available in June and when it is, I will arrange for it to be placed in the Library.

Benefits (Blackpool, North and Fleetwood)

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood have gained work through the New Deal programmes. [175889]

Jane Kennedy: 490 lone parents in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood have gained work through the New Deal for Lone Parents since the start of the programme in October 1998. Figures for lone parents who have gained work through other New Deal Programmes are not available.

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many senior citizens in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood have benefited from the winter fuel allowance since 1997. [175893]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of senior citizens in the Blackpool, North and Walton constituency who received a winter fuel payment in each year since 1999–2000 (including provisional figures for 2003–04) is in the table. Information relating to the 1997–98 and 1998–99 winters is not available.

	Payments made
1999–2000	23,075
2000–01	25,235
2001–02	25,440
2002–03	25,565
2003–04	25,610

Notes:
1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest 5.
2. Please note that the figures for 2003–2004 refer only to the main payment run i.e. they do not include the late payment run figures. We estimate that there are approximately 100,000 people in Great Britain paid via late payment runs (0.8 per cent. of all payments). However, since late payment runs are mainly in respect of non-system cases whose claim had not been received by Qualifying Week, they are heavily skewed towards men aged 60.

Source:
IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. samples.

Careers Guidance

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how he will ensure that adults in *(a)* temporary work and *(b)* work where their skills are under-utilised will be able to access expert advice and guidance in order to improve their employability. [175849]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I have been asked to reply.

All adults aged 20 and over, including those in temporary work and work where their skills are under utilised, have access to impartial information and advice about learning and work, quality assured to the matrix Standard. In August 2004, the Learning and Skills Council will launch an integrated Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) service giving easy access to a consistent range of national and local information and advice services aimed at helping individuals to improve their employability.

Correspondence

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) if he will take steps to cease the practice in his Department of sending correspondence without a clearly identifiable signature of the sender; [167189]

(2) what his Department's policy is on the signing of documents, including correspondence, in the name of a person by a third party who does not make his or her position clear. [167190]

Jane Kennedy: Current procedure on correspondence in the Department of Work and Pensions is that our staff are required to use either their full name or their title and surname (with initial if preferred). All details given should be legible.

In some circumstances, so as not to compromise safety, managers may decide that it is appropriate for staff to sign off their letters with the name of their manager and section, or office manager and section. Managers may also approve the use of an office name where they deem it fitting. Such measures are subject to a suitable system being in place to enable the author of the letter to be identified where needed.

We are currently working to improve the general quality of our correspondence in DWP. Much of this correspondence is computer generated, rather than

produced and signed by an individual. The key issue in both cases is that the customer is provided with a contact for further inquiries.

I have asked officials to look at current practice in the Department and to bring guidance to the attention of all staff who write to customers.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he will reply to the letter to him from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 21 April with regard to Mr. G. Forde. [175615]

Mr. Andrew Smith: I replied to my right hon. Friend on 18 May.

Health and Safety

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he has received the report of the Health and Safety Commission on the effectiveness of the current strategy to promote directors' responsibility for health and safety, the success of the voluntary approach and the need for further legislation; and if he will make a statement. [174143]

Jane Kennedy: Ministers received the Health and Safety Commission's report in January on the effectiveness of the current strategy to promote directors' responsibility for health and safety, the success of the voluntary approach and the need for further legislation. Ministers accepted the Commission's view that the current voluntary approach is working, that further legislation is not needed at the moment but that this would be kept under review.

Identity Theft

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he is taking to reduce identity theft in areas within the remit of his Department and its agencies. [173053]

Mr. Pond: Our overall aim is to always establish the correct identity of a person prior to providing a benefit or service. We are committed to ensuring that National Insurance Numbers are issued, used and controlled correctly and we will continue to develop and implement strategies that enable us to achieve this.

We have established a secure system for the allocation of National Insurance Numbers to adults, conducting rigorous checks to ensure that adult National Insurance Numbers are only issued to those who had undergone an evidence of identity interview.

We closely monitor 15 million inactive accounts for deceased persons and any attempt to activate one of these accounts will be investigated.

We are also working with the Home Office ID card project to ensure that full and appropriate use is made of ID cards, when available, in accessing DWP systems.

National Insurance

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the expenditure on national insurance rebates for those contracted out of SERPS or the second state pension in each year from 1996–97 to 2005–06. [175108]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is in the table.

Tax year	*Estimated rebate cost (£ billion)*
1996–97	6.9
1997–98	7.6
1998–99	7.8
1999–2000	8.3
2000–01	9.1
2001–02	9.5
2002–03	11.1
2003–04	11.5
2004–05	11.9
2005–06	11.9

Note:
Figures are for Great Britain and are in cash terms except for 2005–06 which is in 2004–05 prices. They are consistent with the long-term Public Expenditure Survey undertaken in February 2004.

Source:
Government Actuary's Department

Pension Credit

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the number of *(a)* pensioner households and *(b)* individual pensioners eligible for pension credit (i) this year and (ii) in each of the next 10 years. [175109]

Malcolm Wicks: Estimates of the numbers of people eligible for pension credit, based on data from the Family Resources Survey for 2002–03, will be available early in June. The information will be placed in the Library.

Pensioner Poverty

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what total Government financial support to the poorest 10 per cent. of pensioners was in each of the last 30 years, expressed at today's prices. [175014]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available in the format requested as information on spending on pensioners by decile directly is not recorded.

However latest Households Below Average Income (HBAI) figures show that we have made good progress in tackling pensioner poverty. Two thirds fewer pensioners—1.8 million older people—were in absolute low income in 2002–03 compared with 1996–97.

Our strategy is to seek to maintain and support the major contribution made by the private pension sector in enabling pensioners to share in increased economic well being, and to target state resources on improving the position of the poorest relative to rising national prosperity. Since the introduction of pension credit the poorest third of pensioner households will be £1,750 a year (£33 per week) better off in 2004–05, compared with the 1997 system.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much the poorest third of pensioners received in each year since 1998; and what that sum would have been in each year had the State Pension been linked to earnings. [175131]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available in the format requested.

In 1997–98, pensioners in the lowest third of the pensioner income distribution received an average of £102.12 per week in state benefits. In 2002–03 they received an average of £134.38.

Including private income, these pensioners received £104.81 in 1997–98, £139.73 in 2002–03.

If the basic State Pension had been linked to earnings since April 1998, on top of policies introduced since 1997 (including pension credit), these pensioners would have received an extra £2.10 a week overall on average in 2003–04. If the earnings link had been in place instead of the policies that were in fact introduced they would have lost on average £22.90.

All figures are in cash terms.

Seasonal Fruit Pickers

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what monitoring takes place to ensure the health and safety of seasonal fruit pickers. [175443]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* Seasonal fruit pickers may be exposed to a range of hazards at fruit and vegetable production and packing sites including: transport; machinery; manual handling; noise; slips, trips and falls; and dermatitis. These hazards are common to full and part time workers, including casual or seasonal workers. Health and safety law applies equally to all employees.

Inspectors from HSE's Field Operations Directorate monitor health and safety in agriculture in line with HSE's Agriculture Sector Strategic Programme. Informed by local knowledge and intelligence this is discharged in practice by a range of inspection activities including planned, targeted preventive (proactive) inspection, health and safety blitzes, projects targeted at specific sectors or topics, and the investigation of reported accidents and complaints.

Spelthorne Borough Council

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much administration grant was paid to Spelthorne borough council in 2003–04 to cover the cost of operating the council tax benefit scheme; and what proportion of the council's costs this grant covered. [175547]

Mr. Pond: Spelthorne borough council was paid £144,762 specifically for council tax benefit administration costs in 2003–04. However, this does not include the extra funding for administering this scheme that has arisen due to the increase caseloads following the introduction of the new tax credit and pension credit schemes. The grant is not ring-fenced, but is a targeted grant and represents just one part of Spelthorne's total housing and council tax benefits administration subsidy funding.

The total housing and council tax benefits administration grant paid to Spelthorne borough council for 2003–04 was £509,893; it is for the local authority to decide how much it apportions between the administration of the two benefits.

Spelthorne borough council report that the estimated cost of administering council tax benefit for 2003–04 was £307,000; however, final figures are in the process of being collected.

In addition to the administration grant, a further £56,566 has been paid through the Security Against Fraud and Error (SAFE) scheme. This covers the first three quarters of 2003–04. The final quarter is yet to be finalised; a further payment will be made accordingly.

Winter Fuel Allowance

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the additional £100 being paid to over 70s in Northern Ireland will be included in the winter fuel allowance; and if he will make a statement. [175193]

Malcolm Wicks: The intention is that the one-off 70+ payment to eligible households will be included with the 2004–05 winter fuel payment which is paid automatically to the vast majority of those entitled to it. People in Northern Ireland who do not get a winter fuel payment will need to claim the one-off payment from the Department for Social Development before 31 March 2005.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 27 May 2004

TREASURY

Analogue Wave Band

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what *(a)* estimate he has made and *(b)* research he has (i) commissioned and (ii) evaluated on the value of the sale of the analogue wave band to public funds. [174047]

Ruth Kelly: The terms and method of reallocation of radio spectrum released by digital switchover are a matter for Ofcom. Additionally, the scope of future uses will be dependent on the result of international negotiations commencing in 2006. Hence, the Government are not currently in a position to make an estimate of the likely value of spectrum.

However, the Government have produced an economic cost-benefit analysis of digital switchover. The positive result of this study informed the Government's decision to confirm their support for switchover in September 2003 as it will bring significant benefits to consumers and to broadcasters. A summary of the results can be found at: www.digitaltelevision.gov.uk

Inland Revenue

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) when the Inland Revenue Avoidance Intelligence Unit will commence work; and how many staff it will employ; [176258]

(2) what the total costs, including employment, are for the Inland Revenue Avoidance Intelligence Unit for this financial year. [176259]

Dawn Primarolo: The Inland Revenue's Avoidance Intelligence Unit will be operational by the time the tax avoidance disclosure rules come into effect on 1 August 2004. The anticipated initial funding for the Unit is £1.5 million for the first full year. The precise number of staff who will be employed within the Unit is not fixed but will be under constant review and will vary according to the level of work the Unit has to handle.

Civil Registration (Consultation)

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the origins of the responses to the document Civil Registration: Delivering Vital Change; and how many were received from *(a)* registration officers, *(b)* genealogists and *(c)* the general public. [176583]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the General Registrar for England and Wales, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Dr. Iddon, dated 27 May 2004:

As National Statistician and Registrar General For England and Wales, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what assessment has been made of the origins of the responses to the document Civil Registration: Delivering Vital Change; and how many were received from *(a)* registration officers *(b)* genealogists and *(c)* the general public. (176583)

There were 516 responses from registration officers, 30 from genealogists who explicitly identified themselves as such and 2,310 from the general public. Of the latter group there were many whose main interest appeared to be in family history and genealogy, although a number also commented on other issues such as the propose changes to the system of civil marriage. The large number of responses received will be taken into consideration before proposals are laid before Parliament for scrutiny in the form of a proposed draft Regulatory Reform Order and Explanatory Memorandum.

Indeed, in her Statement to the House of Commons on 29 March the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Ruth Kelly) explained that she had been pleased to see there had been almost 3,400 responses to the consultation document "Civil Registration: Delivering Vital Change". She added that this indicated a very real interest among a wide range of stakeholders—registration practitioners and managers, the public and other interested organisations—in this area of reform.

Correspondence

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he expects to reply to the letter of 24 March 2004 from Stewart Stevenson MSP regarding World Vision. [176133]

Mr. Boateng: There is no record of the letter being received. A copy has been requested and will be replied to as soon as possible.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he expects to reply to the letter dated 9 March from the hon. Member for Banff and Buchan regarding whisky strip stamps. [176201]

John Healey: I have done so.

Employment (Blackpool, North and Fleetwood)

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people were employed in tourism-related jobs in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood on the latest date for which figures are available. [176398]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been has to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mrs. Joan Humble, dated 27 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about tourism-related jobs in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood. (176398)

The latest available data, from the 2002 Annual Business Inquiry, shows that the total number of jobs in tourism related industries in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood Parliamentary Constituency was 4,400. This total is obtained by combining figures for those working in the following industries, as identified by Standard Industrial Classification 2003:

hotels
restaurants
bars
activities of travel agencies
library, archives, museums etc.
sporting activities
other recreational activities.

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many new jobs have been created in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood since 1997. [176399]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mrs. Joan Humble, dated 27 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about jobs created in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood. (176399)

While statistics of new jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes, in numbers of jobs, from year-to-year.

The attached table shows the information requested relating to jobs Blackpool, North and Fleetwood, for 1997 and the latest year available, 2002.

Total number of employees[1] in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood Parliamentary Constituency: 1997 and 2002

	Number, per cent. Total
Number of employees	
1997	32,000
2002	31,500
Change from 1997 to 2002	
Absolute	-500

[1] Employee jobs only, not self-employed jobs.

Source:

1997: Annual Employment Survey, rescaled 2002: Annual Business Inquiry (ABI).

Employment Statistics

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people were employed in each year since 1979, broken down by constituency within each region. [175126]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Chris Ruane, dated 27 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about employment. I am replying in his absence. (175126)

Estimates of the number of people in employment broken down by Parliamentary Constituencies within each region, are only available for the twelve month periods ending February 1997, 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003. This information has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Estimates are taken from the Office for National Statistics' Labour Force Survey (LFS). As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

Information for individual constituencies in Northern Ireland is not shown in the table, but is available from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency.

Football (Taxation)

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the overall liability from the Premier League and football league clubs to the Treasury in unpaid taxes, deferred taxes and business rates is. [176082]

Dawn Primarolo: Individual businesses are monitored by both revenue Departments when they fall into arrears. However information on the debts of particular groups according to the nature of their business is not held centrally in both Departments. The information requested is therefore not readily available.

Fuel Sales (VAT)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much VAT was raised from fuel sales in April. [175961]

John Healey: Customs and Excise do not collect data on VAT from individual goods and services. VAT from household expenditure on road fuels can be broadly estimated from ONS Consumer Trends data. However, data are published on a quarterly basis only.

Honours

Brian White: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much time his Department spent dealing with honours in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by Civil Service grade. [173045]

Ruth Kelly: The Treasury has a designated honours secretary at Range D (HEO/SEO) level for whom work in this area takes up around 10 per cent. of working hours.

The Management Board meets twice a year for an hour to consider nominations. Members of the Management Board also spend a very small amount of their time considering honours-related issues, but it is not possible to disaggregate this.

Information is not available on time spent on honours-related work by other staff within the Treasury and across its associated bodies.

Industrial Wages

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average industrial wage in Great Britain is. [175854]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Gregory Campbell, dated 27 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking for the average industrial wage in Great Britain. (175854)

Average earnings are estimated from the 2003 New Earnings Survey (NES) and are provided for full-time employees on adult rates of pay whose pay was unaffected by absence during the pay period, by their place of work. This is the standard definition used for NES tables. The NES does not collect data on the self employed and people who do unpaid work.

The 2003 NES estimates that the total average industrial weekly earnings of full-time adult employees in Great Britain was £469.00.

The industrial wage covers all Production, Distribution and Service sectors of the economy. More detailed information on earnings is available in the published tables from the 2003 NES. They are available on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_labour/NES2003Analyses_By_Industry/NES2003_Analyses_By_Industry.pdf.

The NES, carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in Great Britain. It is a one per cent. sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes but, because of its sampling frame,

it has difficulty capturing data on people with very low pay. It is therefore likely to under-represent relatively low paid staff earning below the tax threshold.

The New Earnings Survey publication criteria ensures that all estimates are undisclosive and of reliable quality. A number of estimates have been removed from the published tables for these reasons.

International Development

Tom Brake: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many representations he has received in the past 12 months in relation to the target for spending 0.7 per cent. of gross national income on development, broken down by type of representation. [175793]

John Healey: The Government have received the usual representations on all subjects relating to official development assistance (oda). Data on the numbers and types of representations are not held centrally in the format requested.

Since 1997 the UK's level of oda has increased in real terms by 93 per cent. It reached 0.34 per cent. of Gross National Income (GNI) in 2003–04, and is expected to exceed the EU target of 0.39 per cent. for member states in 2005–06. The UK remains committed to the UN target of 0.7 per cent. oda/GNI and to meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

Tom Brake: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in drawing up spending plans in the 2004 Comprehensive Spending Review, he will treat funds committed through the International Finance Facility as counting towards the target of spending 0.7 per cent. of gross national income on development. [176034]

John Healey: The results of the Spending Review will be made public in due course. The OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) rules on the eligibility for official development assistance (oda), and it will be a matter for the DAC to decide what contribution IFF monies would make towards the UK oda/GNI level. The precise arrangements for the operation of the International Finance Facility (IFF) are still the subject of discussions between the UK and other interested governments.

The IFF has been designed to front-load the aid to reach the $50 billion extra per year that it is estimated is needed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). On current trends few of the MDGs will be met by the target date of 2015, and many will remain off-track without increased investment by donor countries. By delivering aid now, when it will have the most impact, the IFF will be able to provide the world's poorest countries with the funds they desperately need.

National Minimum Wage (Manchester)

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many workers in Manchester, Central have benefited from the national minimum wage. [175716]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Tony Lloyd, dated 27 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent question about the number of workers in Manchester Central who have benefited from the national minimum wage (NMW). I am replying in his absence. (175716)

Estimates for Parliamentary Constituencies are not available.

However, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) calculates estimates of the number of jobs paid less than NMW rates for the United Kingdom and Government Office Regions. A guide to measuring low pay and associated articles and data can be found on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=5837&Pos=1&ColRank=1&Rank=272

Official Vehicles

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of official vehicles used by his Department are run on *(a)* petrol, *(b)* diesel, *(c)* liquid petroleum gas and *(d)* compressed natural gas. [172768]

Ruth Kelly: HM Treasury's ministerial vehicles are provided by the Government Car Service. Detailed information on the breakdown of the GSC vehicle fleet was provided by the Cabinet Office on 25 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1538W.

Petrol and Diesel Duty

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what estimate he has made of the revenue which would be raised from petrol and diesel duty if pump prices rose to 90 pence a litre on average in the week beginning 17 May and stayed at that price for the rest of 2004–05; [174568]

(2) what the tax take is from each additional one penny on the litre price of fuel at the pumps; [174569]

(3) what estimate he has made of the amount of tax revenue which the Government would raise from petrol and diesel if pump prices remain at their current level for the rest of the financial year; [174570]

(4) what his latest forecast is for the revenue from all taxes on petrol and diesel for 2004–05; [174571]

(5) what the Budget forecast was for all tax revenues on petrol and diesel for 2004–05. [174572]

John Healey: The forecast revenue from fuel duty is published in table C.8 of the 2004 Financial Statement and Budget Report (HC 301). Estimates of the impact of duty changes were published in "Tax Ready Reckoner and Tax Reliefs", alongside the 2003 pre-Budget report (Cm 6042). Reliable estimates of the impact of changes in prices are not available.

Plastic Carrier Bags

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the merits of a tax on disposable plastic carrier bags. [175934]

John Healey: The Government currently have no plans to introduce a tax on plastic bags. In the UK plastic bags comprise less than 1 per cent. of the waste stream. Hence a tax on plastic bags, on its own, would be unlikely to have any significant impacts on volumes of waste. Further, the Government have a range of

measures in place to tackle the problem of waste, including the landfill tax which goes some way to maintaining the principle that the polluter pays by internalising the cost of the damage to the environment caused by landfill and encouraging recycling.

An assessment of the Irish tax on plastic bags has been completed and I have placed a copy in the Library of the House.

Regulation

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) whether the impact assessments described in the joint initiative on regulatory reform statement of 26 January will be applied to existing EU legislation; and whether such legislation will be repealed if the costs are found not to justify the benefits; [176346]

(2) whether the impact assessments described in the joint initiative on regulatory reform statement of 26 January will include a requirement to estimate the *(a)* costs and *(b)* benefits of proposed new EU legislation; [176347]

(3) whether the simplification of the Community Acquis referred to in the joint initiative on regulatory reform statement of 26 January will involve *(a)* deregulation and *(b)* the removal of legal texts that are obsolete and outdated without changing their legal status; [176348]

(4) what the implementation timetable is for the *(a)* introduction of impacts assessments and *(b)* simplification of the Community Acquis referred to in the joint initiative on regulatory reform statement of 26 January. [176349]

Ruth Kelly: The Joint Initiative on Regulatory Reform was welcomed by the Spring European Council in March. Following on from this, the Competitiveness Council endorsed an initial work programme at its 17–18 May meeting, including improvements to impact assessment and review of existing legislation. The European Council has committed to return to the issue at its November meeting.

The EU's impact assessment process was introduced as part of its Better Regulation Action Plan and covers both costs and benefits of potential action. The joint initiative contains a number of measures designed to strengthen this analysis, relating to both costs and benefits. In particular, the joint initiative called for better assessment of the impact of proposals on EU competitiveness.

With regard to simplification of existing legislation, the joint initiative builds on the Commission's work under its Better Regulation Action Plan. The scope of this programme includes reform or removal of existing legislation which is in force, as well as of that which is obsolete or no longer in use.

The Government will continue to work with EU partners ahead of the November Council to take forward work in this area.

Retained Firefighters (Tax Relief)

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make it his policy to give tax relief to businesses that employ retained firefighters. [176264]

Dawn Primarolo: The Government keep all taxes under review and any changes will be announced as part of the normal Budget process.

Statutory Paternity Leave

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps his Department has taken to help businesses administer the statutory paid paternity leave introduced on 6 April 2003; what targets have been set for this work; and what budget has been allocated. [176521]

Dawn Primarolo: The Inland Revenue provide extensive assistance and support to employers operating the Statutory Paternity Pay scheme.

As well as paper guidance assistance is available for employers on the Revenue's internet site in a simple question and answer format.

The Revenue also send all employers a CD-ROM which contains guidance and other aids in easily navigable format.

The Revenue's, Business Support teams provide a free workshop for employers on SPP at locations across the UK. Assistance is also available on a one to one basis.

The Revenue's Employer's Helpline offers telephone assistance at hours to suit the employer.

The Inland Revenue are also working on the provision of an internet calculator for SPP.

The Inland Revenue do not set a budget or targets for assistance to employers which can be broken down between different employer obligations.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 150W, on statutory paternity pay, when the statistics will become available. [176441]

Dawn Primarolo: Employers will notify the Inland Revenue of the numbers of employees who have received SPP in their annual returns for the 2003–04 tax year. Those returns were due on 19 May 2004, they are received over several months and the Inland Revenue will not have completed processing them until later in the year. Employers are not required to notify us of all requests for SPP, only of payments made.

Tax Credits

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether migrants from the EU accession countries are entitled to *(a)* the child tax credit and *(b)* the working tax credit; and on what conditions. [172952]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the letter from my hon. Friend the Minister for Citizenship and Immigration sent to all Members of Parliament on 10 May 2004. A copy of the letter can be found in the Library of the House.

Unemployment (Manchester)

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the levels of long-term *(a)* adult and *(b)* youth unemployment in Manchester, Central over the last seven years. [175715]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Tony Lloyd, dated 27 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment. I am replying in his absence. (175715)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment in the Manchester Central Parliamentary Constituency.

ONS also compiles statistics on those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

The table below gives the total number of people who had been claiming JSA for over 12 months and the number of people aged 18 to 24 who had been claiming JSA for over 12 months, for the Manchester Central constituency. The figures are annual averages for each year since 1997.

Number of people claiming JSA for over 12 months[1]

	All ages	*Aged 18 to 24*
1997	2,403	432
1998	1,691	285
1999	1,445	120
2000	1,199	49
2001	1,117	36
2002	992	49
2003	822	70

[1] Computerised claims only.

Youth Unemployment

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many long-term youth unemployed there were in each year since 1979, broken down by constituency within each region. [175127]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Chris Ruane dated 27 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment. (175127)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions.

Table 1 gives estimated of the numbers of people aged 16 to 24 who were unemployed for 12 months or longer in the twelve months periods ending in February of each year from 2000 to 2003. Comparable information is not available for earlier periods. The LFS sample size is too small to give reliable information for each Parliamentary Constituency. As with any statistical sample survey, estimates for the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas including Parliamentary Constituencies. Table 2 gives the number of people aged 18 to 24 years who had been claiming JSA for over 12 months, by Government Office Regions, for April each of year from 1986 to 2003. The data are not seasonally adjusted. Data at regional level are not available for earlier years.

This information is also available for Parliamentary Constituencies within each Government Office Region from the Nomis (r) database at the House of Commons Library.

Table 1: Number of people aged 16 to 24 years in long-term unemployment[1] *Government Office Regions, twelve months ending February each year from 2000 to 2003*

Number

	United Kingdom	*North East*	*North West*	*Yorkshire and Humberside*	*East Midlands*	*West Midlands*
2000	67	[2]	13	7	6	[2]
2001	66	6	9	5	[2]	7
2002	64	5	9	5	[2]	4
2003	61	4	9	5	[2]	4

Number

	Eastern	*London*	*South East*	*South West*	*Wales*	*Scotland*	*Northern Ireland*
2000	[2]	9	[2]	[2]	[2]	9	[2]
2001	[2]	11	4	4	5	[2]	[2]
2002	[2]	13	[2]	[2]	3	6	[2]
2003	[2]	11	4	[2]	3	7	[2]

[1] Refers to those who are unemployed over 12 months.
[2] Sample size too small for reliable estimates.

Source:
ONS: Labour Force Survey.

Table 2: Number of people aged 18 to 24 years claiming[1] *Jobseeker's Allowance for more than 12 months Government Office Regions, April*[2] *of each year from 1986–2004*

Number

	North East	*North West*	*Yorkshire and Humberside*	*East Midlands*	*West Midlands*	*Eastern*
1986	25,168	54,074	32,455	18,067	37,595	13,804
1987	18,972	45,551	28,843	15,411	31,626	11,046
1988	12,292	29,282	19,365	9,845	20,164	6,350
1989	8,758	20,495	12,191	5,978	12,002	2,822
1990	6,932	15,757	8,655	3,778	8,153	1,839
1991	6,858	17,020	9,630	5,270	9,329	3,389
1992	10,169	25,848	16,419	10,626	18,312	9,375
1993	11,602	29,651	19,854	13,914	24,469	14,352
1994	10,848	25,277	17,247	13,005	21,314	12,950
1995	9,562	20,093	14,319	10,002	16,295	9,592

Table 2: Number of people aged 18 to 24 years claiming[1] Jobseeker's Allowance for more than 12 months Government Office Regions, April[2] of each year from 1986–2004

Number

	North East	North West	Yorkshire and Humberside	East Midlands	West Midlands	Eastern
1996	8,379	16,274	12,429	8,131	12,776	7,744
1997	5,947	11,815	8,743	5,262	8,621	5,199
1998	3,761	6,706	5,277	2,579	5,309	2,525
1999	926	2,100	1,138	886	2,172	698
2000	438	800	406	268	1,004	296
2001	285	531	295	220	602	198
2002	261	752	407	279	581	260
2003	221	847	349	293	436	312
2004	258	802	363	508	637	479

Number

	London	South East	South West	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
1986	33,871	17,572	14,147	19,250	37,216	[3]—
1987	29,281	14,434	11,276	13,953	34,268	[3]—
1988	20,753	8,022	6,506	8,686	24,414	[3]—
1989	14,216	3,554	3,857	5,855	17,552	[3]—
1990	8,691	2,319	2,470	3,833	13,683	[3]—
1991	10,903	4,017	3,767	4,582	12,049	[3]—
1992	23,225	12,362	10,071	8,399	15,709	[3]—
1993	32,129	19,357	13,853	9,957	17,488	[3]—
1994	30,582	17,269	11,783	9,042	15,024	[3]—
1995	27,848	12,564	9,074	7,027	12,152	[3]—
1996	24,657	10,002	7,623	6,246	9,815	5,636
1997	16,467	6,468	5,150	4,642	7,705	4,372
1998	8,707	2,743	2,201	2,570	4,251	3,193
1999	3,482	652	506	534	1,740	1,226
2000	1,251	285	165	209	414	725
2001	791	151	132	127	263	657
2002	1,065	202	191	155	251	559
2003	1,248	304	205	195	288	369
2004	1,410	497	265	191	338	338

[1] Computerised claims only.
[2] The data are not seasonally adjusted.
[3] Data not available.

Source:
Jobcentre Plus administrative system.

PRIME MINISTER

Cabinet Committees

Ms Munn: To ask the Prime Minister when he will next publish the full membership and terms of reference of Cabinet Committees. [176693]

The Prime Minister: I have placed a copy of the current list of Cabinet Committees, their membership and terms of reference in the Libraries of both Houses. Details have also been updated on the Cabinet Office website.

Correspondence

Mr. Allen: To ask the Prime Minister if he will publish the letter reported in *The Times* of 21 May regarding the time taken to reply to letters from hon. Members, peers and MEPs. [176075]

The Prime Minister: I and my Ministerial colleagues attach great importance to dealing with all correspondence quickly and effectively. On 20 May, my hon. Friend the Minister for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Alexander) published a report on the performance of Departments and Agencies in handling correspondence from hon. Members and noble Peers for 2003. Copies are available in the Library of the House.

Czech Republic

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Prime Minister what steps he took to secure the export of Gripen aircraft to the Czech Republic. [176221]

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Truro and St. Austell (Mr. Taylor) on 9 July 2003, *Official Report*, column 853W.

Hunting Bill

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister what representations he has received about reintroducing the Hunting Bill in this Session; and if he will make a statement. [176292]

The Prime Minister: Since January I have received over 1,600 letters and cards about the issue of hunting. Given the volume of correspondence I receive, over one million letters and cards in the last year covering a broad spectrum of issues, my office records letters by subject rather than by the view expressed.

Lockerbie Bombing

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the outcome of his meeting with the Lockerbie relatives on Monday 24 May. [176998]

The Prime Minister: I had a very constructive meeting with the Lockerbie families on 24 May. It was an opportunity for me to brief them on my visit to Libya in March and to listen to the families' concerns, which we take very seriously.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Athletics

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the financial viability of UK Sport's elite athletes programme; whether she intends to draw more funds from the devolved Governments to increase the finances available to this fund; and if she will make a statement. [176085]

Mr. Caborn: UK Sport recently presented their Business Plan for 2005–09, including details of proposed support to elite athletes, to the Sports Cabinet. The Sports Cabinet considered the proposals in terms of funding need, value for money and affordability and has requested further work be undertaken to ensure that sufficient funds are available for the next Olympic cycle. There is no intention to draw more funds from devolved Governments.

Legal Deposits Libraries Act

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much funding her Department has allocated for *(a)* the long-term storage of the British Library's newspaper collection and *(b)* the archiving of digital material as required under the Legal Deposits Libraries Act 2003. [175968]

Estelle Morris: DCMS recognises the key storage needs of the British Library, and in SR 2002 set aside an extra amount of capital (£3 million in 2004–05 and £8 million in 2005–06) to help the British Library address this. The Department is aware of the British Library's bid for further resources to accelerate the programme of newspaper microfilm surrogate production and to manage digital materials. This is being considered as part of the 2004 Spending Review. The Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003 allows for the possibility of archiving digital material; the precise manner in which this is done will be dependent on regulations which will be brought forward incrementally after consideration by an Advisory Panel.

Licensing

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she expects responsibility for licensing to be transferred to local authorities. [176338]

Mr. Caborn: Licensing authorities, who will generally be local authorities, will be able to accept applications for the conversion of existing licences and club registration certificates from the first appointed day. This will be at least six months after my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State issues the Guidance to licensing authorities. The timetable for full implementation of the Licensing Act 2003 is dependent on parliamentary approval of the draft guidance, which was laid before Parliament on 23 March. If Parliament is content, we expect to complete the implementation of the Act around late summer 2005.

Regional Tourist Boards

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the membership of each regional tourist board has been in the last three years. [176312]

Mr. Caborn: Regional Tourist Boards are not Government agencies, their board members are not appointed by Ministers and records of their membership are not held centrally.

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the expenditure of each regional tourist board has been in the last three years, broken down by main budget heading. [176318]

Mr. Caborn: Regional Tourist Boards (RTBs) are not Government agencies and records of their expenditure are not held centrally. Most of them are private companies limited by guarantee and they have income in addition to Government funding.

Funding via the English Tourism Council in 2001–02 and 2002–03 and via the Regional Development Agencies in 2003–04 totalled £6.5 million, £5.7 million and £3.6 million in these years respectively. Government funding passed to the RTBs in these years for specific tourism projects, delivery of national objectives at a regional level and activities in line with regional strategies. Separately, funding of £1.9 million per annum passed from DCMS to the Greater London Authority who, worked with the London Tourist Board (renamed VisitLondon in 2003), on marketing London overseas and tourism development.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Bisham Footpath 9

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the Government office for the south-east intends to issue its decision on Bisham footpath 9, following the public inquiry, which was completed on 9 November 2003. [174012]

Margaret Beckett: The Government office for the south-east is considering the Inspector's report and expects to issue a decision next month.

Bovine TB

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the current status of the gamma interferon trials being conducted by her Department is; what the total cost so far expended on developing this test is; and what the estimated total cost fully to develop this test to the point where it can be used routinely is. [158000]

Mr. Bradshaw: Desk studies have estimated that significant savings will need to accrue from the use of gamma interferon (γ-IFN) before it becomes cost-effective in GB. The field trial of the γ-IFN test taking place in Wales and the Midlands is sponsored by Defra and the Welsh Assembly Government. It aims to assess

the cost-effectiveness of using γ-IFN in infected herds in conjunction with the single intradermal comparative cervical test.

The field pilot began in November 2002, with the intention to recruit 660 herds. Recruitment to the trial has been slow, with 115 herds recruited by 19 May 2004. Approximately one third of herds recruited so far are γ-IFN tested, with the other herds subject to "extra-severe" interpretation of the skin test and a control group (status quo).

From May 2004, newly recruited herds will have a 50 per cent. chance of being allocated the γ-IFN treatment, with 25 per cent. allocated to "extra-severe" and 25 per cent. to "control" groups. It is hoped this will encourage more eligible herd owners to participate.

Since 1999, the Government have spent more than £900,000 on γ-IFN research projects and £8.5 million on other research projects contributing to the development of γ-IFN as a diagnostic test. This is in addition to the £667,000 we expect to spend on the field pilot for the test.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the average number of cattle involved in a herd TB breakdown was over the last five years; what the average was in herds with repeat breakdowns; and what epidemiological significance there is to the number of animals affected in a herd breakdown. [158675]

Mr. Bradshaw: The following table details the average number of reactor cattle slaughtered per TB incident (breakdown) over the last five years:

	Reactors per incident 1
1999	2.5
2000	2.8
2001	3.1
2002	4.7
2003	3.6

[1] Includes all the herd incidents recorded each year (new and ongoing).

Separate figures are not available for herds with recurrent breakdowns as a subgroup of all breakdowns. This data can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

The number of reactors per incident is a proxy for the severity of a TB breakdown. Severity of a breakdown is in turn determined by the number of cattle in the herd infected at the initial exposure (index animals), the time elapsed between introduction of infection in the herd and the disclosing test (or slaughterhouse case), social interactions between infective and susceptible cattle, herd size, herd management system, susceptibility of the host, the portal of entry into the host and infective dose and, possibly, the strain of "M. bovis" causing the breakdown. Confirmed TB incidents tend to last longer and yield more reactors than unconfirmed incidents.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in how many herd breakdowns in 2003 only one reactor was detected; and in how many of those herds there had been no cattle movements into the herds in the preceding 60 days. [158678]

Mr. Bradshaw: In 2003 there were 1204[1] breakdowns with one reactor detected. Of these, the number with no cattle movements in the preceding 60 days is not centrally recorded on the State Veterinary Service database and can only be provided at disproportionate cost from other sources.

[1] Provisional data downloaded from the State Veterinary Service database on 4–5 March 2004. Subject to change as more data becomes available.

Note:

For the purposes of this question a reactor has been defined as (i) an animal which reacts positively to the tuberculin test and (ii) an animal which has had an inconclusive reaction to the tuberculin tests on three occasions.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many tuberculin positive reactor cattle were slaughtered in the UK in each year from 1999 to 2003 inclusive; and in how many bovine TB infection was not confirmed on culture or examination post mortem in each year. [172557]

Mr. Bradshaw: The information requested is given in the following table for Great Britain.

	Number of TB reactor cattle slaughtered[1]	*Number of unconfirmed cases*[2]
1999	5,910	2,709
2000	7,031	2,629
2001[3]	5,048	2,293
2002	19,903	9,671
2003	20,117	10,180

[1] For the purposes of this question a reactor has been defined as (i) an animal which reacts positively to the tuberculin test or (ii) an animal which has had an inconclusive reaction to the tuberculin tests on three occasions.

[2] Failure to detect visible lesions or culture *Mycobacterium bovis* (*M. bovis*) from samples does not confirm the absence of infection or that the animal has not been exposed to *M. bovis*.

[3] In 2001, the TB testing and control programme was largely suspended due to the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreak. Since testing resumed in 2002, resources have been concentrated on herds with overdue TB tests which would have had a longer period in which to contract the disease. Also the proportion of high risk herds being tested post-FMD is greater than that prior to the outbreak. As a result since 2002 the statistical data is not comparable to that of previous years.

Note:

Data downloaded from the State Veterinary Service database on 1 April 2004 (1999–2001) and 8 March 2004 (2002–03). This is provisional data, which is subject to change, as more data becomes available.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what further research she proposes to undertake to investigate TB in wildlife; and if she will make a statement. [173694]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra is funding the Randomised Badger Culling Trial and associated research (including the Road Traffic Accident survey of badger carcases in seven English counties). A limited survey of wildlife (badgers, and deer with suspicious lesions) killed on the roads in the Furness Peninsula, Cumbria is also under way.

Recently published research highlights that the use of farm buildings and cattle troughs by badgers can constitute a TB risk to cattle. A study of possible badger/cattle interactions and how cattle husbandry methods may limit these is under way.

Defra currently funds two research projects investigating the risk to cattle from wildlife species other than badgers. Both projects are due to be completed during 2004 and their final reports will be studied closely before deciding on future research requirements in this area.

Other work is looking at the "perturbation" effects of removing badgers from an ecosystem, innovative ways of estimating badger numbers and a project to derive economic values associated with changes in badger populations. Another project is devising strategies to diagnose *M. bovis* infection in badgers in the field (such as alternatives to the Brock test with increased sensitivity).

Defra is also part-funding collaborative work on the experimental vaccination of badgers with BCG in the Republic of Ireland through a contract with the Veterinary Laboratories Agency. A recent workshop (April) with the animal pharmaceutical industry discussed possible ways of taking this work forward.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the extra costs, beyond the cost of the test itself, to farmers of using a TB test; and if she will make a statement. [174082]

Mr. Bradshaw: The cost of statutory tuberculin testing by an authorised Veterinary Surgeon is currently paid for by Defra. Cattle keepers are responsible for presenting the animals for testing in a manner in which the test can be performed safely, this includes provision of the necessary cattle handling equipment and labour.

The main cost to farmers incurred for TB testing is labour use. The time spent on testing varies greatly from farm to farm, and will depend on such factors as the size of the herd, the age, breed and sex of the animals, the efficiency of the system employed, the way the cattle are handled, gathering times, preparation and cleaning times and subsequent post-test paperwork.

Some dairy farmers have also reported a reduction in milk yield on testing days.

A full Regulatory Impact Assessment will be required if proposals on pre or post-movement testing outlined in the consultation document "preparing for a new GB strategy on bovine tuberculosis" are taken forward. This will include an assessment of the additional economic burden to farmers.

Carbon Dioxide Emissions

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received on behalf of the UK *(a)* off-shore oil and gas operators, *(b)* electricity generators and *(c)* coal industry regarding Government policy on reducing emissions of carbon dioxide. [172527]

Mr. Morley: The Secretary of State has received numerous representations from the three industrial sectors described above. All three sectors have been closely involved with the consultations on the EU Emissions Trading Scheme National Allocation Plan and have submitted consultation responses.

Furthermore, operators of installations in the offshore oil and gas industry and the coal industry are direct participants in the UK Emissions Trading Scheme and have considerable ongoing contact with the Department because of this.

Countryside Stewardship Scheme

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will take steps to ensure that the area of traditional apple orchards that is not currently covered by the countryside stewardship scheme is included in 2005. [176313]

Alun Michael: I can confirm that, subject to approval by the European Commission, the new Environmental Stewardship Scheme which we plan to introduce in 2005 will contain measures designed to maintain and restore traditional orchards. These will be similar to the measures we have successfully operated under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme. While we hope for a high level of uptake, we cannot guarantee complete coverage, not least because the scheme is voluntary.

Dairy Calves

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many male dairy calves have been *(a)* shot and *(b)* disposed of on UK farms in each of the last three years as being without financial value. [174138]

Alun Michael: Data from the Cattle Tracing System (CTS) on calves of up to 14 days age that either die on farm or are killed at slaughterhouses are tabulated as follows. However, it should be noted that many cattle are not registered under the CTS until they are over 14 days old and these figures are therefore an underestimate.

	Cattle up to 14-days-old that died on farm	*Cattle up to 14-days-old that died at a slaughterhouse*
2001	27,975	66,051
2002	20,784	59,934
2003[1]	15,740	40,437

[1] Data for 2003 only covers the months January to November, inclusive.

Departmental Buildings

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many buildings in England owned by her Department are used at less than 25 per cent. capacity for more than three months of the year. [175978]

Alun Michael: Five buildings on the Defra estate fall within this category. All five have been declared surplus and are awaiting disposal.

The Department does not hold information centrally about properties occupied by non-departmental public bodies but the use of premises by the wider Defra family is currently being reviewed.

Eggs

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received about the impact the cost of egg stamping is likely to have on small-scale egg producers; and if she will make a statement. [174202]

Alun Michael: Defra has received an estimated 3,150 inquiries on the Registration of Laying Flocks Order and the Egg Marketing Regulations—by far the majority of these were from producers wanting to know how to comply with the legal requirements. We have also held meetings with representative bodies, including the National Federation of Women's Institutes; the National Association of Farmers; and the Small Farms Association. For small-scale producers, a stamp and ink (that will last for years) can cost just a few pounds. Most small producers appear to have been satisfied that the costs are reasonable and can be borne comfortably.

Emissions Trading Scheme

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to encourage the European Commission to take a robust line with EU members who produce over-generous national allocation plans under the EU Emissions Trading Scheme to ensure that significant reductions in carbon emissions are achieved. [174783]

Mr. Morley: It is vital that other member states' national allocation plans are robust and ambitious. We welcome the Commission's recent announcement regarding national allocation plans, that clearly demonstrates that they intend to take a firm line in the analysis of these plans.

Government have commissioned consultants to analyse the plans submitted by other member states. The results of this work will be made publicly available and will help inform our discussions with the Commission and other member states.

Environmental Campaigns

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much she expects the Government to spend on environmental campaigns in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06. [168810]

Mr. Morley: Defra provides funding to a number of bodies who will conduct campaigns on environmental issues between 2004–06 as part of their activities. These are shown in the following table. Figures represent overall income. Campaigns will be allocated funds from within these totals.

£ million

	2004–05	*2005–06*
Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP)	57.521	75.709
Environment Agency	870.2	944.9
Energy Saving Trust	59	Not yet allocated
Carbon Trust	24	Not yet allocated
ENCAMS	3.542	3.542

Fallen Stock

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the new Fallen Stock Scheme is expected to commence; and what level of support it has achieved. [174790]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 21 May 2004]:* As announced by the National Fallen Stock Company on 13 May, the Scheme is expected to commence in the autumn. It has the backing of the major farming unions and livestock organisations, but we will not know the level of support it has among farmers until the Scheme begins.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the oral answer of 20 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1079–80, on fallen stock, if she will give guidance to local authorities on how to implement the EU Animal By-Products Regulations with a light touch before the national fallen stock scheme is in operation. [176295]

Mr. Bradshaw: Guidance has already been provided to local authorities and a copy is available in the Library of the House.

Farm Subsidies

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many and what proportion of farms in *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland, *(c)* Wales and *(d)* Northern Ireland which would be eligible for the post-transitional single farm payment would receive payments exceeding (i) 50,000, (ii) 75,000, (iii) 100,000, (iv) 125,000, (v) 150,000, (vi) 175,000, (vii) 200,000, (viii) 250,000 and (ix) 300,000 euros. [172484]

Alun Michael: Payment entitlements under the Single Payment Scheme in England and Northern Ireland will be allocated on the bases of eligible land declared in 2005. It is not possible to provide the information sought until all claims have been received and processed. Payment arrangements for Scotland and Wales are a matter for the devolved Administrations.

David Maclean: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the average subsidy payment in Cumbria was in *(a)* 1999, *(b)* 2000, *(c)* 2001 and *(d)* 2002. [169077]

Alun Michael: The following table represents the average subsidy payment to farmers in Cumbria from 1999 to 2002. These are European Agriculture Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) financial years which run from 16 October to 15 October.

EAGGF Year	*Average subsidy*	*Number of claimants*	*Value of payments*
1999[1]	6,134.41	4,540	27,850,196.65
2000	12,219.08	5,113	62,476,159.75
2001	12,149.86	5,171	62,826,951.00
2002	9,567.28	5,055	48,362,622.32

[1] The figures quoted for 1999 relate to the period from 1 March of that year when the Rural Payments Agency introduced its new accounting system.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what

(a) discussions she has had and *(b)* assessment she has made of future agricultural support payments in (i) uplands and (ii) severely disadvantaged areas. [166445]

Alun Michael: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has had discussions with, and received representations from, a wide range of interests on the subject. As a result she made a written statement to the House on 22 April. Eligible farmers in the uplands and the severely disadvantaged areas will receive the single farm payment, and will continue to be eligible for other schemes such as the Hill Farm Allowance and agri-environment schemes (which are currently being reviewed). The need for assistance to these or other areas will need to be re-examined in the context of the new EU Rural Development Regulation which will come into effect in 2007, and the changing needs of sustainable development in the uplands.

Foot and Mouth

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the report on foot and mouth disease at the Waugh's farm by Mr. Jim Dring was *(a)* first received by her Ministers; and *(b)* first received by her. [173994]

Margaret Beckett: My Ministers and I were briefed about and had access to Mr. Dring's statement concerning the Waugh's farm in the week preceding our publication of his statement.

GM Feed

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the labelling requirements for *(a)* milk and *(b)* meat produced from animals fed on genetically modified feed. [173553]

Mr. Morley: Regulation (EC) 1829/2003 on genetically modified (GM) food and feed introduces new rules for the labelling of food and feed containing, consisting of, or produced from genetically modified organisms (GMOs). The Regulation took direct and full effect in Member States from 18 April 2004.

There is no requirement under the new rules to label products such as milk or meat or eggs obtained from animals fed with GM feed as there is no GM material in these products to detect.

Heddon View Farm

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) if she will define the extent of the processing premises at Heddon View; [174539]

(2) whether the premises designated for processing at Heddon View Farm were analogous to the premises designated by Mr. Jim Dring as direct contact. [174541]

Mr. Bradshaw: The processing premises were in a self contained roofed building and were therefore compliant with the requirements in Schedule 5 of the Animal By-Products Order 1999. The processing premises at Heddon View were separate from the pig premises referred to as a direct contact by Jim Dring.

IACS Payments

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 28 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1025W, to the hon. Member for Salisbury (Mr. Key), on Severely Disadvantaged Areas, what assessment she has made of the extent of non-receipt of integrated administration and control system forms; and how many farms have contacted the Rural Payments Agency to request forms. [174371]

Alun Michael: The Rural Payments Agency sent out replacement Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS) forms to some 1,500 applicants approximately 2.2 per cent. of the total number of IACS applicants.

Psittacosis

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the cases of psittacosis confirmed in Sway in Hampshire in each year since 2000 and the actions taken by her Department; and if she will make a statement. [174629]

Mr. Bradshaw: There have been four recorded cases of psittacosis in Swav, Hampshire since 2000:

	Number of cases
2000	0
2001	3
2002	1
2003	0
2004 (to date)	0

The veterinary surgeon submitting the samples was informed of the results of the examination carried out by the Veterinary Laboratories Agency Regional Laboratory and reminded that psittacosis is a zoonosis (infection transmissible between animals and man) and the public health implications for the owner.

The public health authorities were informed and a visit was made to the premises in 2002 by a Veterinary Officer from the local Defra Animal Health Divisional Office to offer advice on the control of the disease.

Swill Feeding

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department carried out risk assessment on the feeding of swill to pigs prior to the outbreak of foot and mouth disease in 2001. [166759]

Mr. Bradshaw: No. No formal risk assessment was carried out prior to the 2001 foot and mouth disease outbreak. Following the outbreak veterinary advice was that there was a risk from domestically produced meat because of the amount of virus in circulation.

Water Technologies

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many

products have been approved for inclusion in the Enhanced Capital Allowance Scheme for Water Technologies. [175278]

Margaret Beckett: The Water Technology Product List which lists all products that are eligible for inclusion in the scheme, was launched on 6 November 2003. Since the launch, 115 products have been approved for inclusion in the scheme.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Accident Surveillance

Jim Dowd: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether her Department maintains the *(a)* Home Accidents Deaths Database, *(b)* the Home Accident Surveillance System and *(c)* the Leisure Accidents Surveillance System. [175826]

Mr. Sutcliffe: On 2 May 2003, my hon. Friend the Member for Welwyn Hatfield (Miss Johnson), the then Minister for Competition, Consumers and Markets, announced that the DTI will no longer collect statistics on the causes and nature of home and leisure accidents. Following increased pressure on resources and the need to focus on the Department's core priorities, hard decisions had to be made on what to stop. The Home Accident Surveillance System (HASS) and the Leisure Accidents Surveillance System (LASS) did not fit with these priorities.

Data from HASS and LASS for the years 2000, 2001 and 2002 were published in December 2003. These systems are no longer maintained by DTI, and no further data have been collected beyond 2002. An inquiry service on HASS and LASS historic data up to and including 2002 is being provided by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) for a period of five years with effect from 1 January 2004.

The Home Accidental Deaths Database held data up to and including 1995, and for similar reasons is no longer maintained by the Department. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) collects information about fatal accidents.

Coal Compensation Schemes

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many coal compensation scheme claims have resulted in full and final settlements of less than *(a)* £1,000 and *(b)* £500. [176105]

Nigel Griffiths: As of 26 May 2004, the figures are as follows:

	Number of settlements less than £1,000	*Of which number of settlements less than £500*
COPD	26,281	11,867
VWF	2,971	301

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many coal compensation scheme claims have resulted in solicitors being paid more than claimants. [176106]

Nigel Griffiths: As of 26 May 2004, the figures are:

	Number of settlements where solicitor costs exceed damages paid to claimant
COPD	46,768
VWF	2,655

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations have been made to her since Easter about the possibility of minimum payments for coal compensation schemes. [176107]

Nigel Griffiths: The Claimants Representative Group advised the judge that they were looking at the possibility of a minimum payment arrangement for respiratory disease claims. The Department has received two letters from the Claimants Representative Group since Easter seeking background information on claims volumes. The subject has also been discussed at the regular Operation and Monitoring meetings between the parties. A formal proposal has not yet been submitted to the Department.

Nutritional Supplements

Mr. Hawkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations to EU Commission officials she has made on behalf of UK businesses in relation to plans for a draft Directive on nutritional supplements for sports competitors; and if she will make a statement. [175281]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Public Health on 25 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1605W.

Post Office

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations she has received in respect of the manner in which Post Office Ltd. is approaching the Urban Network Reinvention programme in Birmingham. [172025]

Mr. Timms: To date, we have received petitions, including those co-ordinated by the Birmingham Evening Mail, opposing all Post Office Ltd.'s proposals for sub post office closures in Birmingham. We have also received representations on the same basis from Birmingham city council. I discussed this with Councillor Albert Bore, the Leader of the Council, on 19 April 2004.

It was inevitable that Post Office Ltd.'s restructuring of its network in urban areas would be controversial. The restructuring is, however, essential for future network viability. The Government regard it as most important that all communities have good access to postal services. At the end of Post Office Ltd.'s restructuring of the urban post office network, at least 95 per cent. of the urban population nationally will still live within one mile of their nearest post office.

Radioactive Waste

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 12 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1781W, on radioactive waste, for what reason the review of Nirex is not yet complete. [164802]

Mr. Morley: I have been asked to reply.

The review of Nirex, as announced by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State on 16 July 2003, *Official Report*, column 318W, has taken longer than anticipated. Officials are continuing to work on this and Ministers will announce a way forward in due course.

Renewable Energy

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what share of the overall energy supply in mainland Great Britain she expects will be supplied by renewable energy sources by the end of 2005; [175858]

(2) what share of the overall energy supply industry in Northern Ireland she expects will be supplied by renewable energy sources by the end of 2005. [175864]

Mr. Timms: The Department has made no such projections.

Retail Industry

Jim Dowd: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) if she will ask the Competition Commission to reopen its investigation into competition in the retail industry conducted in 2000; [175759]

(2) what research has been undertaken into the practice of below cost selling in the grocery industry since 2000; [175760]

(3) what plans she has to commission research into the impact of below cost selling in the UK retail industry. [175761]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Competition Commission investigation in 2000 did not look at the retail industry generally. It was a specific investigation into the supply of groceries from multiple stores. The Commission's report found that the practice of below cost selling, when carried out by companies with market power, did operate against the public interest but that remedies would be disproportionate to the adverse effect. The Commission therefore did not recommend any action in this regard.

It is for the competition authorities to decide if a market investigation into the retail industry is now needed or if further research on below cost selling is required.

CABINET OFFICE

EU Regulation

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Eddisbury (Mr. O'Brien) on 30 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1319W, on gold-plating, if he will list cases of unforeseen or undesired over-implementation identified by the Cabinet Office Regulatory Impact Unit, broken down by *(a)* the EU Directive, *(b)* the Department responsible for implementation and *(c)* the option taken that went beyond the minimum necessary to comply with the European Directive. [176100]

Mr. Alexander: The Cabinet Office guidance referred to in the original question states that

"Instances of gold-plating will need to be brought to the attention of the Cabinet Office Regulatory Impact Unit."

In the context of the guidance, it is clear that what is being referred to is consultation during the course of policy development, rather than notification after the event. The Cabinet Office does not hold records of all the policy discussions which have taken place which have dealt with possible gold-plating.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Eddisbury (Mr. O'Brien) of 30 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1319W, on gold-plating, if he will list the instances of the implementation of EU legislation where, due to exceptional reasons, it has been deemed necessary to over-implement Directives, broken down by *(a)* the EU Directive and *(b)* the Government Department responsible. [176101]

Mr. Alexander: One instance has been identified by the Cabinet Office since November 2001, when the provision of Tranposition Notes to Parliament became mandatory.

The 2001 Money Laundering Directive required the UK to regulate

"auditors, external accountants and tax advisors ... in the exercise of their professional activities."

The UK implementing regulations (Money Laundering Regulations 2003) introduced by Her Majesty's Treasury, after extensive consultation, covered all those carrying out the activities of accountancy (including unaffiliated professionals) in order not to create loopholes for criminal activity.

Iraq

Mr. Soames: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office on what date the International Committee of the Red Cross report on the treatment by Coalition forces of prisoners of war and other persons protected by the Geneva conventions during arrest, internment and interrogation in Iraq was received by the Office. [173900]

Mr. Alexander: Neither I nor officials in the Cabinet Office received this report of the International Committee of the Red Cross before it appeared in the public domain.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Internet Access

Mr. Ancram: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission when the House authorities expect to install wireless internet access on the Parliamentary Estate. [175561]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The Information Committee makes recommendations on wireless access. I am sure that the Committee would be happy to receive views from hon.

Members. The Parliamentary Communications Directorate is evaluating the technologies involved and assessing security issues.

Security

Mr. Forth: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission who vouched for the person who, from the front of the security screen, threw a substance into the Chamber on 19 May. [175266]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The person who threw the substance into the Chamber on 19 May was present at the invitation of The Baroness Golding and I refer the right hon. Member to her personal statement of 19 May 2004, *Official Report, House of Lords*, column 777.

Mr. Forth: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what analysis was carried out to ensure the non-toxicity of the substance thrown into the Chamber on 19 May before it was re-opened. [175326]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The analysis was made by explosives officers of the Metropolitan police using specialist equipment.

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission if he will make a statement on contingency plans for evacuating hon. Members from the House in the event of an emergency. [175397]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: Contingency plans for the evacuation of the Chamber in an emergency are in place and these will be confirmed after the Whitsun recess.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Namibia

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what financial assistance is being given to Namibia by the European Union in 2004–05. [175617]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The indicative allocation under the 9th replenishment of the European Development Fund amounts to €91 million to be committed over five years from 2002. Firm figures for planned disbursements in 2004–05 are not available.

The focus of European Union assistance in Namibia is on poverty reduction, including rural development, education and HIV/AIDS. The Country Strategy Paper is published on the European Commission website www.europa.eu.int/comm/development

Administration Cost Savings

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what administration cost savings were achieved by his Department in each year since 1997, expressed *(a)* in cash terms and *(b)* as a percentage of the departmental budget; and if he will make a statement. [175748]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Separate figures are not available for past efficiency improvements. DFID has however sought to promote efficiency, for example through internal Service Level Agreements. From financial years 1996–97 to 2002–03, the proportion of the development budget used for administration remained constant at 2.8 per cent. of the total programme, despite a significant widening of DFID's responsibilities in areas that do not entail significant programme spending.

A new definition of administration costs was introduced during 2003–04 in order to manage operating costs more efficiently and increase transparency. This incorporated substantial charges previously paid from the programme budget. Under Resource Accounting, from 2003–04 the administration budget also incorporates capital charges previously accounted for separately. Between 2002–03 and 2005–06, costs under the new definitions will have fallen from 5.8 per cent. (£197 million) to 5.1 per cent. (£236 million) as a proportion of the programme.

Chad

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance his Department is providing to *(a)* the Government of Chad and *(b)* non-governmental organisations operating in Chad in relation to the humanitarian response to atrocities in Darfur; and if he will make a statement. [175874]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID does not provide any assistance to the Government of Chad. DFID is gravely concerned about the situation in Darfur. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that 120,000 refugees have fled to Chad from Darfur, and the UN estimates that over 1 million people are displaced within Darfur. The UK has committed £2 million to UNHCR for emergency assistance to refugees in Chad. DFID also contributes 19 per cent. of the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO)'s commitments to NGOs operating in Chad. (ECHO has committed over £4.5 million).

Comprehensive Spending Review

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what correspondence he has had in the last three months with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on *(a)* setting a firm timetable for spending 0.7 per cent. of GNI on development and *(b)* making provision for that level of spending in the 2004 Comprehensive Spending Review; what the outcome of those discussions was; and if he will place the correspondence in the Library. [175872]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: I am regularly in discussion with the Chancellor about a range of matters. In line with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information (part 2, exemption 2) details of such confidential discussions are not normally disclosed.

Secondments

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many secondees there

are from his Department in *(a)* Iraq, *(b)* Afghanistan, *(c)* India and *(d)* Tanzania; and what their (i) host agency and (ii) activity is in each case. [175746]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: In Iraq four DFID staff have been seconded to the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) in Southern Iraq, working in the areas of press and public information, essential infrastructure and the environment. In addition, DFID funds 59 secondee posts in CPA offices across Iraq. These posts are being filled on consultancy terms and cover a wide range of reconstruction related issues.

In Afghanistan DFID has seconded one staff member to the World Bank as a governance and institutional development specialist, and in Tanzania one member of staff is working as Environmental Adviser to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

DFID has no staff secondments in India. In line with most of DFID's programmes, we fund a wide range of consultancies at the request of the Government of India and State Governments. Currently there are 10 consultancies working for the Government of India.

St. Helena

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what policies he intends to pursue to *(a)* halt and *(b)* reverse the decline in population on St. Helena. [174756]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The decline in the island's population, and the problems associated with it, featured prominently in the recent discussions in St. Helena between the island government and a joint DFID/FCO mission. DFID is working with the St. Helenian authorities to address the causes and impacts. For example, a fiscal review is planned with the aim of stimulating growth in the island's private sector and encouraging inward investment. Measures have been introduced to offer some public service appointments on enhanced terms to encourage St. Helenians to stay in St. Helena or return there. DFID is also reviewing options for future physical access to and from the island.

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will assess the cost of maintaining St. Helena over the next 10 years. [174760]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID cannot make this assessment, as it would depend on a range of factors including major investment decisions, which we expect to address later this year, on future physical access arrangements. The background to this was reported in my written statement on 19 April 2004 *Official Report*, column 1WS. In addition, our assistance to St. Helena is set normally in three-year cycles which are negotiated with the island government in the light of anticipated needs and resources available. Discussions have taken place recently with the St. Helena authorities about our assistance for the island over the period 2004–05—2006–07 inclusive. I expect to report on those discussions shortly.

Sudan

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what financial assistance is being given to Sudan by the European Union in 2004–05. [175157]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The estimated disbursements from the European Development Fund for Sudan in 2004 is €14.3 million. Subject to a comprehensive peace agreement being signed in 2004 an indicative allocation of a further €150 million may be available over the period to 2007.

In addition further humanitarian assistance will be made available for Sudan through European Humanitarian Office (ECHO).

DFID also understands that the European Community has committed €1.5 million to support the Peace Talks and the Verification Monitoring Team, which is responsible for investigating and reporting on breaches of the Memorandum of Understanding on the cessation of hostilities in southern Sudan. A further €475,000 has been made available in support of the Darfur peace talks.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what measures his Department *(a)* has taken in the past month and *(b)* plans to take in June in relation to the situation in Darfur, Sudan, broken down by type of action; and what funding has been allocated to each action. [175767]

Hilary Benn: In April 2004, I set aside an additional £10 million to be committed to agencies engaged in humanitarian relief in Darfur[1]. In the last month, DFID has committed funding to the following agencies.

Agency	*Type of activity*	*Total commitment (£)*
OXFAM	Public Health Humanitarian Response Darfur (Water/ Sanitation Programme)	2,193,161
WFP	Emergency purchase and distribution of Food Aid for internally displaced Sudanese in Darfur.	2,000,000
WHO	Emergency primary health care and response to communicable diseases in Darfur; support to measles vaccination programme	1,500,000
UNICEF	Additional support to humanitarian assistance for crisis in Darfur; emergency nutrition; emergency health care and the protection of children	1,500,000
UN Joint Logistics Centre	Support to enable UNJLC to co-ordinate the logistics of an effective humanitarian response in Darfur	250,000

In addition to financial commitments in May, the UK has seconded three humanitarian experts to the UN Joint Logistics Centre in Darfur. DFID has also provided in-kind donations of non-food items (22,500 blankets and 15,000 plastic sheets) for distribution by humanitarian agencies.

In June, DFID plans to continue committing the remainder of the £10 million to humanitarian agencies who are operational in Darfur and will continue to monitor the situation and keep the level of our response under review.

In addition to DFID's provision of humanitarian assistance, I have also taken measures to secure access for humanitarian relief. The Foreign Secretary, the Minister for Africa and I all raised this subject with the Sudanese Foreign Minister during his recent visit to the United Kingdom, and the UK Special Representative and our Ambassador in Khartoum had further discussions with the Government on this issue last week. Later, on 20 May, the Sudanese Foreign Minister announced new measures governing the issue of visas and travel permits to humanitarian workers wishing to travel to Darfur.

Since the ceasefire agreement at N'Djamena on 8 April, the UK has been in close contact with the parties and other members of the international community, including the African Union, to try and help set up the Ceasefire Commission Monitoring Mechanism set out in the 8 April agreement. I spoke to Said Djinnit, the Peace and Security Commissioner of the African Union, on 10 May, about the urgent need to get the team in place. DFID will provide swift and significant funding to enable a rapid deployment and are encouraging other donors to do the same.

[1] DFID commitment since October 2003 now total over £17.5 million

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what aid his Department is giving to alleviate the situation in *(a)* Sudan and *(b)* Chad. [175770]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID has committed over £16.9 million to humanitarian agencies providing assistance to people affected by the situation in Darfur, Sudan, of which £3 million has been committed to agencies providing relief to the refugees who have fled into Eastern Chad. DFID has also contributed 19 per cent. of the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO)'s commitments to NGOs operating in Darfur and Eastern Chad. (ECHO has committed over £4.5 million).

A breakdown of DFID commitments is given as follows.

Period	*Agency*	*Description*	*Total cost (£)*
October to December 2003	UNHCR	Supplementary Appeal for Emergency Assistance to Sudanese Refugees in Eastern Chad—2003	1,000,000
October 2003 to September 2004	SC-UK	Emergency Response to Conflict Related Internal Displacement in North Darfur	500,000
November to December 2003	ICRC	Contribution to the ICRC 2003 Emergency Appeal for Sudan	1,000,000
November 2003 to March 2004	WFP	Additional Contribution to 2003 UN Appeal, due to Crisis in Darfur, to Provide Emergency Food Assistance to Sudanese Populations Affected by War and Natural Disasters	2,000,000
January to April 2004	MSF-F	Emergency Assistance to IDPs in Darfur—through increasing access to health care in conflict areas, disease prevention, halting nutritional deterioration and treating malnourished children	491,369
January to December 2004	MSF-H	Darfur Components of Emergency Health Interventions in Northern Sudan Project	650,000
February to December 2004	UNICEF	Emergency Assistance to Humanitarian Crisis in Darfur for Health; Water Supply; Water and Environmental Sanitation; Relief and Shelter Items; and the Protection of Children	1,000,000
February to November 2004	GOAL	Emergency Assistance to Population in Kutum Province, North Darfur—through a combined Health, Nutrition and Shelter Intervention	575,963
March to December 2004	ACF	Emergency Nutrition Programme in North Darfur	250,000
March to December 2004	WFP	Emergency Distribution of Food Aid Commodities to Sudanese Refugees in North East Chad	1,000,000
March 2004 to January 2005	UNHCR	Emergency Assistance to Sudanese Refugees in Eastern Chad	1,000,000
April 2004 to December 2004	OXFAM	Public Health Humanitarian Response Darfur (Water/Sanitation Programme)	2,193,161
May 2004 to December 2004	WFP	Emergency purchase and distribution of Food Aid for internally displaced Sudanese in Darfur	2,000,000
May 2004 to November 2004	WHO	Emergency primary health care and response to communicable diseases in Darfur; support to measles vaccination programme	1,500,000
May 2004 to December 2004	UNICEF	Additional support to humanitarian assistance for crisis in Darfur; emergency nutrition; emergency health care and the protection of children	1,500,000
May 2004 to July 2004	UN Joint Logistics Centre	Support to enable UN Joiit Logistics Centre to co-ordinate the logistics of an effective humanitarian response in Sudan	250,000
Total			16,910,493

DFID has allocated £35 million for bilateral assistance to Sudan in 2004–05. This will be spent in the following areas:

Life-saving and life-sustaining humanitarian, recovery and reintegration assistance.

Assistance for parties to implement the peace agreement including military/political arrangements and to build the consensus for peace more widely.

Support for the development of an effective public administration, state security and judicial system throughout Sudan.

Support for development and implementation of policies for poverty reduction.

DFID does not have a bilateral programme in Chad.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what action he has taken to secure access to Darfur for humanitarian relief; and if he will make a statement. [175839]

Hilary Benn *[holding answer 25 May 2004]:* Pursuant to the response given to UIN 175839 on Wednesday 26 May.

I remain deeply concerned about the grave situation in Darfur, western Sudan. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, the Minister for Africa (Chris Mullin) and I all registered our serious concerns about the humanitarian and human rights situation with the Sudanese Foreign Minister, Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail, when he visited London on 11 May. The UK Special Representative and our Ambassador in Khartoum had further detailed discussions about Darfur with several Government Ministers and senior officials in Khartoum last week.

I spoke to Mr. Ismail again on 20 May and he told me he had announced new measures governing the issue of visas and travel permits to humanitarian workers wishing to travel to Darfur. These new measures came into effect on 24 May and include the following: all visas for NGOs, donors, the ICRC, the UN and other humanitarian workers going to Darfur will be issued by Sudanese Embassies within 48 hours; visas will now last for three months rather than one; the requirement for permits to travel from Khartoum to Darfur has been cancelled—notification of travel plans is now the sole requirement; unrestricted movement in Darfur is permitted, subject to UN security co-ordinating movements; a special customs officer will be appointed to facilitate the smooth movement of humanitarian freight.

We welcomed this announcement, and have been monitoring its implementation closely. Initial indications are that these new procedures are working.

Humanitarian needs in Darfur remain enormous. Over one million people are internally displaced and a further 120,000 have fled across the border into Chad. Their circumstances are precarious and are likely to worsen with the onset of rains in the region. The UK has committed over £17.5 million to humanitarian agencies working in Darfur and eastern Chad (see table). We are the second largest donor in Darfur after the US. Our commitments include £5 million agreed on 11 May to support WFP, WHO and UNICEF, as well as commitments in the last two weeks of £670,000 to MSF-Belgium for emergency health care in North Darfur and £250,000 for the UN Joint Logistics Centre (UNJLC). We have also seconded seven humanitarian experts, four of whom are supporting OCHA in Khartoum and in Darfur and three of whom are working in UNJLC to improve the co-ordination of relief. In addition we have provided 15,000 plastic sheets and 22,500 blankets for distribution by agencies. We also contribute 19 per cent. of the cost of ECHO'S commitment—of £4.5 million—to NGOs working in Darfur and Chad. Despite our efforts, we are concerned that the recent UN appeal remains significantly under funded, and we are urging other donors to increase their contributions.

The Sudanese Government can be in no doubt about the seriousness with which we view the situation. We have made it very clear that we expect the parties to implement fully the 8 April ceasefire agreement, including by ensuring unimpeded humanitarian access. Both parties must to put an end to all violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. The Sudanese Government must act now to rein in the Janjaweed militias who seem to be responsible for some of the worst atrocities.

In terms of improving the security situation in Darfur, our priority remains rapid deployment of the African Union-led Ceasefire Monitoring Commission (CFC). To this end we are in almost daily contact with the AU through our Embassy in Addis Ababa, and with other members of the international community. The AU mission has now returned from its reconnaissance visit, and they are currently putting together an operational plan and outline budget. These will be discussed today by the Sudanese Government and opposition groups in Addis Ababa. We then plan to make a swift and significant contribution to the CFC and are encouraging other donors to do the same.

The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has now issued its report on Darfur and the Security Council has been briefed on its contents. It identifies disturbing patterns of human rights violations in Darfur, including forced displacement, arbitrary killing of civilians, and rape, perpetrated by the Sudanese Government and its proxy militia, many of which may constitute war crimes and/or crimes against humanity. Further urgent discussions are taking place on what action should now be taken in light of the report's recommendations. We, with our EU partners, have also made clear that all alleged attacks should be thoroughly investigated and the perpetrators brought to justice. We are also in close contact with the OHCHR about Darfur, and are working to ensure that the Independent Expert, mandated by the 23 April Commission on Human Rights decision on Sudan, is appointed as soon as possible.

The House will also want to be aware that on 26 May the Protocols on power-sharing and the three areas of

the Nuba Mountains, Southern Blue Nile and Abyei were signed at the Sudan peace talks in Naivasha, Kenya. The UK has played an important role in supporting the parties at the peace talks and was represented at the signing ceremony by our Special Representative for Sudan, Alan Goulty. The signing is a welcome and significant step towards a comprehensive peace agreement that will bring an end to decades of conflict in the south of Sudan.

I will keep the House updated on developments.

[1] *UK government-funded humanitarian support in response to the crisis in Darfur, Sudan*

Period	*Agency*	*Description*	*Total cost (£)*
October to December 2003	UNHCR	Assistance to Sudanese Refugees in Eastern Chad—2003	1,000,000
October 2003 to September 2004	SC-UK	Related Internal Displacement in North Darfur	500,000
November to December 2003	ICRC	Contribution to the ICRC 2003 Emergency Appeal for Sudan	1,000,000
November 2003 to March 2004	WFP	Additional Contribution to 2003 UN Appeal, due to Crisis in Darfur, to Provide Emergency Food Assistance to Sudanese Populations Affected by War and Natural Disasters	2,000,000
January to April 2004	MSF-F	Emergency Assistance to IDPs in Darfur—through increasing access to health care in conflict areas, disease prevention, halting nutritional deterioration and treating malnourished children	491,369
January to December 2004	MSF-H	Darfur Components of Emergency Health Interventions in Northern Sudan Project	650,000
February to December 2004	UNICEF	Emergency Assistance to Humanitarian Crisis in Darfur for Health; Water Supply; Water and Environmental Sanitation; Relief and Shelter Items; and the Protection of Children	1,000,000
February to November 2004	GOAL	Emergency Assistance to Population in Kutum Province, North Darfur—through a combined Health, Nutrition and Shelter Intervention	575,963
March to December 2004	ACF	Emergency Nutrition Programme in North Darfur	250,000
March to December 2004	WFP	Emergency Distribution of Food Aid Commodities to Sudanese Refugees in North East Chad	1,000,000
March 2004 to January 2005	UNHCR	Emergency Assistance to Sudanese Refugees in Eastern Chad	1,000,000
April 2004 to December 2004	OXFAM	Public Health Humanitarian Response Darfur (Water/ Sanitation Programme)	2,193,161
May 2004 to December 2004	WFP	Emergency purchase and distribution of Food Aid for internally displaced Sudanese in Darfur.	2,000,000
May 2004 to November 2004	WHO	Emergency primary health care and response to communicable diseases in Darfur; support to measles vaccination programme	1,500,300
May 2004 to December 2004	UNICEF	Additional support to humanitarian assistance for crisis in Darfur; emergency nutrition; emergency health care and the protection of children	1,500,000
May 2004 to July 2004	UN Joint Logistics Centre	Support to enable UNJLC to co-ordinate the logistics of an effective humanitarian response in Sudan	250,000
May 2004 to October 2004	MSF-Belgium	Emergency Health Care for IDPs in North Darfur	671,300
Total			17,581,793

[1] In addition we have also seconded four humanitarian officers to OCHA and three to the UN Joint Logistics Centre to work on Darfur.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Active Communities Unit

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total budget for expenditure by the Active Communities Unit on the voluntary sector *(a)* was for 2003–04 and *(b)* is for 2004–05. [171063]

Fiona Mactaggart: Last year, the work of the Active Community Unit was expanded to incorporate a Charities Unit and a Civil Renewal Unit in a new Active Communities Directorate. Through the Active Communities Directorate, the Home Office aims to build strong, thriving communities where everyone, regardless of age, race or social background has a stake in society.

The overall budgets for expenditure on active communities for financial years 2003–04, and planned for 2004–05, rounded to the nearest million pounds, is as follows:

£ million

	SR settlement	*Futurebuilders fund*
2003–04	81	10
2004–05	84	57

The figures show allocations for the Directorate based on the Department's Spending Review 2002 settlement. In addition, the futurebuilders fund is shown, which is being distributed by an independent provider under contract to the Home Office.

Anti-crime Initiatives

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what public funds were spent on tackling drugs misuse in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* 2003–04. [175882]

Caroline Flint: Breakdown of financial allocation to local constituencies is not available to the Home Office. Funding is allocated to Drug Action Team (DAT) areas, in this case Blackpool DAT.

The period 1997–98 pre-dates National Drug Strategy, during this time the primary care trust (PCT) allocated funding for tackling drug misuse. The 1997–98 figure reported to us by Blackpool PCT is £198,776 which covered Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre (all within the health authority boundaries at the time).

In 2003–04 the total drugs allocation for Blackpool was £1,174,983. In order to ensure consistency figures supplied are based on funding streams associated with the National Drug Strategy and are readily verifiable. These funding streams are specifically targeted at tackling the harm caused to individuals, families and communities by the misuse of drugs. Other mainstream funding is made available at a local level, and this varies both in amount and origin so, as a result it is not possible to provide robust financial information.

	2003–04 (£)
Partnership Capacity	66,872
Treatment Pooled Budget	740,000
Through Care After Care Pump Priming	35,000
Building Safer Communities[1]	207,193
Young people	125,918
Total	1,174,983

[1] Contains non-drug elements.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much public funding has been spent on CCTV security cameras in Bootle since 1997. [175910]

Ms Blears: Since 1997, the Home Office has provided £132,623 to Bootle for CCTV schemes.

Allocation of that funding locally is a matter for Bootle council and Merseyside police. The information is not held centrally.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what public funds were spent on tackling drugs misuse in Bootle in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* 2003–04. [175912]

Caroline Flint: Breakdown of financial allocation to local constituencies is not available in the form requested as funding is allocated to Drug Action Team (DAT) area (Sefton DAT).

1997–98 Sefton drugs allocation was as follows:

	1997–98 (£)
Local Health Authority Block contracts	728,671
JMU Database	20,000
Pharmacy costs	100,000
Social Work team	100,000
Drug Misuse special allocation from DoH	374,000

In 2003–04 the total drugs allocation for Sefton DAT was £2,142,399. In order to ensure consistency figures supplied are based on funding streams associated with the National Drug Strategy and are readily verifiable. These funding streams are specifically targeted at tackling the harm caused to individuals, families and communities by the misuse of drugs. Other mainstream funding is made available at a local level, this varies both in amount and origin so as a result it is not possible to provide robust financial information.

	2003–04 (£)
Partnership Capacity	71,500
Treatment Pooled Budget	1,336,000
Through Care After Care Pump Priming	35,000
Building Safer Communities[1]	484,700
Young People	215,199
Total	2,142,399

[1] Contains non-drug elements.

Anti-social Behaviour Orders

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many anti-social behaviour orders have been used in Lancashire, broken down by district; [175496]

(2) how many anti-social behaviour orders are awaiting decisions in Lancashire, broken down by district; [175497]

(3) how many anti-social behaviour orders have resulted in a custodial sentence in Lancashire, broken down by district. [175510]

Ms Blears: Information is given in Table A on the number of applications for anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) in Lancashire, by result, and local authority area, up to 31 December 2003 (latest available).

Data are not collected centrally on the status of orders currently being processed.

ASBOs are civil orders introduced under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, and do not of themselves result in a custodial sentence. Breach of an ASBO is a criminal offence and a custodial sentence may result following conviction. Information on breaches of ASBOs are compiled from data reported on the Home Office Court Proceedings Database. Available information for ASBOs breached in Lancashire is given in Table B.

Table A: The number of ASBOs, as notified to the Home Office by all courts within Lancashire, by local authority area and result, 1 April 1999 to 31 December 2003

Local authority area	*Total issued*	*Total refused*
Lancashire	72	0
of which:		
from 1 April 1999 to 31 May 2000 by pfa	5	0
from 1 June 2000 to 31 December 2003 by local authority area	67	0
Blackburn with Darwen BC	3	0
Blackpool BC	10	0
Burnley BC	17	0
Chorley BC	5	0
Fylde BC	3	0
Hyndburn BC	4	0
Lancaster CC	2	0
Oswaldtwistle	1	0
Pendle BC	3	0
Preston BC	5	0
Ribble Valley BC	1	0
Rossendale BC	9	0
South Ribble BC	1	0
West Lancashire DC	2	0
Wyre BC	1	0

Note:
Between 1 April 1999 to 31 May 2000 data available by police force area (pfa) only.

Table B: ASBOs breached in Lancashire, by type of sentence imposed and period, from 1 June 2000 to 31 December 2002[1], England and Wales

	Type of sentence imposed for breach of ASBO				
		Immediate custody			
Period (by appearance date)	*Unsuspended imprisonment*	*Detention in a young offender institution*	*Detention and training orders*	*Other*	*Total*
1 June to 31 December 2000	—	—	—	—	—
1 January to 31 December 2001	2	1	—	3	6
1 January to 31 December 2002	2	1	2	2	7
Total	4	2	2	5	13

[1] Breach data are compiled from breaches reported on the Home Office Court Proceedings Database. Data for 2003 will be available in the autumn.

Note:
Individuals breaching their ASBO more than once in the same year are counted only once for that year, based on the principal disposal (severest penalty imposed). Individuals breaching more than once, but in different years, are counted separately for each year.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many children and young people who have broken anti-social behaviour orders are in *(a)* local authority secure units, *(b)* secure training centres and *(c)* young offender institutions; and if he will make a statement. [175465]

Ms Blears: Information on breaches of anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) are compiled from data reported on the Home Office Court Proceedings Database. We are unable to tell the number of offenders currently held for breach of an ASBO in local authority secure units or secure training centres. The number of offenders sentenced to a period of detention in young offender institutions for a breach of an ASBO, for the period 1 June 2000 to 31 December 2002, is shown in the table, together with other sentences imposed. Breach data for 2003 will be available in the autumn.

ASBOs breached by persons aged 10 to 20 years, by type of sentence imposed and period, from 1 June 2000 to 31 December 2002[1]

Period (by appearance date)	*Detention in a Young Offender Institution[2]*	*Detention and Training Orders[3]*	*Other*	*Total*
1 June to 31 December 2000	—	4	5	9
1 January to 31 December 2001	13	24	44	81
1 January to 31 December 2002	25	53	103	181
Total	38	81	152	271

[1] Breach data are compiled from breaches reported on the Home Office Court Proceedings Database. Data for 2003 will be available in the autumn.

[2] Persons aged 18 to 20 years.

[3] Persons aged 10 to 17 years. Offenders may be sent to a local authority secure unit, secure training centre or (over 15 years of age), to a young offender institution.

Note:

Individuals breaching their ASBO more than once in the same year are counted only once for that year, based on the principal disposal (severest penalty imposed). Individuals breaching more than once, but in different years, are counted separately for each year.

Bribery/Corruption

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* legislative and *(b)* administrative arrangements need to be made by the United Kingdom Government in order to meet its obligations under the UN Convention Against Corruption; and when the Government intend to ratify the UN Convention. [174003]

Mr. MacShane: I have been asked to reply.

Legislation is required to comply fully with the convention's requirements in Article 52, on prevention and detection of transfers of the proceeds of crime; Article 53, on the confiscation and repatriation of assets; and Article 55, on the forfeiture of the instrumentalities of crime.

Primary legislation is required to comply with Article 55. Secondary legislation, under part 11 of the Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) 2002, is needed to comply with Article 53.

Secondary legislation will also be required to comply with Article 52. Measures dealing with the requirements of Article 52 are likely to be included in the EU Third Money Laundering Directive. Our current expectation is that negotiations on the directive will be completed by the first part of next year and we would seek to implement it in the UK through secondary legislation, as soon as we reasonably could thereafter.

The Government are also considering what, if any, administrative arrangements need to be made to enable the UK to meet its obligations under the convention.

The Government will seek to implement legislation and other measures at the earliest possible opportunity. We intend to ratify the convention as soon as we are satisfied that the UK can comply fully with its obligations under it.

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) when he intends to reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, dated 26 January 2004, with regard to Mosamma Meherun Nessa Begum, transferred to him by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office; [166348]

(2) when he intends to reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, dated 26 January 2004, with regard to Mosamma Meherun Nessa Begum, transferred to him from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. [172251]

Mr. Blunkett: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 6 May 2004.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, dated 29 March 2004, with regard to Henry Morgan Crowe. [170701]

Mr. Blunkett: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 11 May 2004.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he intends to reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, dated 5 April 2004, with regard to Alfred Kaland. [172252]

Mr. Blunkett: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 11 May 2004.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter to him from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 14 April with regard to Muhammad Rafique. [175614]

Mr. Blunkett: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 27 May 2004.

Domestic Violence

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many reported cases involving domestic violence there were in England and Wales in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [174490]

Ms Blears: Domestic violence is not separately identified in the recorded crime statistics collected by the Home Office nor in the statistics of court proceedings, because the circumstances of the offences are not collected.

However, the British Crime Survey (BCS) routinely collects data on the prevalence and number of incidents of domestic violence in England and Wales from the main "face-to-face" part of the survey. In the 2002–03 BCS there were an estimated 501,000 incidents of domestic violence in England and Wales as a whole. 35 per cent. of these cases were reported to the police.

E-crime

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much public funding has been spent on the e-crime strategy since it was introduced. [176611]

Caroline Flint: The e-crime strategy will look to provide a framework for Government, law enforcement and industry action in response to e-crime, seeking to outline current legislation, policy and practice, as well as addressing current questions and advancing and informing the debate on longer-term issues.

However the strategy has not been published as yet. Officials continue to work to bring the strategy together and it will be published soon.

EU Enlargement

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people from EU accession countries arrived at UK international *(a)* airports and *(b)* bus stations on the first week of May. [173182]

Mr. Browne: Since 1 May, members of the EU accession countries are subject to the same immigration controls as citizens of other EU member states. We are therefore not able to say how many passengers arrived from EU accession countries. Data from the International Passenger Survey (IPS), showing the total number of visits by nationals of all the EU accession countries in May, will be available early in July.

Air Guns

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment has been made of the level of enforcement of penalties in cases of air gun misuse. [175541]

Caroline Flint: The information given in the table relates to persons who were proceeded against at magistrates courts in 2002 for offences under the Firearms Acts where an air weapon was involved and relates to the principal offence for which they were prosecuted. It is not possible to identify from the statistics of court proceedings collected centrally other offences where an air weapon is used in the commission of a crime. Comparative statistics on court proceedings for 2003 will not be available until the autumn.

Offence description	*Statute*	*Persons proceeded against*	*Persons found guilty*	*Persons sentenced*	*Absolute/ conditional discharge*	*Fine*
Possession of air weapon with intent to endanger life	Firearms Act, 1968 Sec 16	32	3	3	—	—
Using air weapons or imitation air weapons to resist arrest	Firearms Act, 1968 Sec 17(1)	—	—	—	—	—
Possessing air weapon or imitation air weapon at time of committing or being arrested for an offence specified in schedule 1 of the Act	Firearms Act, 1968 Sec 17(2)	32	—	—	—	—
Possessing air weapon or imitation air weapon with intent to commit an indictable offence or resist arrest	Firearms Act, 1968 Sec 18(1)	11	1	1	—	—
Possessing of a air weapon or imitation air weapon with intent to cause fear of violence	Firearms Act, 1968 Sec 16A (as amended by Firearms (Amendment) Act 1994)	127	25	25	2	—
Possession of air weapon by persons previously convicted of crime	Firearms Act 1968 Section 21 (4) as amended by the Criminal Justice & Public Act 1994, Sec 157 Sch. 8 part III.	57	35	36	9	8
Supplying air weapon to person denied them under Section 21	Ibid Section 21(5) as amended by the Criminal Justice & Public Order Act 1994, Sec 157 Sch. 8 part III.	—	—	—	—	—
Carrying loaded air weapon in public place etc.	Ibid Section 19	186	137	137	41	45
Trespassing with air weapon in a building	Ibid Section 20(1)	2	1	1	1	—
Trespassing with air weapon on land	Ibid Section 20(2)	32	23	23	8	12
Person under 17 acquiring air weapon	Ibid Section 22(1).	—	—	—	—	—
Person under 14 having with him an air weapon or ammunition therefor	Ibid Section 22(4)	7	5	5	1	—
Person under 17 having with him an air weapon in a public place	Ibid Section 22(5)	51	41	41	14	5
Person under 14 making improper use of air weapon when under supervision	Ibid Section 23(1)	1	—	—	—	—
Person supervising person under 14, permitting improper use of air weapon	Ibid Section 23(1).	—	—	—	—	—
Selling or letting on hire an air weapon to person under 17	Ibid Section 24(1)	—	—	—	—	—
Supplying air weapon to person under 14	Ibid Section 24(4)	2	2	2	1	1
Supplying air weapon to person drunk or insane	Ibid Section 25	—	—	—	—	—
Failure to hand over air weapon or ammunition or demand by constable	Ibid Section 47(2)	—	—	—	—	—
Total		540	273	274	77	71

Offence description	Statute	Average fine amount (£)	Community penalty	Immediate custody	Average custodial sentence length (months)	Otherwise dealt with
Possession of air weapon with intent to endanger life	Firearms Act, 1968 Sec 16	—	2	1	6.0	—
Using air weapons or imitation air weapons to resist arrest	Firearms Act, 1968 Sec 17(1)	—	—	—	—	—
Possessing air weapon or imitation air weapon at time of committing or being arrested for an offence specified in schedule 1 of the Act	Firearms Act, 1968 Sec 17(2)	—	—	—	—	—
Possessing air weapon or imitation air weapon with intent to commit an indictable offence or resist arrest	Firearms Act, 1968 Sec 18(1)	—	—	—	—	1
Possessing of a air weapon or imitation air weapon with intent to cause fear of violence	Firearms Act, 1968 Sec 16A (as amended by Firearms (Amendment) Act 1994)	—	16	7	15.3	—
Possession of air weapon by persons previously convicted of crime	Firearms Act 1968 Section 21 (4) as amended by the Criminal Justice & Public Act 1994, Sec 157 Sch. 8 part III.	138	12	5	7.0	2
Supplying air weapon to person denied them under Section 21	Ibid Section 21(5) as amended by the Criminal Justice & Public Order Act 1994, Sec 157 Sch. 8 part III.	—	—	—	—	—
Carrying loaded air weapon in public place etc.	Ibid Section 19	96	47	3	2.3	1
Trespassing with air weapon in a building	Ibid Section 20(1)	—	—	—	—	—
Trespassing with air weapon on land	Ibid Section 20(2)	112	2	1	4.0	—
Person under 17 acquiring air weapon	Ibid Section 22(1).	—	—	—	—	—
Person under 14 having with him an air weapon or ammunition therefor	Ibid Section 22(4)	—	4	—	—	—
Person under 17 having with him an air weapon in a public place	Ibid Section 22(5)	49	21	—	—	1
Person under 14 making improper use of air weapon when under supervision	Ibid Section 23(1)	—	—	—	—	—
Person supervising person under 14, permitting improper use of air weapon	Ibid Section 23(1).	—	—	—	—	—
Selling or letting on hire an air weapon to person under 17	Ibid Section 24(1)	—	—	—	—	—
Supplying air weapon to person under 14	Ibid Section 24(4)	300	—	—	—	—
Supplying air weapon to person drunk or insane	Ibid Section 25	—	—	—	—	—
Failure to hand over air weapon or ammunition or demand by constable	Ibid Section 47(2)	—	—	—	—	—
Total		103	104	17	9.4	5

Leyhill Prison

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 25 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 435W, if he will make a statement on the conclusions and recommendations of the investigation report; and if he will place a copy in the Library. [160194]

Paul Goggins: I wrote to the hon. Member for Northavon (Mr. Webb) on 8 March 2004 and placed a copy of the letter in the Library.

Neighbourhood Watch Logo

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department who owns the Neighbourhood Watch logo. [176390]

Ms Blears: The neighbourhood watch logo was designed by the Central Office of Information in 1994 on behalf of the Home Office, and is therefore Crown Copyright.

As a result of complaints from local neighbourhood watches it recently came to light that in early 2003 the National Neighbourhood Watch Association (NNWA) registered the Neighbourhood Watch logo as its own trademark. This was done without consulting the Home Office, the Police or neighbourhood watch generally.

We are taking steps to resolve the situation with NNWA and to restore ownership and control of the Neighbourhood Watch trademarks to the Home Office.

Number Plate Recognition Technology

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will list the 10 prosecutions that have resulted from automatic number plate recognition technology that have led to the highest value of drug seizures; [175244]

(2) how many and what types of prosecution have resulted from cars being stopped by automatic number plate recognition cameras in North Wales since their introduction; [175245]

(3) how many prosecutions have led to prison sentences as a result of the use of automatic number plate recognition technology; [175246]

(4) how many cars were stopped by automatic number plate recognition technology in each police authority area since their introduction. [175247]

Ms Blears: Data listing the 10 prosecutions that resulted from vehicles being stopped by Automatic Name Plate Recognition (ANPR) dedicated police intercept teams that led to the highest value of drug seizures are not held centrally. However, between 1 June 2003 and 16 May 2004, the latest date for which figures are available, the following number of arrests carried out by the 23 police forces involved in ANPR Project Laser Two for drug-related offences, were as follows:

	ANPR drug-related arrests
Number of arrests	1,082
Number of occasions	686
Value of drugs recovered (£)	432,124.00

The table gives a breakdown of the number and type of arrest made as a result of vehicles being stopped by the North Wales police ANPR intercept teams between 1 June 2003 and 16 May 2004:

Arrest breakdown

	Number
Robbery	2
Theft/burglary	75
Driving	249
Drugs	182
S25	112
Auto Crime	51
Warrant	53
Other	57

Details of how many prosecutions led to prison sentences as a result of ANPR are not held centrally.

Data on the number of vehicles stopped by ANPR in each police authority area since its introduction are not held centrally. The number of vehicles stopped in each of the 23 ANPR Project Laser Two police forces between 1 June 2003 and 16 May 2004, the latest date for which figures are available, were as follows:

	Number
Avon and Somerset	5,692
Cambridgeshire	7,818
City of London	4,871
Cleveland	2,317
Greater Manchester police	14,612
Hampshire	5,767
Hertfordshire	4,911
Kent	9,896
Lancashire	10,596
Leicestershire	9,233
Lincolnshire	10,303
Merseyside	6,431
Metropolitan	17,435
Northamptonshire	6,688
Northumbria	3,731
North Wales	10,227
North Yorkshire	4,214
Nottinghamshire	2,532
Staffordshire	5,078
Warwickshire	4,503
West Midlands	7,247
West Yorkshire	8,322

Police Patrols (Bicycles)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 19 May to the hon. Member for Southend, West, reference 172570, which police forces use bicycles while patrolling; and if he will make a statement. [175898]

Ms Blears: Information on the number of police forces who use bicycles while patrolling is not collected centrally. The deployment of officers patrolling on bicycles is an operational matter for the Chief Constable and will vary among each force.

Police Training

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what effect the planned reduction of posts at Centrex will have on the provision of Stage 2 probationer training. [168442]

Ms Blears: Delivery of Stage 2 probationer training remains a priority. The reduction in training staff is a consequence of reduced demand for places from police forces: the ratio of trainer to probationer students remains the same. The planned reduction in police support staff numbers will be achieved by a thorough review of administrative processes with a view to making efficiency savings.

All changes have been made in consultation with key stakeholders, who are content that the approach taken will not impact negatively on the quality of Stage 2 probationer training.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Crown Prosecution Service

22. **Julie Morgan**: To ask the Solicitor-General what plans she has for the Crown Prosecution Service to improve public awareness of its work. [176012]

The Solicitor-General: Public awareness of the work of the Crown Prosecution Service is being improved by prosecutors talking about their work, for example in local schools and at local community meetings

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Council Tax

Jim Knight: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 20 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1140–41W, on council tax, what public consultation will take place on council tax revaluation, with particular reference to consultation between the Government and mobile home users. [176369]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not yet finalised the detailed arrangements for public consultation on the 2007 council tax revaluation.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to introduce council tax for *(a)* static holiday caravans and *(b)* touring caravans. [175944]

Mr. Raynsford: Council tax liability arises only in respect of domestic property and is based upon the identification of a "chargeable dwelling". Caravans are not in themselves subject to council tax, but liability may arise in respect of the land on which the caravan stands. If a caravan remains on private land for a period of at least six months, the listing officer may include an entry in the valuation list for council tax purposes. If the caravan is being used for holiday letting for more than 140 days a year, then it will be subject to non-domestic rates rather than council tax. The Government have no plans to amend legislation on this matter.

Housing Pathfinder Scheme

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much *(a)* in total and *(b)* per council property is to be made available to Hull under his Pathfinder scheme (i) this year and (ii) in each of the next three years; when the money will start to be paid; and whether there has been a delay in payment. [175106]

Keith Hill: Allocation of Housing Market Renewal funding to the Hull and East Riding Market Renewal pathfinder is subject to the pathfinder demonstrating that it has satisfactory arrangements in place to develop a strategic market renewal scheme and to the approval of that scheme once submitted. Following an overhaul by the pathfinder of its governance arrangements and the preparation of a revised work programme, the pathfinder has been informed that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is prepared to enter into a grant agreement that will provide funds to facilitate scheme development.

The Pathfinder's target date for submission of its strategic scheme is the end of September 2004. Allocation of Housing Market Renewal funding for the scheme, along with the amount and timing of any allocation and the programme of work supported, will be dependent on submission of the scheme and it's subsequent assessment by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and independent scrutiny by the Audit Commission.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Rendel: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) if he will list for *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05 the local authorities for which a funding (i) ceiling and (ii) floor has been imposed; [176366]

(2) if he will list for each local authority for which a ceiling has been imposed *(a)* the grant calculated by the funding formula and *(b)* the grant actually received in real terms figures for (i) 2003–04 and (ii) 2004–05; and what the difference was in each case, expressed as a percentage of the local authority's council tax intake. [176367]

Mr. Raynsford: Two tables have been made available in the Library of the House showing the floor and ceiling classification of all authorities for 2003–04 and 2004–05 respectively, together with their formula grant before floors and ceilings, their formula grant after floors and ceilings, the difference, their council tax yield and the difference expressed as a percentage of the council tax yield.

It should be noted that ceilings do not fully meet the cost of the floor; therefore a scaling factor was applied to that portion of the grant increase above the level of the floor for all non-floor/non-ceiling authorities.

In 2004–05, there were no effective ceilings for both the shire district and police authority groups; the floors were funded entirely via the scaling factor.

Regional Assemblies

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his oral answer of 19 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 968–69, on regional assemblies, what the evidential basis was for the figure given for the cost of answering the hon. Member for North Essex's written questions relating to the Government's information campaign on elected regional assemblies; and what the *(a)* total projected cost and *(b)* the cost to date of that campaign is. [175779]

Mr. Raynsford: Since January 2004 to date, the hon. Member for North Essex (Mr. Jenkin) has asked 60 questions on issues related to elected regional assemblies, including the information campaign. The average cost of answering a parliamentary question, as calculated by Her Majesty's Treasury, is £135. This gives a total of £8,100.

For the total projected cost of the information campaign and its breakdown, I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 366W. To date, the Government have spent just under £700,000.

Retained Firefighters

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many retained firefighters have been in service during each of the last four years. [176261]

Phil Hope: The information requested is as follows.

Retained firefighters in post, England and Wales, 2000–03[1]

	Number
2000	14,698
2001	14,832
2002	14,719
2003	14,776

[1] Data refer to retained workforce as at 31 March of each year

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to help in the recruitment of more retained firefighters. [176262]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has set up a review team to examine the issues which contribute to the challenges facing the fire and rescue service in the recruitment and retention of retained firefighters. The review team, a partnership between the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and key service stakeholders, will submit its full report, with recommendations, to the Practitioners' Forum in July 2004.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has also sponsored the production of a public information video, highlighting the role of retained firefighters. This video was distributed to fire and rescue services this month for use as part of their community information programmes and as a recruitment tool.

Additionally, we have produced a new range of recruitment literature which will be launched in the summer for fire and rescue services to use in their retained recruitment campaigns.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will extend the key worker definition to include *(a)* firefighters and *(b)* retained firefighters for the purposes of the affordable housing initiative. [176263]

Keith Hill: In the Fire Service, the Key Worker Living (KWL) programme is assisting whole-time junior officers and retained firefighters (all grades) to tackle recruitment and retention difficulties linked to housing issues experienced by these groups in London, the South East and Eastern Regions. Based on current evidence, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no plans to extend the assistance to whole-time firefighters.

Rights of Way

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the navigability of rights of way; and what measures he plans to improve it. [175263]

Alun Michael: I have been asked to reply.

The Countryside Agency rights of way condition survey in England in 2000, found between 87 and 89 per cent. of routes "usable" by walkers, cyclists and horse riders. In addition, the statutory "best value" performance management framework requires local highway authorities to measure the ease of use of their rights of way, by carrying out annual surveys and reporting against their rights of way performance indicator.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 requires local highway authorities to prepare rights of way improvement plans. These plans encourage highway authorities to take a strategic look at their rights of way network, with a view to accommodating modern patterns of demand and use and providing better for the needs of users. The Government have provided additional funding to enable the preparation of these plans.

TRANSPORT

Transport (Serious Emergency)

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how well developed Government plans are to deal with a serious emergency in the London Underground. [174681]

Mr. McNulty: Through the London Resilience partnership, the Government are working closely with London Underground, Transport for London, British Transport Police and the other emergency services to ensure that London's front-line responders are as well prepared as possible to deal with a serious emergency on the underground. This work is building on tried and tested emergency response procedures and practice developed by London Underground and the emergency services through thirty years of coping directly with terrorist alerts and other emergencies on the underground network. Over the past two and a half years, a number of steps have been taken—and continue to be taken—to strengthen further this emergency response capacity. These include the provision of new equipment to the emergency services, ongoing verbal and written briefings to London Underground staff and a continuing programme of training and exercises.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment has been made of whether London Underground lines could be evacuated successfully in the event of a serious disruption to the electricity supply of the London Underground. [174685]

Mr. McNulty: This is an operational matter for London Underground, but during last August's power failure all passengers were safely evacuated following well-established procedures. Although not needed last August, LU has back up generators that provide sufficient power for essential equipment, including tunnel and additional station lights that enable the safe evacuation of trains trapped between stations.

London Underground has well established procedures for investigating any incident and how it was handled. LU published a report in December on the August power failure and has revised its procedures for evacuating trains, as well as improving familiarity with how to restore services following a power failure and has acted to reduce the risk of a similar incident.

British Transport Police

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many British Transport Police officers there were in each London borough in each year since 1997. [172816]

Mr. McNulty: The British Transport Police (BTP) does not deploy its officers by borough due to the nature of policing the rail network in London. In London and the south east the numbers of police officers were:

	Police	*Specials*	*Total*
1997	1,148	0	1,148
1998	1,125	0	1,125
1999	1,123	1	1,124
2000	1,100	25	1,125
2001	1,125	31	1,156
2002	1,181	50	1,231
2003	1,250	79	1,329
2004	1,315	123	1,438

Bus Services (Cambridgeshire)

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether it is his policy that part of the capital cost of the proposed guided bus scheme should be paid by way of loan money raised by Cambridgeshire county council. [176260]

Mr. McNulty: Yes. The proposed Cambridge to Huntingdon Rapid Transit Guided Busway has been provisionally accepted for funding through Cambridgeshire county council's local transport plan settlement. As is usual with such major schemes (i.e. those costing more than £5 million) the funding will comprise 50 per cent. grant and 50 per cent. supported borrowing.

Car Sharing

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will estimate the total reduction in vehicle kilometres that would result from a *(a)* 10 per cent., *(b)* 20 per cent. and *(c)* 50 per cent. increase in average vehicle occupancy. [172336]

Mr. McNulty: It is estimated that the decrease in vehicle kilometres for cars, taxis and vans as a result of an increase in vehicle occupancy would be as follows:

	Percentage increase in vehicle occupancy		
	10	*20*	*50*
Resultant percentage change in vehicle kilometres	-9	-17	-33
Vehicle kilometres by cars, taxis and vans (billion)			
Current (2002)	447	447	447
Following decrease in occupancy	407	373	298
Change	-41	-75	-149

This assumes that the occupancy increase is a result of increased trip sharing and therefore fewer trips, and not, for example, from a shift of passengers from other modes of transport. It is also assumed that an increase in occupancy does not result in an increase in trip length (i.e. passenger kilometre figures stay fixed).

Child Cyclist Accidents

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many children were *(a)* injured and *(b)* killed while riding their bicycles in 2003 in *(a)* Shrewsbury and Atcham and *(b)* England. [175633]

Dr. Howells: The latest year for which information is available is 2002. The numbers of children (0–15) killed or injured in road accidents while riding their pedal cycles in 2002 in *(a)* Shrewsbury and Atcham and *(b)* England, are shown in the following table.

The first release of figures for 2003 will be on 24 June 2004.

	Shrewsbury and Atcham	*England*
Killed	0	21
Injured	19	4,198

Container Ports

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what factors he takes into account when considering applications for future container port development. [175578]

Mr. Darling: I consider the full range of factors that emerge from the inspector's reports on the public inquiry into each application.

Crossrail

Ann Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the impact of the proposed ventilation duct due to be built at Stamford Brook Common as part of the Crossrail development on *(a)* residents and *(b)* local air quality in Brentford and Isleworth. [176096]

Mr. McNulty: Cross London Rail Links Ltd. (CLRL) is continuing to develop its Crossrail proposals. Assessments of environmental impact form an important part of CLRL's work, and should the section of route affecting Brentford and Isleworth be confirmed, the interests of people living and working there will form part of that assessment.

Ann Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent representations he has received on the Crossrail development. [176097]

Mr. McNulty: The Secretary of State has received representations on Crossrail from a number of stakeholders, including in particular the representatives of London's business interests, who have expressed their continuing support for the proposals. He has also received representations from residents along the route proposed by Cross London Rail Links Ltd.

Departmental Annual Report

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how many of the new vehicles that came into service on the railways as described on page 10 of

The Department of Transport Annual Report 2004 have since been withdrawn for periods of more than three weeks; [174170]

(2) how many vehicles that have entered service on the railways have subsequently been withdrawn for periods of three weeks or more in each year since 1997. [174171]

Mr. McNulty: The information is not available in the form requested. There have been cases where faults on individual trains have led to their removal from service for varying periods. Trains may also be taken out of service for periods of three weeks or more to allow for planned heavy maintenance. Among the new trains introduced since 1997, however, there is no case in which an entire fleet, or a significant part of one, has entered passenger service but is currently out of use.

Driving Licences

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many driving licence applications were returned in 2003 for being incorrectly completed; and what proportion of the total number of applications this represents. [175794]

Mr. McNulty: During the financial year 2003–04, 9.8 per cent. of applications for driving licences were incorrectly completed and returned to customers. 6.6 million driving licences were issued in the same period.

Equal Pay

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the pay gap between men and women employed by his Department and its agencies in *(a)* Southampton, *(b)* Eastleigh, *(c)* Winchester and *(d)* Romsey. [171621]

Mr. McNulty: The Central Department for Transport and its Agencies with staff in Southampton and the surrounding area individually carried out equal pay reviews in 2003, which included the pay gap between men and women. Although some pay gaps were identified, these can be explained and are justifiable. Action plans are in place to reduce the gaps even further.

Import/Export Costs

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the annual cost of transhipment of *(a)* consumer goods and raw materials imported into the UK and *(b)* manufactured goods exported from the UK. [175598]

Mr. Darling: None. Data collected in accordance with the EC Maritime Statistics Directive does not enable us to calculate the volumes transhipped via foreign or other UK ports, nor any extra costs to shippers that might arise.

Light Rail (Blackpool)

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the need for social inclusion benefits in the criteria for assessment of the Blackpool Light Rail bid in the light of the National Audit Office Report, Improving Public Transport in England through light rail. [175509]

Mr. McNulty: Social inclusion benefits are already taken into account in the Department's value for money assessments.

Liquefied Petroleum Gas

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many vehicles his Department estimates will be using liquefied petroleum gas fuel by 2008; and what estimate he has made of the contribution these vehicles will make to a reduction in road transport emissions. [172569]

Mr. Darling: The Government directly support the use of more environmentally friendly fuels through reduced fuel duty rates. These fuels include liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), compressed or liquefied natural gas, biodiesel and low and zero sulphur petrol and diesel.

Further, the Government encourage the use of cleaner vehicles through reduced vehicle excise duty rates based on vehicle emissions (which are zero for electric vehicles) and reduced levels of company car tax for low emission vehicles. Purchase grants are available under the PowerShift programme for hybrid, electric, LPG and natural gas vehicles. In addition, hydrogen vehicles are supported under the New Vehicle Technology Fund and the fitting of emission abatement equipment is incentivised through the CleanUp programme.

According to the LPG Association, there are currently some 107,000 LPG vehicles licensed in the UK—an increase from around 39,000 LPG vehicles in 2000. We expect this number to continue to rise, but we have no firm estimates for vehicle numbers in 2008.

Good quality LPG vehicles can offer a number of environmental advantages, particularly where they are used in place of diesel vehicles in urban areas. The precise nature of these benefits will depend on where the vehicles are used and what type of vehicles they are replacing and as such we have no firm estimates for emissions reductions resulting from the use of LPG vehicles in 2008.

M6

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* cars, *(b)* vans and *(c)* lorries on average use the M6 toll road each day. [175959]

Mr. McNulty: Since the opening of the M6 Toll in December 2003 a monitoring programme has been carried out. An initial report, compiled from surveys carried out on behalf of the Highways Agency, is being prepared and is due to be published in the near future. More comprehensive reports are scheduled for one year and five years after opening.

However, the M6 Toll concessionaire, Midland Expressway Ltd., has published figures showing that the average 24-hour weekday (Monday to Friday) two way traffic flow recorded in April 2004 was 47,247 vehicles per day (vpd). Weekend flows are lower at 39,575 vpd.

Currently, there is no breakdown between cars, vans and lorries available but indications are that traffic flows comprise mainly cars and light vehicles with HGVs continuing to use the original M6 route.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total cost of constructing the M6 toll road was. [175960]

Mr. McNulty: The M6 Toll has been privately financed by Midland Expressway Ltd. (MEL) under a 53 year concession agreement awarded by the Government in 1992. The construction costs awarded by MEL to its contractor at tender stage were £485.5 million. The overall costs are a matter for MEL but I understand that the development cost incurred is in the region of £900 million. This includes cost of land, interest on loans, consultancy, management, and legal fees.

Management Consultants (Railways)

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how much has been paid by his Department and its predecessors to management consultants in respect of the national railways in each year since 1997; [171214]

(2) which management consultants have worked for his Department and its predecessors in each year since 1997; and what payments were made to each management consultancy for work in connection with the national rail network in each year. [171215]

Mr. McNulty: The information is shown in the following table.

£ million

Consultant	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	Total
Mercer Management Consulting	3.928	0.777	0.539	5.244
KPMG LLP	—	—	1.500	1.500
Jacobs Consultancy UK Ltd.	—	—	0.090	0.090
Total	3.928	0.777	2.129	6.834

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how much the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) has paid to management consultants in respect of the national railways in each year since the SRA was created; [171216]

(2) which management consultants have worked for the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA), and what payments have been made to each for work in connection with the national rail network, in each year since the creation of the SRA. [171217]

Mr. McNulty: The SRA was created in January 2001. The information requested is shown, for each year since the SRA's creation, in the following table:

£

Consultant	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Frank Robertson Associates	12,727.40	5,623.40	—	—	18,350.80
Hays Management Consultants	—	—	—	159,495.01	159,495.01
KPMG Consulting	—	143,364.80	—	—	143,364.80
Mantix	83,600.00	69,200.00	—	—	152,800.00
Organisation Consulting Partnership	—	—	55,426.76	—	55,426.76
PJR Ltd.	—	29,250.00	—	5,551.88	34,801.88
Parsons Group International Ltd.	24,920.00	—	—	—	24,920.00
Patricia Sloane Associates	—	4,800.00	—	—	4,800.00
Towers Perrin	—	3,899.00	18,020.00	70,865.44	92,784.44
Total	121,247.40	256,137.20	73,446.76	235,912.33	686,743.69

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how much Network Rail has paid to management consultants for work in connection with the national railways in each year since its creation; [171218]

(2) what payments have been made for work in connection with the national rail network by Network Rail to each management consultancy which has carried out such work, broken down by year. [171219]

Mr. McNulty: These are operational matters for Network Rail. Details of consultancies let by Network Rail are commercially confidential.

Ministerial Meetings

Lawrie Quinn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what meetings he has had with Mr. Alan Osborne over the last 12 months. [174812]

Mr. McNulty: The Secretary of State met with Alan Osbourne on 13 May 2003 when he was an employee of the HSE.

Lawrie Quinn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he has met Mr. Alan Osborne to discuss the rail review. [174811]

Mr. McNulty: The Secretary of State has not met with Alan Osbourne to discuss the rail review.

Lawrie Quinn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he has met the Health and Safety Commission to discuss the rail review. [174814]

Mr. McNulty: The Secretary of State has regular discussions with the HSE to discuss a range of issues and will be meeting with them again shortly.

Official Vehicles

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what percentage of official vehicles used by his Department are run on *(a)* petrol, *(b)* diesel, *(c)* liquid petroleum gas and *(d)* compressed natural gas. [172777]

Mr. McNulty: The Government as a whole have signed up to various targets for improving the performance of its own vehicle fleet, details of which, together with reports on each Department's progress towards these targets, are available at www.sustainable-development.gov.uk.

The Department for Transport Headquarters has very few departmental vehicles. The Government Car Service (GCS) provides our ministerial cars. For detailed information on the breakdown of the GCS vehicle fleet, I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Minister for the Cabinet Office on 25 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1538W.

Over 1,000 vehicles are currently used by the Department for Transport's various agencies, including a number of specialist vehicles. Precise information is not readily available on the fuels used by all these vehicles, but in 2003 approximately 11 per cent. of the vehicles for which this information was available were LPG vehicles.

Piracy Conference

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) who from his Department will attend the International Maritime Bureau's piracy conference in June; [174607]

(2) what *(a)* meetings he has had and *(b)* correspondence he has exchanged with his counterparts in (i) Malaysia and (ii) elsewhere on tackling piracy in Southern Asia. [174610]

Mr. McNulty: The Department works with other countries in Southern Asia through the IMO on a routine basis to tackle piracy. In the past the Department has raised the topic in bilateral meetings with officials and Ministers from overseas countries (for example Indonesia). The Department's Transport Security Directorate, TRANSEC has in the past participated in and, jointly with the FCO, provided UK financial support for several IMO regional missions and seminars, presenting UK Government actions and chairing working groups and syndicates. These seminars have played an important role in raising awareness of the incidence and impact of piracy and armed robbery at sea. No request for a ministerial meeting has been received, nor has any ministerial correspondence been received.

The Deputy Director of this Department's Transport Security Directorate, will be attending the International Maritime Bureau's piracy conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on June 29–30. This will be a good opportunity for the UK to discuss piracy with the host country of Malaysia as well as other key states in the fight against piracy such as Indonesia and Singapore.

Railways

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funding and subsidy arrangements are available from *(a)* central Government and *(b)* other national and European-based agencies to companies who wish to transport goods *(a)* into the United Kingdom and *(b)* across the United Kingdom by rail. [175429]

Mr. McNulty: The Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) announced a £22 million Company Neutral Revenue Support grant from April to help the movement of domestic intermodal and deep-sea container traffic by rail instead of road where this is justified by environmental benefits.

The SRA also operates the Freight Facilities Grant and the Track Access Grant schemes to support the cost of moving goods by rail instead of road within the UK where this is justified by environmental benefits. The Freight Facilities Grant is currently suspended.

In 2003 the EU agreed a five-year funding programme called "Marco Polo" to encourage intermodal freight transport. Aid may be offered to schemes that involve at least two member states, subject to conditions. The total budget for the five-year period is 75 million euros.

Albert Owen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions he has had with Network Rail on improving line speeds on the track between Holyhead and Chester. [174070]

Mr. McNulty: None. The SRA is actively considering the issues on the North Wales coast and investigating cost effective line speed increases which may be achievable through modest signal and track works. It must first address deliverability and planning issues. In doing so, it is consulting stakeholders, including the Welsh Assembly, about its proposals as part of the on-going work on the West Coast Strategy. Any commitment to future improvements that may demonstrate value for money will only be given if the project is affordable, and subject to other funding priorities.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what criteria were used by the Strategic Rail Authority in determining its policy of giving priority to long-distance services over local services when letting new railway franchises. [174077]

Mr. Darling: The Strategic Rail Authority does not have a policy of giving priority to long-distance services over local services when letting new railway franchises.

Regional Assemblies Bill

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether it is planned that the draft Regional Assemblies Bill should specify the circumstances in which decisions relating to transport and transport infrastructures will be taken at *(a)* regional and *(b)* national level. [175123]

Mr. Darling: The draft Regional Assemblies Bill will specify the proposed statutory provisions required to bring into effect the transport powers of elected regional assemblies set out in the White Paper, "Your Region, Your Choice: Revitalising the English Regions" (CmSSll).

Elected regional assemblies will be responsible for advising Government on funding allocations for local transport, taking over functions currently exercised by regional government offices. They will also be responsible for a regional transport strategy, which is currently prepared by regional planning bodies and issued by the Secretary pf State for planning as part of regional planning guidance.

The powers of the elected regional assemblies in relation to rail will be subject to the outcome of the rail review, which I announced in my statement to the House on 19 January 2004.

Rescue Operations (Morecambe Bay)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many rescue operations have taken place of people caught in the rising tides in Morecambe Bay since 5 February. [176335]

Mr. McNulty: Since 5 February 2004, Her Majesty's Coastguard has responded to seven incidents where people were caught out by rising tides in Morecambe Bay.

Road Safety

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the effectiveness of the Safer City Project in reducing *(a)* road accidents and *(b)* road casualties in Gloucester. [176215]

Mr. McNulty: "Gloucester Safer City" was a demonstration project sponsored by the Department for Transport and ran from 1996 to 2001. It was the subject of full monitoring and conditions in Gloucester were compared with five control towns.

Compared with the control towns, the project showed that there was

16.7 per cent. saving in all injury accidents

36.9 per cent. saving in Killed or Seriously Injured accidents

16 per cent. reduction in drivers exceeding speed limits

65 per cent. residents said road safety had improved in the past five years

Full details are given in the Research Report on "Gloucester Safer City" which can be found in the Road Safety section of the Department for Transport website.

Sea Ports/Airports

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his policy is towards port developments. [175087]

Mr. Darling: Our policy towards port development is as set out in Modern Ports, our policy paper issued in 2000. We will support sustainable port projects for which there is a clear need, with each looked at in detail on its merits.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how his Department is promoting the UK ports industry. [175088]

Mr. Darling: We take appropriate steps necessary to ensure that the ports industry continues to meet the needs of the wider UK economy.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport under what authority the provision of port facilities elsewhere in Europe may be taken into account when considering whether new or expanded port facilities should be authorised in the UK. [175090]

Mr. Darling: The Habitats Directives provide that, where an Appropriate Assessment concludes that a proposed port development may adversely affect the integrity of a European Site, there is a requirement to consider alternative solutions. In these circumstances European Commission guidance states that alternative solutions may extend to alternatives in other EU regions or countries. However, it is clear that the extent to which options outside the UK are indeed alternatives will depend, amongst other things, on how effectively they can still serve the market in the UK.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he last discussed the impact of the EU Habitats Directive on the ports industry with *(a)* the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and *(b)* his European counterparts. [175091]

Mr. Darling: Officials have regular discussions with DEFRA on a wide range of environmental port issues, including the impact of the Habitats Directive. We have worked with DEFRA in securing clarification from the Commission on application of the Habitats Directive in port approaches, and we have assisted the Commission's work with my European counterparts to ensure consistency across all Member States.

Speed Cameras

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his oral answer of 3 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 616, if he will list the sites where there are cameras in the Christchurch constituency to which he referred; and on what evidential basis he states that there had been an 18 per cent. reduction in people being killed or seriously injured at those sites. [157765]

Mr. McNulty: The Department does not hold statistical information broken down by parliamentary constituency areas, but at the level of partnerships. The hon. Member may wish to contact the Dorset Safety Camera Partnership for this information. A county-wide survey of Dorset found that at fixed camera sites there had been an 18 per cent. reduction in people being killed or seriously injured.

Transport (Borrowings Liability)

Mr. Grieve: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what liability the Government have in respect of the borrowings of *(a)* Network Rail and *(b)* Transport for London. [175515]

Mr. McNulty: The information is as follows.

(a) The Government, through the Strategic Rail Authority, have provided support up to a maximum of £21 billion principal for Network Rail's borrowing. These arrangements are shown as contingent liabilities in the Department's accounts.

(b) Transport for London is an independent body and the Government have no liability in respect of its borrowings. However the Government do have outstanding contingent liabilities in respect of the London Underground PPP undertaken by London Underground and the Docklands Light Railway Lewisham extension PFI.

Vehicle Activated Signs

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what revenues raised from speed cameras can be used for the erection of Vehicle Activated Signs under the terms governing speed camera partnerships. [171898]

Mr. McNulty: Approved traffic signs are allowable costs within the safety camera netting off programme. This includes the funding of Vehicle Activated Signs on a case-by-case basis. This matter is covered by the "Handbook of Rules and Guidelines for the Operation of the National Road Safety Camera Programme for England and Wales", 31 October 2003, copies of which have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Anti-social Behaviour Orders

John Mann: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what training provision is provided for clerks to magistrates courts in the use and application of anti-social behaviour orders. [176013]

Mr. Leslie: The responsibility for the training of court clerks currently rests locally with the 42 independent Magistrates Courts Committees (MCCs). The Judicial Studies Board (JSB) has issued guidance on the application and use of anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) to all magistrates and this is available to court clerks.

The JSB has also issued MCCs with two Criminal Justice Reform updates in March and April 2004 for circulation to both court clerks and magistrates.

In addition, the Justice's Clerks Society has recently finalised a guidance document on ASBOs after consultation with the Home Office, which has been sent to all their members.

Community Legal Service

Nick Harvey: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what consultations he has undertaken on *(a)* placing duties on local government to participate in Community Legal Service (CLS) Partnerships and *(b)* including CLS coverage in local authority strategic plans. [174957]

Mr Lammy: Recommendations from the Independent Review of the Community Legal Service (CLS), published on 28 April 2004, suggest changes to CLS Partnerships. CLS Partnerships have enjoyed considerable support from Local Authorities since they were set up in 2000. My Department is currently seeking views on the Review's recommendations, as part of a process of consultation. We will be considering the best way in which to build on the success of the CLS in the light of the Review's recommendations and the comments we receive. Any suggestions for a change in the interaction between Local Authorities and CLS Partnerships will be considered as part of this process.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what proposals he has to tackle, through the Community Legal Service, the unmet need and unresolved legal problems amongst low income, vulnerable and socially excluded groups. [174958]

Mr. Lammy: The Community Legal Service (CLS) has already demonstrated that the law assists in tackling social exclusion, particularly in conjunction with other Government programmes (e.g. Jobcentre Plus and the Connexions service). Further details of the achievements of the CLS in this area can be found in my evidence, and that of the Legal Services Commission, to the recent enquiry of the Constitutional Affairs Committee on Access to Legal Aid. My Department is currently seeking views on the recommendations of the Independent Review of the CLS, published on 28 April 2004, as part of a process of consultation. We will be considering the best way in which to build on the success of the CLS in the light of the Review's recommendations and the comments we receive.

Computer File Formats

Mr. Allan: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what his Department's policy is in respect of the computer file formats used for the *(a)* distribution and *(b)* archiving of publicly available documents. [173356]

Mr. Leslie: The Department's documents that are generally available to the public electronically are provided through the Department's website (www.dca.gov.uk/publications.htm) These are usually available in Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) and Portable Document format (PDF) formats. Previously published documents are archived in the same formats at: www.dca.gov.uk/pubs/archive.htm

Departmental Logo

Mr. Evans: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much has been spent in *(a)* creating and *(b)* providing name plates for the outside of Government buildings bearing his Department's new logo. [172388]

Mr. Leslie: My Department has incurred costs of *(a)* £655.00 for consultancy and design fees for creating the new nameplates and *(b)* £3,313.92 in providing external name plates for the outside of Government buildings bearing its new logo. The £3,313.92 consists of £2,256.28 for the front sign at Selborne House and £1,057.64 for a sign to the rear of the same building.

Attachment of Earnings Orders

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will list the *(a)* upward and *(b)* downward payroll adjustments an employer may have to make as a result of the policies of his Department. [175179]

Mr. Leslie: The Attachment of Earnings Act 1971 allows a court to make Attachment of Earnings Orders for unpaid maintenance, fines and civil judgment debts. Employers may therefore have to make downward payroll adjustments to reflect these court orders which require the deduction of a set sum from the employee's salary.

Departmental Staff

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many staff were employed in the Department to work in the communications field, and what the total expenditure on communications for the Department was, broken down by *(a)* Government Information and Communication Service

staff and *(b)* other staff, broken down by (i) press officers, (ii) special advisers and (iii) others, in (A) 1994–95, (B) 1996–97, (C) 1997–98 and (D) 2001–02. [168685]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) was created in June 2003, and therefore was not in existence during the periods for which details are required.

Minority Languages

Mr. MacDonald: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether the meeting of the British-Irish Council held in November 2003 identified areas for enhanced inter-governmental cooperation in respect of indigenous, minority and lesser-used languages. [174185]

Mr. Leslie: The meeting of the British-Irish Council in November 2003 focused on indigenous, minority and lesser-used languages. It was agreed that members of the BIC should:

jointly consider outcomes of research into intergenerational language transmission;

carry out an assessment of structures supporting indigenous language learning in adult education in each of the BIC administrations;

work together to identify priorities for their respective indigenous languages in relation to information and communication technology development;

consider together the potential benefits of co-operating on the development of language use surveys; and

share information on their experiences of the relationship between planning policy and linguistic considerations.

Mental Incapacity Bill

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what protection there is in the draft Mental Incapacity Bill for a person who lacks mental capacity because they have been heavily sedated. [174216]

Mr. Lammy: The draft Mental Incapacity Bill will offer protection to any individual who lacks the capacity to make his or her own decisions. The Bill only permits actions taken or decisions made on behalf of someone who lacks capacity if they are made in their best interests. This process requires the person making the decision to consider whether it is likely that the person lacking capacity will at some time in the future have the capacity in relation to the matter and question, and therefore whether the decision may be postponed.

The use of sedation will only be permitted if the person reasonably believes its use is necessary to prevent harm to the person lacking capacity, and proportionate to the likelihood and seriousness of that harm.

The Government will also be responding shortly to the 40 recommendations of the Health Select Committee following their inquiry into elder abuse. These include recommended safeguards on the use of medication in care homes.

Official Vehicles

John Barrett: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what percentage of official vehicles used by the Department are run on *(a)* petrol, *(b)* diesel, *(c)* liquid petroleum gas and *(d)* compressed natural gas. [172772]

Mr. Lammy: The Government as a whole have signed up to various targets for improving the performance of their own vehicle fleet, details of which, together with reports on each Department's progress towards these targets are available at www.sustainable-development.gov.uk

The Government Car Service provides my Departments" ministerial vehicles. Detailed information on the breakdown of GCS vehicle fleet is being provided separately.

The percentage of official vehicles used by my Department that run on the above fuel types are as follows:

2003–04

	Number	*Percentage*
Cars		
Petrol	22	4.09
Diesel	499	92.75
LPG[1]	17	3.16
Natural gas	0	0
Total	538	100
Vans (<3.5t)		
Petrol	0	0
Diesel	1	100
LPG/natural gas[1]	0	0
Total	1	100
Heavy vehicles (<3.5t)		
Petrol	0	0
Diesel	0	0
LPG/natural gas[1]	0	0
Total	0	100

[1] LPG—Dual Fuel (unleaded petrol and liquid petroleum gas) vehicles.

Parliamentary Questions

John Thurso: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) how many *(a)* ordinary written and *(b)* named day questions his Department received in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary session up to the most recent date for which figures are available, broken down by month; [170760]

(2) what proportion of *(a)* ordinary written questions to his Department were answered within five sitting days of tabling and *(b)* questions for a named day received a substantive answer on that day in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) the current parliamentary session up to the most recent date for which figures are available, broken down by month. [170761]

Mr. Lammy: For the 2002–03 parliamentary session, my Department had 696 Commons ordinary written questions of which 383 were answered within five sittings days and 98 named day questions of which 65 were answered on the specified date.

For the current parliamentary session (2003–04) my Department has had 436 Commons ordinary written questions, of which 301 were answered within five sitting days and 70 named day questions of which 34 were answered on the specified date.

Figures are not available for my Department's parliamentary questions broken down by month as our records are not held in this manner.

My Department endeavours to answer all parliamentary questions within the parliamentary deadlines whenever possible. In addition, I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House to the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker) on 3 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 907W.

Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many statutory reviews under section 101 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 have resulted in the High Court issuing a certificate of no merit under section 101(3)*(d)* in each month since April 2003. [175823]

Mr. Lammy: The Administrative Court Office does not keep a record of the number of cases in which a certificate of no merit is issued. To ascertain this information each court file would have to be individually inspected to check the decision of the judge. These figures could not be obtained without incurring disproportionate costs.

However, I am able to offer information from the Legal Services Commission (LSC). They have received 5 certificates of no merit for statutory review from the Administrative Court under section 101(3)*(d)* since April 2003.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many applications to the Legal Services Commission for certificates of public funding for statutory review under section 101 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 have been *(a)* granted and *(b)* refused each month since April 2003. [175824]

Mr. Lammy: The Legal Services Commission did not receive any applications for statutory review until July 2003, but the number granted between July 2003 and March 2004 are set out in the following table:

2003	*Month certificates granted*
July	1
August	2
September	23
October	37
November	33
December	30
January	49
February	24
March	64

The Legal Services Commission is unable to provide figures for the number of applications refused because its systems do not record refusal data broken down by category of case.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many statutory reviews under section 101 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 have been heard by the High Court in each month since April 2003; and how many of these were determined in favour of the applicant. [175825]

Mr. Lammy: The Administrative Court received the first applications for statutory review in May 2003. Statutory reviews under section 101 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 are considered on paper only; there are no hearings. The figures from May 2003 until April 2004 of statutory review applications received and granted are as follows:

Month/year	*Applications received*	*Applications granted*
May 2003	2	1
June 2003	3	0
July 2003	2	0
August 2003	9	0
September 2003	65	10
October 2003	84	26
November 2003	95	14
December 2003	117	15
January 2004	118	8
February 2004	130	40
March 2004	203	25
April 2004	116	36
Total	944	175

WORK AND PENSIONS

Jobseeker's Allowance (Liverpool, Walton)

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Liverpool, Walton were receiving jobseeker's allowance in each year from its inception to 2003. [166967]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the table.

Jobseeker's allowance (JSA) claimants in Liverpool, Walton

	Number
1997	5,661
1998	4,863
1999	4,513
2000	4,092
2001	3,730
2002	3,502
2003	3,317
2004	2,983

Notes:
1. Figures given are the claimant count in March for each year.
2. Figures are not seasonally adjusted and do not include clerical cases.
3. Jobseeker's allowance was introduced in October 1996.

Source:
100 per cent. count, Jobcentre Plus computer systems.

Benefit Claims

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people were claiming key benefits in *(a)* the Edinburgh, West constituency and *(b)* the City of Edinburgh local authority area in each year since 1995. [166671]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the following tables.

Number of claimants of key benefits in Edinburgh West parliamentary constituency by client group

Thousand

As at November	Working Age	Over State Pension Age
1995	6.3	NA
1996	6.0	NA
1997	5.5	NA
1998	5.1	NA
1999	5.3	15.4
2000	4.9	15.7
2001	4.9	15.8
2002	4.6	16.0
2003	5.0	15.8

Number of claimants of key benefits in City of Edinburgh local authority by client group

Thousand

As at November	Working Age	Over State Pension age
1995	47.7	NA
1996	45.9	NA
1997	41.9	NA
1998	41.4	NA
1999	40.4	76.9
2000	38.9	76.2
2001	37.5	76.3
2002	37.2	75.8
2003	37.9	75.7

Notes:
1. Figures are taken from a five per cent sample and are therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.
2. Figures are in thousands and rounded to the nearest hundred.
3. Working Age Key Benefits are Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Benefit and Disability Living Allowance.
4. Pension Age Key Benefits are State Pension, Incapacity Benefit, Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) /Pension Credit and Severe Disablement Allowance.
5. Pension Credit replaced MIG from 6 October 2003.
6. Parliamentary constituencies and local authorities have been allocated using the relevant ONS postcode directory.
7. Parliamentary constituency and local authority breakdowns were not available prior to Nov 1999 for claimants over State Pension age.

Source:
IAD Information Centre.

Benefits

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 1 April, *Official Report*, column 1633W, on pension payment, what the arrangements will be for cashing the cheques. [175950]

Mr. Pond: Direct Payment is an essential part of our drive against financial and social exclusion, giving our customers access to a wide range of financial services, which some cannot access at present.

The cheque method of payment is only intended for those customers who genuinely cannot use Direct Payment. Customers who will require a cheque payment are likely to have had experience of, and be familiar with, cashing order books and giros at the post office. The cheque solution replicates this process. Cheques can be cashed at post office branches or paid into an account, and they will provide the facility for a third party to cash the cheque on a customer's behalf.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate how many and what percentage of those *(a)* of working age and *(b)* not of working age who receive (i) attendance allowance, (ii) each (A) level and (B) component of disability living allowance and (iii) incapacity benefit, broken down by region. [176227]

Maria Eagle: Information on the numbers of benefit recipients as requested has been placed the Library.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate how many people in Newcastle upon Tyne, Central constituency receive *(a)* attendance allowance, *(b)* each (i) level and (ii) component of disability living allowance and *(c)* incapacity benefit. [176228]

Maria Eagle: The information required is set out in the tables.

AA by rate in Newcastle upon Tyne, Central parliamentary constituency as at 30 November 2003

Thousand

All	1.8
Higher rate	1.2
Lower rate	0.6

DLA by rate in the Newcastle upon Tyne, Central parliamentary constituency

Thousand

	All	Children	Working age	Pensioners
All	4.1	[1]0.4	2.1	1.1
Higher Rate Care and Higher Mobility	0.6	—	[1]0.4	[1]0.2
Higher Rate Care Lower Rate Mobility	[1]0.3	[1]0.1	[1]0.2	—
Higher Rate Care only	[1]0.1	[1]0.1	—	—
Middle Rate Care and Higher Rate Mobility	0.6	—	[1]0.3	[1]0.2
Middle Rate Care and Lower Rate Mobility	[1]0.5	[1]0.1	[1]0.4	—
Middle Rate Care only	[1]0.2	[1]0.1	[1]0.1	—
Lower Rate Care and Higher Rate Mobility	0.8	—	[1]0.4	[1]0.3
Lower Rate Care and Lower Rate Mobility	[1]0.1	—	[1]0.1	—
Lower Rate Care only	[1]0.4	[1]0.1	[1]0.2	[1]0.1
Higher Rate Mobility	[1]0.5	—	[1]0.3	[1]0.2
Lower Rate Mobility	[1]0.2	—	[1]0.2	—

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) beneficiaries in the Newcastle upon Tyne, Central constituency at 30 November 2003, by rate of IB

	Thousand
IB/SDA total	3.2
All IB rates	2.7
IB short term (low rate)	[1]0.1
IB short term (high rate)	[1]0.2
IB long term rate	2.4
SDA	0.5

[1] Figures are based on a very few sample cases and are therefore subject to a high degree of sampling error and should be used as a guide to the current situation only.

Note:
Figures are shown in thousands and are rounded to the nearest hundred.
Source:
IAD Information Centre, 5 per cent. sample.

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of those claiming *(a)* incapacity benefit and *(b)* severe disablement allowance for (i) anxiety, (ii) stress, (iii) depression and (iv) other mental health reasons in each year since 1997. [175700]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 25 May 2004]:* The available information is in the table.

£ million

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Incapacity benefit—benefit expenditure by year and selected conditions							
Phobic Anxiety Disorders or Other Anxiety Disorders	280	278	262	279	281	284	282
Reaction to Severe Stress (e.g. Post traumatic stress disorder)	48	56	66	78	89	97	103
Depressive Episode or Recurrent Depressive Disorder	773	831	827	918	969	1,002	1,036
All other Mental and Behavioural Disorders	583	584	515	567	563	603	613
Severe disablement allowance—benefit expenditure by year and selected conditions							
Phobic anxiety disorders or other anxiety disorders	17	17	16	16	16	15	13
Reaction to severe stress (e.g. post traumatic stress disorder)	[1]—	1	1	1	1	1	1
Depressive episode or recurrent depressive disorder	51	50	50	50	53	48	44
All other mental and behavioural disorders	350	347	356	361	366	326	316

[1] Less than £0.5 million.
Notes:
Figures are consistent with the historical outturn expenditure figures published in the DWP's benefit expenditure which can be found on the Department for Work and Pensions website at: http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/expenditure. asp.
Figures are for IB and SDA recipients only and do not include "credits only" cases or income-related benefits.
Figures do not include costs of administration.
From 6 April 2001, there are no new claims for SDA; from that date people disabled early in life can qualify for IB.
Expenditure has been apportioned using data on conditions of IB and SDA recipients from the IB Quarterly Statistical Enquiry which is based on a 5 per cent. sample and therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.
Figures are in 2004–05 prices, calculated using the latest GDP deflator.
Figures are rounded to the nearest million pounds.
Totals may not sum due to rounding.
Figures for 2003–04 are estimated outturn.
Source:
DWP—Information and Analysis Directorate, Great Britain estimated expenditure on incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) by year and selected conditions.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people who are entitled to *(a)* income support, *(b)* attendance allowance, *(c)* disability living allowance, *(d)* pension credit, *(e)* council tax benefit and *(f)* housing benefit are not claiming it in the Vale of Clwyd. [175026]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available.

National figures of the estimated number of people who are entitled to, but not receiving, income support, council tax benefit and housing benefit can be obtained from the DWP report, "Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take-Up". The latest statistics relate to financial year 2001–02; a copy of the publication is held in the Library.

Mr. Forth: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people aged from 16 years to 64 years received *(a)* jobseeker's allowance, *(b)* incapacity benefit and *(c)* severe disablement allowance in (i) 1997 and (ii) the latest year for which figures are available; what the costs of each was in each year; and if he will make a statement. [174484]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the table.

	1997–98		*2003–04*	
	Expenditure (£ million)	*Caseload (thousands)*	*Expenditure (£ million)*	*Caseload (thousands)*
Jobseekers allowance (contribution based)	475	201	531	183
Jobseekers allowance (income based)	3,418	1,190	2,027	658
Incapacity benefit	6,640	1,600	6,637	1,497
Severe disablement allowance	909	346	810	286

Notes:
1. Expenditure is shown in cash terms.
2. Expenditure for 2003–04 is estimated outturn.
3. Caseload is for August for both the financial years shown in the table. Figures do not include those receiving national insurance credits only. Some jobseeker's allowance recipients can receive both types of benefit, and these are included in caseload figures for both contribution-based and income-based benefit.
4. Expenditure is rounded to the nearest million. Caseload is rounded to the nearest thousand.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what access to benefits British nationals entering this country who are destitute are entitled. [165495]

Mr. Pond: British nationals arriving in the UK from abroad may make an immediate claim for income support, pension credit, housing benefit, council tax benefit and jobseeker's allowance (income-based). In addition to satisfying the normal conditions of entitlement, anyone who claims these benefits within two years of coming to the UK must also demonstrate that they are habitually resident in this country.

Under the National Assistance Act 1948, local authorities may provide accommodation to British passport holders who do not pass the habitual residence test if they are destitute and have a need for care and attention which is not otherwise available. Such accommodation can be provided only as board and lodging and if the local authority considers it appropriate to do so in all the circumstances. Authorities are not obliged under the Act to provide other services or cash payments.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what prioritisation criteria will be used in the process of transferring existing Child Support Agency cases to the new assessment system. [175560]

Mr. Pond: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Dartford (Dr. Stoate) on 27 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 341W.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his oral statement of 11 February to the Work and Pensions Select Committee, on the Child Support Agency reforms, if he will list the milestones against which the success of the recovery programme will be judged. [170452]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Steve Webb, dated 27 May 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to his Oral Statement of 11th February, to the Work and Pensions Select Committee, on the Child Support Agency reforms, 11th February, if he will list the milestones against which the success of the recovery programme will be judged.

In accordance with our agreed plans EDS made enhancements to their computer service for Child Support Reform on 26 January and 22 March. They made enhancements to their telephony service on 9 and 10 January and 29 March. We have agreed plans in place covering a further upgrade to their service on 7 June 2004. We are aware that EDS currently have plans for further upgrades in August and October. This is in line with their stated intention to complete their remedial work by October 2004. We are still discussing the final content and delivery timetable for their remaining plans and until those are agreed I am unable to provide any further milestones.

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for what reason a non-resident father's Child Support Agency payment stops when a child is born to that father in a new relationship. [174588]

Mr. Pond: When a new child is born the non-resident parent's liability will be recalculated to take account of their change in responsibilities.

Under the old scheme, if a non-resident parent had previously been assessed to pay the minimum amount of maintenance (currently £5.60 a week) the birth of a new child would mean that they were exempt from this minimum payment.

Under the new scheme, a flat rate of maintenance (usually £5.00 a week) is payable even if there is a child present in the non-resident parent's household.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Child Support Agency's powers *(a)* to obtain sufficient information to make an assessment of child support and *(b)* to enforce payment of assessed child support; and what plans he has to alter and extend these powers. [174599]

Mr. Pond: The Child Support Agency has a wide range of powers both to obtain the necessary information and to enforce payments of child maintenance where necessary. I have no plans to change these.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in what circumstances separated parents may *(a)* seek a court order for the assessment of child support and *(b)* register with the Child Support Agency a voluntary agreement for child support as alternatives to seeking an assessment of child support by the Child Support Agency. [174601]

Mr. Pond: Parents who do not already have a court order cannot usually make arrangements for child support through the court unless the court is converting a written maintenance agreement to a consent order.

Parents with care in receipt of Income Support or income-based Jobseeker's Allowance are required by law to co-operate with the Child Support Agency. Any existing form of court order or agreement will be superseded by a maintenance calculation which must be honoured.

The Child Support Agency can only calculate child maintenance in accordance with the legislation. It cannot register a voluntary agreement for child support.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for what reasons of data protection the Child Support Agency may withhold from a client information about a change of circumstances of the person liable to pay child support when such change affects the amount of child support payable. [174604]

Mr. Pond: Regulation 9A of the Information, Evidence and Disclosure Regulations (1992) covers the information which may be disclosed to a third party. This provides that only information which is essential to the understanding of how the maintenance is calculated will be made available to either party.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Child Support Agency's new computer system provided by EDS. [174605]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. David Kidney, dated 27 May 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Child Support Agency's new computer system provided by EDS.

The Agency meets with EDS on a regular basis to assess both the effectiveness of their current computer service and their plans for remedying known defects. The service is progressively improving as defects are fixed. Ministers last reported to the House on the operational impacts of this on 21 April 2004.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in what circumstances the income of the household of a person liable to pay child support rather than solely the liable person's income can be taken into account for the purpose of assessing child support. [174625]

Mr. Pond: The income of the partner of a non-resident parent is only taken into account when assessing child support in the old scheme. It is used to calculate the "protected level of income" within the formula. Without this information the Child Support Agency cannot make a final assessment. The non-resident parent might then be asked, in the interim, to pay a higher amount than his or her circumstances would otherwise demand.

Under the new scheme, the maintenance calculation is based only on the income of the non-resident parent, which could however include tax credit paid to another member of their household.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he intends that child support cases under the old Child Support Agency system will be migrated to the new system. [174633]

Mr. Pond: I refer my hon. Friend to the written answer I gave the hon. Member for Castle Point (Bob Spink) on 18 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 1092W.

Child Tax Credit

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) if he will make a statement on the proposed timetable for transferring the child elements of jobseeker's allowance and income support to child tax credit payments; [166482]

(2) if he will place in the Library a copy of the agreement reached between the Department and the Inland Revenue ensuring that families do not lose the child element of jobseeker's allowance and income support until child tax payments are guaranteed. [166542]

Mr. Pond: The transfer of income support and jobseeker's allowance cases on to child tax credit began on 6 April 2004 as planned. Families on income support and jobseeker's allowance who were already receiving child tax credit have started to receive support for their children solely through child tax credit. New claimants of income support and jobseeker's allowance are no longer awarded child allowances in those benefits, but receive child tax credit instead.

The automatic phased transfer on to child tax credit of the remaining families with children within income support and jobseeker's allowance is planned to begin from October 2004. Meanwhile, families will continue to receive the same level of support through their benefits as they would from child tax credit.

We have always recognised that it is important to ensure a successful and smooth migration for claimants of income support and income-based jobseeker's allowance on to child tax credit. We have therefore taken steps to ensure that those families will not lose the child element of jobseeker's allowance and income support until we have confirmation that child tax credit has been awarded. The technical design of the income support and jobseeker's allowance computer systems ensure this. The child and family elements will automatically continue to be paid until a confirmation that child tax credit has been awarded is received from Inland Revenue.

In April 2002, The Treasury published "The Child and Working Tax Credits" (HMT 2002), which made it clear that continuity of payment is of particular importance to us.

Compensation Recovery Unit

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many cases *(a)* were registered with the Compensation Recovery Unit and *(b)* resulted in repayment of benefits to the CRU in each of the last 10 years; what the total repaid to the CRU was; and if he will make a statement. [R] [173563]

Mr. Pond *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* The available information is in the table.

£

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Total number of claims registered	688,315	706,715	770,243
Total number of benefit recovery cases	35,907	40,258	39,995
Total benefit recovered	139,130,000	166,590,000	171,110,000

Note:
It is not possible to provide the requested information prior to the year 2001–02 as records are only kept for the most recent three years.

Payroll Adjustments

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the *(a)* upward and

(b) downward payroll adjustments an employer may have to make as a result of the policies of his Department. [175180]

Jane Kennedy: There are limited circumstances under which an employer may need to make payroll adjustments as a result of our policies.

Statutory Maternity Pay and Statutory Sick Pay are both paid by employers and may require payroll adjustments. Employers may also need to implement a Deduction from Earnings Order if the Child Support Agency deems this necessary to ensure a non-resident parent fulfils their responsibilities as a parent.

It is also sometimes necessary, where voluntary agreements have failed, for employers to administer an Attachment of Earnings Order in relation to the enforcement of debt recovery through the civil courts.

Departmental Staffing

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many of his Department's employees are working in Strathkelvin and Bearsden; [176469]

(2) how many of his Department's employees are working in Scotland. [176470]

Maria Eagle: As at 31 March 2004, a total of 15,487 Department for Work and Pensions employees were based in Scotland. This figure includes 536 temporary staff. The information is not collected for parliamentary constituencies.

Disabled Workers

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the measures introduced to improve the working conditions of disabled workers in Bootle over the last seven years. [176238]

Maria Eagle: We have a number of measures in place nationally to help improve conditions for disabled people at work, as well as measures to improve their access to services generally. None of these are specific to Bootle, but all are available to disabled people who live and work there.

From 1996, the employment provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act required most employers of 20 or more staff not to discriminate against, and to make reasonable adjustments for, disabled job applicants or employees; in December 1998, we reduced this threshold to 15 employees. From October this year, the small employer exemption will be removed and most currently excluded occupations, such as police officers, firefighters, and partners in business partnerships will be brought within the scope of the Disability Discrimination Act employment provisions.

Jobcentre Plus runs a number of specialist programmes providing help for disabled people, including New Deal for Disabled People, Workstep, Access to Work, the Job Introduction Scheme, and Work Preparation. All these programmes provide practical advice and support to disabled people and their employers to help overcome work related obstacles resulting from disability. Since 1997–98 there have been year on year increases in both numbers helped and programme spend.

To help people access appropriate help, Jobcentre Plus has established a network of Disability Service Teams. The teams are made up of Disability Employment Advisers, Access to Work Advisers and Occupational Psychologists; their services are accessed through local Jobcentres. Since April 2003, disabled people in work have been receiving financial support through the Working Tax Credit. This is available if a person is working an average of at least 16 hours per week (self-employed or for an employer); and have a disability which puts them at a disadvantage in getting a job. 70,000 families (including over 32,000 adults without children) are benefiting from the disability element within the Working Tax Credit, compared with 38,000 who benefited from the old Disabled Person's Tax Credit.

Disability Living Allowance

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what percentage of people in Great Britain are in receipt of disability living allowance. [175865]

Maria Eagle: The response to the question is set out in the following table.

DLA Recipients by Government Office Region against population as at 30 November 2003.

	All (Thousand)	*Percentage of the population*
All	2,558.2	4.4
North East	156.5	6.2
North West	405.7	6.0
Yorkshire and Number	249.7	5.0
East Midlands	184.2	4.4
West Midlands	245.6	4.6
East	180.1	3.3
London	249.3	3.4
South East	222.5	2.8
South West	173.1	3.5
Wales	207.9	7.1
Scotland	283.6	5.6

Notes:

1. Figures taken from a five per cent sample at 30 November 2003.
2. Figures are in thousands and rounded to the nearest hundred.
3. From November 2002, the methodology for producing these figures was changed to allow statistics to be published much sooner. This has resulted in a small increase in the reported caseload. This is because some cases which have actually terminated but have not yet been updated on the computer system are now included.
4. Population figures are from the Office for National Statistics and the General Registrar of Scotland at mid 2002.

Source:

IAD Information Centre.

Early Retirement

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many employees in his Department took early retirement, and at what total cost, in the last financial year. [172183]

Maria Eagle: 53 staff took early retirement from the Department for Work and Pensions in the financial year 2003–04, at a total cost in that year of £1,154,073.

In addition to costs in the year of early retirement there are subsequent costs until the individual staff reach age 60. Costs in subsequent years for these early retirements are as follows:

£

	Costs
2004–05	470,215
2005–06	345,592
2006–07	286,207
2007–08	221,997
2008–09	69,477
2009–10	50,682
2010–11	47,166
2011–12	15,766
2012–13	2,359

For the same period there were 15o cases of actuarially reduced retirement. Actuarially reduced retirement enables staff aged 50 and over to retire early and receive an immediate payment of an actuarially reduced pension at no extra cost to the Exchequer.

Filestore (Nelson)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has for the filestore in Nelson, Lancashire; and if he will make a statement. [163202]

Mr. Pond: Records storage for the Department for Work and Pensions is moving to Capita from 1 July 2004, with migration of services taking place over the following two to three years.

Negotiations regarding the effect of this on individual stores, including that of Nelson, Lancashire, are continuing.

It is not anticipated that the majority of the 44 existing departmental in-house filestores, will continue in operation, however one or two of the larger stores may remain operational although functions may change over time.

Health and Safety Inspectors

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many health and safety inspectors there are, broken down by *(a)* ethnicity and *(b)* languages other than English spoken by inspectors; what methods of communications are available to inspectors when dealing with workers who are not fluent in English; and if he will make a statement. [175423]

Jane Kennedy: The following tables show the number of full time equivalent inspectors broken down by their ethnicity (Table 1) and the languages other than English spoken (Table 2) as at 21 May 2004.

Table 1: Break down of inspectors by ethnicity

Ethnic origin	Number
African	4.65
Any Chinese background not specified	2
Any other ethnic background not specified	8
Any other mixed ethnic background	1
Asian and White	3
Black Caribbean and White	0.55
Caribbean	7
East African Asian	1
Egyptian	1
Indian	19.61
Other Asian background not specified	4
Pakistani	8
Tehran/Iran	1
Other[1]	1,507.8
Total	1,568.61

[1] The information on individual ethnic origins has been provided from the HSE's personnel system and is based on the recently completed survey. However, it should be noted that if the individual declined to respond on the form then the system would automatically default to other.

Table 2: Break down of the languages spoken by inspectors

Language[1]	Number
Arabic	2.0
Bengali	2.0
Cantonese	2.0
Chinese	2.0
Chinese Mandarin	1.0
Czech	1.0
Danish	3.0
Dutch	2.8
Farsi	1.0
Flemish	1.0
French	329.0
Gaelic	3.0
German	89.0
Greek	2.5
Gujarati	2.6
Hindi	7.0
Igbo	0.7
Italian	18.9
Japanese	1.0
Nepali	1.0
Norwegian	3.0
Polish	1.0
Portuguese	2.8
Punjabi	15.0
Pushtu	1.0
Russia	6.0
Sign	1.0
Spanish	40.2
Swahili	1.0
Swedish	2.0
Tamil	2.0
Urdu	8.0
Welsh	20.7
Yoruba	1.0
Total[2]	577.3

[1] Languages other than English.
[2] Some inspectors speak more than one language other than English.

HSE provides two main means of communication for inspectors who are not fluent in the language spoken by workers with whom they are dealing. These are interpreters for verbal communications and translators for provision of written communications.

There is a legal duty on all employers to provide comprehensible and relevant information on the risks to the health and safety of their employees and the measures they have in place to protect them against those risks. This means that those employing workers who are not fluent in English may need to make special arrangements in order to comply with this duty. To help them comply, HSE and its inspectors seeks to provide support to such employers through a range of services including the provision of leaflets containing key health and safety messages translated into a variety of languages and access to a translation service.

Housing Benefit

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cumulative additional cost to his Department has been of housing benefit paid where council housing is transferred from councils to registered social landlords in each year from 1999 to 2000. [176267]

Mr. Pond: I refer my hon. Friend to the written answer I gave him on 20 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1169W.

Income Support

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people were receiving income support in each of the last 25 years, broken down by constituency within each region. [175130]

Mr. Pond: The available information has been placed in the Library.

Industrial Injuries (Appeals)

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the Government's target time is from application to hearing for appeals concerning industrial injuries disablement benefit diseases; and what the average waiting time has been for those whose appeals are currently being heard. [175717]

Mr. Pond: This is a matter for Christina Townsend, Chief Executive of the Appeals Service. She will reply to the hon. Member.

Letter from Christina Townsend to Mr. Tony Lloyd dated 27 May 2004:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question regarding the target time for hearing appeals concerning Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB) diseases and the average waiting time for those whose appeals are currently being heard.

Our target for the 2003–2004 financial year was to hear appeals within an average of 13 weeks from receipt in our Service. Information on waiting times is not available in the format requested but I can advise you that the average waiting time for Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit appeals was 15.9 weeks for the 2003–2004 financial year.

I hope that this is helpful.

Information and Communication Technology

Mr. Simon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his budget is for staff training in information and communication technology in this financial year. [173716]

Maria Eagle: The Department for Work and Pensions and its agencies do not have a specific budget for training staff in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) during the current financial year. Resource is allocated to Learning and Development in general and includes an element in respect of ICT learning.

However, Jobcentre Plus, DWP's largest agency, has committed a budget of £400,000 for non-specialist staff to learn basic IT applications such as Word and Excel. All other ICT learning in the Department will be funded from the general Learning and Development budget.

Mr. Simon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his targets are for improving the information and communication technology (ICT) skills base of staff within *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies; and what method he uses to certify the competence levels achieved by staff receiving training in ICT. [173717]

Maria Eagle: DWP and its agencies do not have specific targets for improving the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills base of staff, but we are committed to ensuring staff have the skills and competence to do their jobs. Learning needs are identified on an individual basis through discussion between jobholders and their line managers. This process will increasingly be assisted by the development of a series of capability matrices which will enable individuals to define their learning needs and to identify the learning solutions by which they can meet them.

The standard Kirkpatrick model is used to evaluate learning and development in the Department, including an assessment of whether individuals have met the learning objectives of the course.

Scottish and National Vocational Qualifications (S/NVQs) in Information Technology are available to staff but these are not mandatory. In the business year 2003–04, 200 staff completed full awards in IT S/NVQ's. Of these, 16 were at level 1, 156 at level 2 and 28 were at level 3. Staff undertaking S/NVQ's are required to produce a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate the required level of competence.

Jobcentre Plus

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will place in the Library a copy of the assessment made under the provisions of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 of the proposal to move Jobcentre Plus jobs out of London; and if he will make a statement on the implications of the assessment. [175025]

Jane Kennedy: The draft Impact Assessment forms the basis for further consultation and is currently with London Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS) representatives for their initial comments. Following receipt of their comments the intention is to circulate a further draft to a much wider range of stakeholders including all London MPs, the Greater London Authority, the Commission for Racial Equality, the London Development Agency, the Government Office for London and others.

Once the draft has been agreed, the final version will of course be made available and I will arrange for a copy of this document to be placed in the Library when it is published.

EU Worker Registration

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the likely impact of the fee for registering under the EU workers registration scheme *(a)* on Jobcentre Plus services and *(b)* on illegal working; and if he will make a statement. [175032]

Jane Kennedy: The UK Government support the free movement of people and workers within the EU—providing our citizens with the opportunity to work elsewhere, as well as allowing our economy to benefit from the productive potential of workers from the new member states.

The UK has one of the most successful and flexible labour markets in the EU with unemployment at its lowest level for 30 years. The UK labour market has upwards of 550,000 vacancies, and around 15 per cent. of UK trend economic growth depends on migration. Indeed studies show that migrants paid £2.5 billion more in taxes in 1999–2000 than they consumed in benefits and services. Hence the UK is well placed to absorb additional workers from accession states.

But just as UK nationals have the responsibility not to abuse our benefit and social protection system, so we would expect our neighbours and partners in the EU not to abuse the system. That is why we have allowed free movement of labour but brought in regulations to prevent exploitation of our benefits.

It costs £50 to register for the first time under the worker registration scheme. The fee has been set at this level to cover some of the administrative costs of running the scheme, in accordance with other charged services. Registration enables those nationals from the eight accession states who were working in the UK without authorisation prior to 1 May to regularise their status and move into the formal economy. We do not believe that a one-off fee of £50 will act as a deterrent to registration by them or by others arriving in the UK. Similarly, we foresee the introduction of this fee having no impact on the services provided by Jobcentre Plus.

Lung Diseases

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the most recent estimate is of the number of *(a)* deaths from mesothelioma, *(b)* cases of lung cancer attributable to asbestos, *(c)* deaths from asbestosis, *(d)* disablement benefit cases relating to asbestosis and *(e)* cases of disablement benefit for diffuse pleural thickening. [175957]

Jane Kennedy: There were 1, 848 deaths from mesothelioma in 2001 (the latest year for which data are available).

Lung cancers caused by exposure to asbestos cannot be individually distinguished from those due to other causes such as smoking. However, based on research evidence on the relative incidence of mesothelioma and lung cancer in specific occupational groups, it is estimated that there were between approximately 1,750 and 3,500 asbestos related lung cancer deaths in 2001.

There were 73 deaths in 2001 in Great Britain where the underlying cause of death was recorded as asbestosis.

Provisional figures for 2003 indicate that 650 cases of asbestosis and 400 cases of diffuse pleural thickening were identified through the Department for Work and Pensions Industrial Injuries and Disablement Benefit Scheme.

Mr. F.A. Street

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when the decision of the appeal tribunal on 23 April to pay income support to Mr. F A Street of Kingsbridge, Devon from 31 October 2003 will be implemented; and what the reasons are why payment has not been made. [176216]

Mr. Pond: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from David Anderson to Mr. Steen, dated 27 May 2004:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply direct to your question concerning payment of income support for Mr. F A Street, following an appeal tribunal decision. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Details of benefit claims are confidential and I will write to you directly on the matter in question.

This is in line with Part 2, paragraph 12 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

New Deal

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents in Manchester, Central have gained work through the New Deal programme. [175714]

Jane Kennedy: 700 lone parents in Manchester, Central have gained work through the New Deal for Lone Parents since the start of the programme in October 1998. Figures for lone parents who have gained work through other New Deal programmes are not available.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many women in Bootle have benefited from *(a)* the New Deal for Lone Parents and *(b)* the New Deal for Partners since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [176235]

Jane Kennedy: Through the New Deal we have introduced a wide range of initiatives to help individuals improve their employment prospects by giving them the skills, support and confidence they need to move into work. From 12 April we enhanced the New Deal for Partners in order to offer partners taking part in that programme the same level of help and support as our successful New Deal for Lone Parents programme. Also from this April we have started to roll out Work Focused Interviews for Partners, offering greater support to partners of benefit recipients.

Some 1,390 women have started New Deal for Lone Parents in Bootle since the beginning of the programme in October 1998, of whom, 800 have gained a job. Information on the number of women who have benefited from the New Deal for Partners is not available.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents in Bootle have gained work through the New Deal programme. [176236]

Jane Kennedy: 810 lone parents in Bootle have gained work through the New Deal for Lone Parents since the start of the programme in October 1998. Figures for lone parents who have gained work through other New Deal Programmes are not available.

Parental Income

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the net effect has been of income tax, national insurance and benefits in each year since 1997 on the income of *(a)* two non-working parents with four children under 16 years and *(b)* two working parents with four children under 16 years earning up to (i) £10,000, (ii) £15,000, (iii) £20,000, (iv) £25,000 and (v) £30,000; [172831]

(2) what the net effect has been of income tax, national insurance and benefits in each year since 1997 on the income of *(a)* two non-working parents with three children under 16 years and *(b)* two working parents with three children under 16 years earning up to (i) £10,000, (ii) £15,000, (iii) £20,000, (iv) £25,000 and (v) £30,000; [172832]

(3) what the net effect has been of income tax, national insurance and benefits in each year since 1997 on the income of *(a)* one non-working parent with a child under 16 years and *(b)* one working parent with a child under 16 years earning up to (i) £10,000, (ii) £15,000, (iii) £20,000, (iv) £25,000 and (v) £30,000; [172833]

(4) what the net effect has been of income tax, national insurance and benefits in each year since 1997 on the income of *(a)* one non-working parent with two children under 16 years and *(b)* one working parent with two children under 16 years earning up to (i) £10,000, (ii) £15,000, (iii) £20,000, (iv) £25,000 and (v) £30,000; [172834]

(5) what the net effect has been of income tax, national insurance and benefits in each year since 1997 on the income of *(a)* one non-working parent with three children under 16 years and *(b)* one working parent with three children under 16 years earning up to (i) £10,000, (ii) £15,000, (iii) £20,000, (iv) £25,000 and (v) £30,000. [172835]

(6) what the net effect has been of income tax, national insurance and benefits in each year since 1997 on the income of *(a)* one non-working parent with four children under 16 years and *(b)* one working parent with four children under 16 years earning up to (i) £10,000, (ii) £15,000, (iii) £20,000, (iv) £25,000 and (v) £30,000; [172836]

(7) what the net effect has been of income tax, national insurance and benefits in each year since 1997 on the income of *(a)* two non-working parents with a child under 16 years and *(b)* two working parents with a child under 16 years earning up to (i) £10,000, (ii) £15,000, (iii) £20,000, (iv) £25,000 and (v) £30,000; [172837]

(8) what the net effect has been of income tax, national insurance and benefits in each year since 1997 on the income of *(a)* two non-working parents with two children under 16 years and *(b)* two working parents with two children under 16 years earning up to (i) £10,000, (ii) £15,000, (iii) £20,000, (iv) £25,000 and (v) £30,000. [172838]

Mr. Pond: The information has been placed in the Library.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he will answer questions *(a)* 152844, *(b)* 152845 and *(c)* 152855, tabled by the hon. Member for Northavon on 30 January. [167392]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* Replies were given to the hon. Member on 22 April, 12 February and 24 May respectively.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of *(a)* ordinary written questions to his Department were answered within five sitting days of tabling and *(b)* questions for written answer on a named day received a substantive answer on that day in (i) the 2002–03 parliamentary session and (ii) this parliamentary session, broken down by month. [171194]

Maria Eagle: The information is in the table.

Percentage

	Proportion of ordinary written questions answered within five sitting days	*Proportion of named day written questions answered on that day*
Session 2002–03		
13–30 November	4	20
December	41	41
January	23	55
February	34	52
March	37	60
April	57	46
May	50	62
June	16	53
July	56	73
August	No questions tabled	
September	80	79
October	45	73
1–20 November	74	75
Session 2003–04		
26–30 November	35	100
December	62	73
January	39	78
February	48	83
March	52	81
April	85	72

Note:
Figures correct as at 5 May 2004.

Pension Protection Fund

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the annual cost of running the Pension Protection Fund, broken down by *(a)* direct costs of employing staff, *(b)* costs paid to outside bodies including (i) investment managers and (ii) actuaries and *(c)* the costs of collecting the levy by the New Pension Regulator. [175945]

Malcolm Wicks: Our initial estimates indicate that running costs for the early years of the PPF are between £9–15 million per year. These are order of magnitude figures and are based on a number of assumptions made very early on about the way the PPF might operate. The operating model and the detailed processes underpinning that model are now being refined; this is enabling us to have a much clearer view about not only the potential supply routes, but also the number of people, and necessary skills set, the PPF will need to deliver its business. It is important to note that final decisions relating to operations are very much a matter for the in-coming board. Estimates will be revised once these decisions are firmed up.

With those points in mind, the early numbers show that on the basis of PPF employing around 100 staff—including professionals such as actuaries—the staff costs represent approximately a third of the total. The charges relating to investment managers are not factored into the admin costs, as they are part and parcel of the on-going activity relating to the Fund itself. Assumptions relating to the charges in this area are, at this stage, commercially sensitive. We estimate costs relating to levy collection are in the order of less than half a million pounds.

Pension/Benefit Fraud

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what measures he has taken to eliminate *(a)* pension and *(b)* housing benefit fraud. [174997]

Mr. Pond: We are committed to driving down levels of fraud and error in the benefits system.

A service delivery agreement was introduced to reduce loss from fraud and error in minimum income guarantee/pension credit by 20 per cent. by March 2006. The latest figures for minimum income guarantee were published in the national statistical report, "Fraud and Error in Income Support and Jobseeker's Allowance from April 2002 to March 2003"; a copy is available in the Library.

The report shows that loss from fraud and error is falling, with a 17 per cent. reduction in fraud and error between April 2002 and March 2003 against the baseline, and a reduction in fraud alone of 45 per cent.

Data-matching with the Inland Revenue on savings and contributions to occupational pension schemes identifies income that may not have been reported; additionally information on other savings products such as individual savings accounts will become available for data matching later this year. These measures are equally applicable to the detection of fraud in relation to pension credit which replaced minimum income guarantee in October 2003.

The Government have set a challenging target to reduce fraud and error in housing benefit for working age people. We are working with local authorities to achieve a 25 per cent. reduction by March 2006, and the total amount available to spend on tackling fraud and error in housing benefit in the three years from 2003 to 2006 is £420 million. The Department published "Fraud and Error in Housing Benefit, April 2002 to March 2003" on 11 December 2003. This report represents the first national headline estimates for the level of fraud and error in housing benefit; a copy is available in the Library.

Latest figures show that, in the last three years, local authorities have increased the number of prosecutions and sanctions for benefit fraud by more than 500 per cent. In 2003–04, local authorities carried out 2,667 prosecutions and issued 6,289 cautions and penalties.

The Verification Framework is intended to detect and prevent fraudulent claims and sets a minimum standard of evidence needed for a claim to be assessed. Of the 348 authorities which have received funds to implement the Verification Framework scheme, 301 are fully compliant, with a further 37 being compliant in at least one of the modules. Verification Framework funding of £224 million has been made available for the three years from April 2003, with an additional £8 million being made available to local authorities to assist them with the change from the current VF scheme to a new regime introduced in April 2004.

From 5 April 2004, the Department is providing local authorities with monthly data-matching and risk based reviews via the Housing Benefit Matching Service (HBMS). This will enable local authorities to identify fraud and error at an earlier stage than in the past, ensuring that any overpayments are kept to a minimum.

Pensioners

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Scotland receive council tax benefit. [176492]

Mr. Pond: As at May 2002, there were 284,000 pensioner households receiving council tax benefit in Scotland, including 340,000 beneficiaries aged 60 or over.

Notes:

1. Pensioner households are defined as benefit units (which may be a single person or a couple) where the claimant and/or partner are aged 60 or over.

2. Beneficiaries are defined as claimants and partners who are aged 60 or over.

3. The figures have been rounded to the nearest thousand.

4. Figures for any non-responding authorities have been estimated.

5. Council tax benefit totals exclude any second adult rebate cases.

Source:

Housing benefit and council tax benefit annual summary statistics, May 2002.

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost was of over-payments to pensioners in each year since 1997. [175753]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is in the table.

Cost of benefit overpayments to pensioners

	Volume	*Value (£)*
1999–2000	111,599	26,074,886
2000–01	140,795	42,333,932
2001–02	201,260	87,619,329
2002–03	156,189	58,192,614
2003–04	149,554	51,428,186

Notes:
1. Records are not available prior to 1999–2000.
2. Data for 1999–2000 and 2000–01 is based on overpayments of Attendance Allowance and Retirement Pension.
3. From 2001, data includes Income Support paid to claimants over the age of 65.
4. From 2003, overpayments of Pension Credit are included.

Source:
Central Debt Management System

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what procedures are in place to enable pensioners who have been over-paid to pay sums back to the Department. [175754]

Malcolm Wicks: There are various procedures in place to enable pensioners who have been overpaid to repay sums to the Department. The method of repayment will depend on the particular circumstances of the case; our aim being to recover the money in a cost effective manner without causing unnecessary hardship to the customer.

Customers are notified of an overpayment and given one calendar month to pay the amount in full or to arrange payment by instalment. The notification includes full details of how to repay, how to appeal and how to get further help and advice.

Where the customer is not able to repay the amount in a single lump sum, payment by instalments can be negotiated. As the majority of pensioners receive payments from the Department, the preferred method of recovery by instalments is through direct deduction from their entitlement.

Both lump sum and instalment payments can also be made by Cheque, Postal Order, Girobank, Transcash, Direct Debit, Switch or Delta.

Seasonal Fruit Pickers

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what standards his Department has in place to cover regimes of temporary accommodation sites housing seasonal fruit pickers. [175444]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 set specific requirements about the safety of gas systems in accommodation that is provided for an occupant who is not the owner of that accommodation.

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 places general requirements on all work activity to be performed in a way that does not jeopardise the health and safety of the workers involved, or people affected by work activity. Those general requirements could apply to work that is done to maintain or repair temporary accommodation and hence offer some further protection to those using this type of accommodation.

Shanklin Jobcentre

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much has been spent in the last 12 months, and how much is planned to be spent in the next 12 months, on upgrading premises and equipment at Shanklin Jobcentre. [176365]

Jane Kennedy: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to the hon. Member.

Jobcentre Plus.

Letter from David Anderson to Andrew Turner, dated 27 May 2004:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply direct to your question concerning how much money has been spent on upgrading the premises and equipment at Shanklin Jobcentre in the last 12 months and plans for expenditure in the next 12 months. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Shanklin Jobcentre has not required any works in the last 12 months other than routine maintenance; therefore no monies have been spent on upgrading the building. However, in line with the national programme of upgrading the IT systems in all offices, Shanklin Jobcentre's IT system has been upgraded. We are unable to give the precise cost involved as it was funded from the national programme.

Due to the current roll-out plans of Jobcentre Plus services to the Isle of Wight we have no plans for expenditure over the next 12 months.

I hope this is helpful.

Part-time Workers (State Assistance)

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what state assistance is available to people without health impediments or caring responsibilities who only work between 17 and 19 hours a week. [173948]

Mr. Pond: Adults aged 25 or over who usually work 30 hours or more a week may be eligible for working tax credit. It can also be paid to people who work 16 hours or more a week who are aged 16 or over and responsible for at least one child, or are disabled. However people without children or a disability, working between 17 and 19 hours a week would only be eligible for working tax credit if they were aged 50 or over and were returning to work after at least 6 months on one or more of a range of out-of-work benefits.

Housing benefit and council tax benefit run-on is also available to help with the transition to work. This allows certain qualifying claimants of income support and jobseekers allowance to continue to receive housing benefit and council tax benefit for up to four weeks after starting work. In April 2004, a similar provision was announced for those in receipt of incapacity benefits.

Sure Start (Manchester)

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many mothers in Manchester, Central have made use of the Sure Start maternity grant. [175713]

Mr. Pond: The data is not available in the format requested, the available information is in the table.

Sure Start maternity grants

	Applications	*Awards*
For Manchester Central, Manchester South, Manchester Trinity and Oldham Social Fund Districts		
2000–01	5,061	4,147
2001–02	5,719	4,596
2002 to December	5,055	4,013
For area covered by Manchester Jobcentre Plus		
2003 January to March	1,039	889
2003–04	4,708	3,635
2004 April	421	337

Notes:
1. Manchester, Central parliamentary constituency was not included in a single Social Fund District, but used to be part of the area covered by Manchester, Central, Manchester South, Manchester Trinity and Oldham Social Fund Districts. Manchester Central parliamentary constituency is now part of Manchester Jobcentre Plus District. The latter was formed in January 2003 from Manchester Central, Manchester South and Manchester Trinity Social Fund Districts, together with part of Oldham Social Fund District. The two areas for which data are given above are different, therefore the data are not comparable.
2. Sure Start maternity grants were introduced on 27 March 2000. The very small number of cases for 1999–2000 have been excluded for data protection reasons.
3. Data is given for all applications and awards, irrespective of whether the application was made by the mother or her partner.
Source:
DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with *(a)* members and *(b)* representatives of the provisional government of Afghanistan on the (i) security situation and (ii) requirements for increased foreign involvement in Afghanistan in the last 12 months; and if he will make a statement. [175756]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We regularly discuss these issues with the Afghan Transitional Administration at a range of levels. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary visited Kabul in March this year and discussed issues including security and foreign involvement in Afghanistan with various members and representatives of the Afghan government.

This followed a similar visit in July 2003. The Foreign Secretary also addressed these issues with President Karzai and members of his government during the President's visit to the UK in June 2003. I visited Kabul in October 2003 and also met President Karzai and other members of the Afghan government in Berlin on 1 April 2004. My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Bill Rammell) visited Kabul on 4–6 May this year and met President Karzai and other Ministers.

The security situation remains a problem, particularly in the South and East. Sporadic attacks continue against both international and Afghan forces, as well as the UN and NGOs. Fighting between Afghan forces also occurs. The international community, including the UK, is responding with increased commitments of troops and resources, including by extending the network of Provincial Reconstruction Teams. In the long-term, Afghanistan must be able to maintain its own security, through an effective national army and police force. Work to recruit and train those has been under way for some time, with the UK's active support and involvement.

On 1 March 2004 DFID announced (an increase of the UK's commitment, from £200 million over five years to at least £500 million over the same period. This funding is to support a range of reconstruction work, support for conflict prevention, and the counter-narcotics effort. A booklet outlining DFID's program in Afghanistan has been placed in the Library of the House. International donors demonstrated their commitment to Afghanistan at the Berlin Conference held on 31 March—1 April 2004 by pledging US$8.2 billion of assistance over the next three years. This represents two thirds of Afghanistan's requirements over this period. We hope that the full requirement will be met through more money becoming available from donors that were only able to make one-year pledges in Berlin.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of developments over the last 12 months of the security situation in *(a)* central, *(b)* northern, *(c)* eastern, *(d)* western and *(e)* southern Afghanistan; what recommendations concerning troop contributions his Department has made; and if he will make a statement. [175757]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Central Afghanistan, in general, is reasonably secure, assisted by the presence of the New Zealand-led Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) based in Bamiyan and the new PRT in Oruzgan Province. Northern Afghanistan is generally stable but is subject to long-standing tensions between the two biggest factions in the region. The UK-led PRT based in Mazar-e Sharif has helped defuse tensions and a second UK-led PRT is now being established in Faryab Province. There tend to be fewer security incidents in the west. A flare-up of fighting in Herat followed the death of the Afghan Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism in March but units of the Afghan National Army (ANA) calmed the situation.

Security in the south and east is worrying. There have been murders of international and Afghan aid workers. Seven PRTs have been established in the south and east to help improve the security environment. Coalition forces and units of the ANA continue to pursue terrorists, especially along the border with Pakistan. The Pakistani army is playing its part in ensuring that perpetrators of attacks in Afghanistan cannot easily find refuge in Pakistan.

The international community, including the UK, is responding to the need for security with increased commitments of troops and resources. Additional PRTs are the key to expanding the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). The UK has agreed to lead a second PRT and provide a Forward Support Base for all PRTs in the North. But ISAF expansion can only proceed once NATO's statement ofrequirements is fully met. We are pressing other nations to contribute the resources needed to meet remaining shortfalls.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with *(a)* members and *(b)* representatives of the provisional Government of Afghanistan concerning the timing of elections; and if he will make a statement. [175758]

Mr. MacShane: We regularly discuss arrangements for the elections with members of the Afghan Transitional Administration (ATA) at all levels; I discussed this subject with President Karzai and other members of the ATA in Berlin on 1 April.

President Karzai announced on 28 March that national elections would be held in September 2004. The Joint Elections Monitoring Board, a joint Afghan Government and UN body, is currently leading preparations while an electoral law is finalised. The UK is committed to supporting the electoral process. Last year we contributed £10.55 million to support election registration, we have pledged a further £0.5 million for voter education and £2.77 million to support preparations for the elections themselves. We are working with the UN, international partners and NATO to consider how the international community can assist and can support the Afghan Government in delivering security for the election process.

Israel

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has held with the Israeli Government about the situation of the Bedouins in the Negev. [175203]

Mr. MacShane: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not recently raised this issue with the Israeli Government. In August 2003 our embassy in Tel Aviv raised with the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs the situation of the Bedouin, including plans for development of the Negev, and government action to improve the standard of health among the Bedouin. During her visit to Israel in October 2003, my noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean discussed the plight of the Bedu with representatives of several Israeli human rights groups.

Departmental Buildings

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many buildings in England owned by his Department are used at less than 25 per cent. capacity for more than three months of the year. [175981]

Mr. MacShane: None.

EU Enlargement (Benefit Restriction)

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what factors underlay the decision of the Government to restrict benefit opportunities for nationals of EU accession states; and if he will make a statement. [161352]

Mr. Pond: I have been asked to reply

The Government strongly support the accession to the European Union of the new member states. We intend to open our borders to those who genuinely want to come and work here. This will benefit the UK economy, expanding the range of skills and supply of workers available across the UK. People from the accession countries who are legally working in the UK will have the right to reside in the UK while in work.

However, we need to take measures to protect our social security system from possible abuse. Regulations were laid on 30 April 2004 making it a requirement that a person has the right to reside in the UK, as well as being habitually resident, in order to claim income-related benefits. Workers who are legally working in the UK and who are on low income may qualify for housing benefit and council tax benefit as well as child benefit and tax credits.

Iraq

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs who is responsible for deciding on the use of oil assets in Iraq. [174045]

Mr. Mullin: As agreed in UNSCR 1483, DFI funds are disbursed at the direction of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), in consultation with the Iraqi interim administration, to meet the needs of the Iraqi people. UNSCR 1483 also noted the establishment of an audit oversight body for the DFI—the International Advisory and Monitoring Board (IAMB). The IAMB is charged with ensuring that DFI funds are used in a transparent manner and for the purposes for which they were disbursed.

The Iraqi Ministry of Finance and of Planning and Development Co-operation working with the CPA have published Budgets for 2003 and 2004 which outline the use of oil revenues in public expenditure in Iraq (Budget information can be found on the CPA website at http://www.cpa-iraq.org/budget/). In addition a Programme Review Board (PRB) has been established to enable emergency off-budget expenditure (decisions made by the PRB can be found at http://www.cpa-iraq.org/budget/program_review_board.html).

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many barrels of oil have been exported from Iraq since the fall of Saddam Hussein; what value this represents; and what use has been made of these funds within Iraq. [174046]

Mr. Mullin: All proceeds from the export sale of Iraq's oil are deposited in the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI), as agreed in United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1483. As of 17 May 2004 approximately US$ 9.4 billion had been deposited into the DFI from the export sale of oil since 28 May 2003.

Information on the volume of oil exports from Iraq by month can be found on the US Department of Defense website at http://www.defendamerica.mil/. Average crude oil exports for each month since June 2003 to April 2004 are as follows:

	Monthly average crude oil exports from Iraq—millions of barrels per day
June 2003	0.2
July 2003	0.322
August 2003	0.646
September 2003	0.983
October 2003	1.149

	Monthly average crude oil exports from Iraq—millions of barrels per day
November 2003	1.524
December 2003	1.541
January 2004	1.537
February 2004	1.382
March 2004	1.825
April 2004	1.804

As determined in UNSCR 1483 all DFI funds are to be used in a transparent manner to meet the needs of the Iraqi people. The Iraqi Ministry of Finance and of Planning and Development Co-operation working with the CPA have published Budgets for 2003 and 2004 which outline the use of oil revenues in public expenditure in Iraq (Budget information can be found on the CPA website at http://www.cpa-iraq.org/budget/). Disbursements have included support of food production and distribution programmes, currency exchange programmes, electricity and oil infrastructure programmes, equipment for Iraqi security forces, and Iraqi civil service salaries and ministry budget operations.

Middle East

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what representations he has made to the Israeli Government regarding its refusal to register children born in the occupied territories to parents of mixed Israeli/Palestinian origin; [175351]

(2) what representations he has made to the Israeli Government following its decision to prohibit Israelis married to residents of the Occupied Territories to live with their spouses in East Jerusalem. [175352]

Mr. MacShane: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not raised these issues with the Israeli Government. During her visit to Israel in October 2003, my noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean discussed the legislation which is behind such discriminatory treatment of Arab Israelis with several human rights groups. Our concerns about the impact of the citizenship law were subsequently raised by British Embassy staff on 7 October 2003 with the Israeli Ministry of the Interior.

Sudan

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what contribution his Department is making to the monitoring of the ceasefire in southern Sudan. [175719]

Mr. MacShane: The Government have contributed over £460,000 to the Verification Monitoring Team (VMT), which is responsible for investigating and reporting on breaches of the Memorandum of Understanding on the cessation of hostilities in southern Sudan. We are currently considering a further, significant contribution. The Government have provided four members to staff to work for the VMT.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) if he will consult other members of the United Nations Security Council with a view to securing an emergency session of the Security Council to address the situation in Darfur, Sudan; [175720]

(2) what diplomatic measures his Department *(a)* has taken in the past month and *(b)* plans to take in relation to the situation in Darfur, Sudan. [175721]

Mr. MacShane: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. Mullin) to my right hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham Ladywood (Clare Short) on 25 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1571–72W).

Darfur was discussed at the EU General Affairs and External Relations Council on 26 April and 17 May, and the UN Security Council was briefed about the situation on 2 April and 7 May. Since then, our Permanent Representative to the UN in New York has been working closely with other Security Council members, notably the US, France and Germany, to ensure that the Security Council remains focused on the crisis. We will continue to consider with all partners what further we can do to alleviate the situation.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government supported the addition of Sudan to the UN's Human Rights Committee; and if he will make a statement. [175906]

Mr. MacShane: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Bill Rammell) to the right hon. Member for Tonbridge and Malling (Sir John Stanley) on 24 May 2004 *Official Report*, columns 1363W—136W.

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the attacks on civilians and displacement of communities in the Shilluk Kingdom in Sudan. [176063]

Mr. MacShane: We are very concerned by reports of fighting in the Upper Nile region of Sudan, and, in particular that civilians have been targeted. Estimates suggest that between 70–80,000 people have now been displaced and non-governmental organisations in the area have reported that services in the town are becoming increasingly stretched. Though we understand that fighting has decreased since 3 May, the humanitarian situation is likely to deteriorate further with the onset of seasonal rains.

We are following the situation closely and are in contact with all parties in the area, including the Verification and Monitoring Team which is responsible for investigating and reporting on breaches of the cessation of hostilities. We raised the matter with the Sudanese Foreign Minister during his visit to London on 11 May.

United States

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the United States Supreme Court concerning the Alien Torts Act. [176327]

Mr. MacShane: The Government, together with the Australian and Swiss Governments, filed an amicus brief in the US Supreme Court on 23 January 2004 in the Sosa *v.* Alvarez case which may serve as a test case for the US Alien Tort Statute (ATS). The concern addressed by the Government's amicus brief is the use of the ATS to bring suits for damages brought by non-US nationals or companies in relation to events occurring outside the US. The US Supreme Court is expected to rule on the ATS case at the end of June. A copy of the amicus brief will be placed in the Library of the House.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Student Loan Company

13. **Mr. David:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will alter the rules governing the Student Loan Company Ltd. so that interest on loans is not charged when a former student is engaged in voluntary work. [176002]

Alan Johnson: We have no plans to remove the interest rate on student loans for graduates doing voluntary work. Student loans are already made on exceptionally favourable terms. There is a real terms zero rate of interest on these loans in line with inflation, as defined by the Retail "Prices Index". Currently, graduates involved with voluntary work who are earning less than £10,000 do not have to make repayments. That amount will rise to £15,000 in April 2005.

Further Education

14. **Tony Baldry:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on further education funding. [176003]

Alan Johnson: The Government have set out their investment plans for 2003–04 to 2005–06 to support its Success for All strategy to reform further education and training. These plans enable the Learning and Skills Council to increase funding for further education significantly. For the academic year 2003/04, core funding rates per qualification increased by 3 per cent. for school sixth forms and 4.5 per cent. for further education colleges (setting aside the impact on rates of changes to targeted funds for pay and staff training and teachers' pension funding). Our expenditure plans to 2005–06 should see that trend continue.

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which further education colleges are participating in the *(a)* learning communities, *(b)* adult learners' grant and *(c)* employer training pilots; and what plans he has for take-up in North Staffordshire. [175564]

Alan Johnson: Further Education (FE) colleges are key partners in developing Learning Communities. Eleven test bed Learning Communities entered their development phase in April 2004 and a further 15 will be in place by September. Although, none of the test beds are located in North Staffordshire, there are proposals for two learning communities to be developed in Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme, and the local FE colleges are closely involved. At this stage in the development of the test beds we do not have information on the FE colleges involved in the local partnerships.

Adult Learning Grant (ALG) pilots are currently being operated in 10 local Learning and Skills Council areas. There are over 75 FE colleges and other providers (as seen in following Table) who have learners in receipt of an ALG in the pilot areas. From September 2004, there are plans to double the size of the current pilot by extending ALG throughout the two lead regions—the South East and North East. There are no ALG pilots in the Staffordshire area and the area does not figure in the lead regions.

There are currently 12 Employer Training Pilots in operation and, by September 2004, there will be 18 covering 20 local LSC areas. The LSC is responsible for managing the pilots, which involves 118 FE colleges (as seen in the following list) providing training and other services to help meet the skills needs of participating employers. At present there are no plans to extend the pilots to North Staffordshire.

	FE colleges involved in ALGs
Bedfordshire	Bedford College
Bedfordshire	Barnfield College
Bedfordshire	Dunstable College
Bedfordshire	Luton Sixth Form College
County Durham	Bishop Auckland College
County Durham	New College, Durham
County Durham	East Durham and Houghall Community College
County Durham	Derwentside College
Devon and Cornwall	Truro College
Devon and Cornwall	Penwith College
Devon and Cornwall	North Devon College
Devon and Cornwall	Plymouth College of Art and Design
Devon and Cornwall	Plymouth College of Further Education
Devon and Cornwall	Cornwall College
Devon and Cornwall	Exeter College
Devon and Cornwall	Bicton College
Devon and Cornwall	East Devon College
Devon and Cornwall	South Devon College
Devon and Cornwall	Falmouth College of Art and Design
Humberside	John Leggott Sixth Form College
Humberside	Wilberforce College
Humberside	Franklin College
Humberside	East Riding College
Humberside	Wyke Sixth Form College
Humberside	Bishop Burton College
Humberside	Hull College
Humberside	Grimsby College
Humberside	North Lindsey College
Humberside	East Yorkshire College of Further Education
Humberside	Driffield School
Lancashire	Skelmersdale College
Lancashire	Blackburn College
Lancashire	Nelson and Colne College
Lancashire	Blackpool and The Fylde College
Lancashire	Lancaster and Morecambe College
Lancashire	Preston College
Lancashire	Accrington and Rossendale College
Lancashire	Runshaw College
Lancashire	Burnley College
Lancashire	Myerscough College
Lancashire	Cardinal Newman College
Lancashire	St. Mary's College, Blackburn
Leicestershire	Gateway Sixth Form College
Leicestershire	Regent College
Leicestershire	South Leicestershire College
Leicestershire	Loughborough College
Leicestershire	Stephenson College
Leicestershire	Brooksby Melton College
Leicestershire	Leicester College
Leicestershire	Wyggeston and Queen Elizabeth I College
London West	Harrow College
London West	Uxbridge College
London West	Baling, Hammersmith and West London College

	FE colleges involved in ALGs
London West	Stanmore College
London West	West Thames College
London West	College of North West London
Shropshire	Ludlow College
Shropshire	New College, Telford
Shropshire	Telford College of Arts and Technology
Shropshire	Walford and North Shropshire College
Shropshire	Shrewsbury College of Arts and Technology
South Yorkshire	Thomas Rotherham College
South Yorkshire	Dearne Valley College
South Yorkshire	Sheffield College
South Yorkshire	Rother Valley College
South Yorkshire	Rotherham College of Arts and Technology
South Yorkshire	Doncaster College
South Yorkshire	Barnsley College
South Yorkshire	Northern College
The Black Country	Halesowen College
The Black Country	Walsall College of Arts and Technology
The Black Country	Wolverhampton College
The Black Country	Sandwell College
The Black Country	Dudley College of Technology
The Black Country	Stourbridge College

FE Colleges and Work-Based Learning Providers involved in ETPs:

Academy of Learning Ltd.
Accrington and Rossendale College
Adult Community College Colchester
Adult Community College Chelmsford
Anderson Business College Ltd.
Babington Business College Ltd. (Derby)
Barking College
Basildon Adult Community College
Berkshire College of Agriculture
Bexley College
Birmingham Academy Training Ltd.
Birmingham College of Food Tourism and Creative Studies
Birmingham Community College
Bolton Community College
Bournville College of Further Education
Bracknell and Wokingham College
Braintree College
Brooksby Melton College
Building Crafts College
Burton College
Bury College
Canterbury College
Catten College Ltd.
Central Training Academy
Chelmsford College
Chesterfield College
City College Manchester
City of Sunderland College
Colchester Institute
Cricklade College
Crown Secretarial College
Derby College
Derby Tertiary College Wilmorton
East Berkshire College
Eccles College
Epping Forest College
Gateshead College
Greenwich Community College
Hackney Community College
Harlow College
Harlow ITEC
Havering College of Further and Higher Education
Highbury College—Workforce and Business Development
Hopwood Hall College
Institute of Refractories Engineers
Intec Business Colleges PLC
ITEC Learning Technologies
Josiah Mason Sixth Form College
Kingston Maurward College
Leicester Adult Education College
Leicester College
Lewisham College
Loughborough College
Ludlow College
Manchester College of Arts and Technology
Matthew Boulton College of Further and Higher Education
Mid-Kent College
Moulton College F.E.C
Myerscough College
New College Swindon
New College Telford
Newbury College
Newcastle College
Newham College
Newham College of Further Education
North Hertfordshire College
North Trafford College of Further Education
North Tyneside Adult Basic Education
North Tyneside College Silverlink Business training
North Warwickshire and Hinckley College
North West Kent College of technology
Northumberland College
Norton Radstock College
Oaklands College
Otley College of Agriculture and Horticulture
Pendleton College
Preston College
Queen Alexandra College
Ridge Danyers College
Salisbury College
Shipley College
Shrewsbury College of Arts and Technology
Shrewsbury Sixth Form College
Solihull College
South Birmingham College
South East Derbyshire College
South East Essex College of Arts and technology
South Kent College
South Leicestershire College
South Trafford College
South Tyneside College
Southend Adult Community College
Sparsholt College Hampshire
St. Helens College
St. John Rigby College
Stephenson College

Stockport College of Further and Higher Education
Sutton Coldfield College
Swindon College
Swindon College (Swindon 1)
Tameside College
Telford College of Arts and Technology
Tendring Adult Community College
Thanet College
The Oldham College
The Virtual College
The Vocational College Ltd.
Thurrock and Basildon College
Tower Hamlets College
University of Derby High Peak College
Wakefield College
Walford and North Shropshire College
West Kent College
West Nottinghamshire College
Wigan and Leigh College
Wiltshire College
Wirral Metropolitan College
Writtle College

Skill-based Qualifications

15. **Ross Cranston:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to develop flexible skill-based qualifications. [176004]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Creating an employment-led qualifications system for adults that responds quickly to changing skills needs is a key goal of the Government's Skills Strategy.

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority is working with the Learning and Skills Council, the Sector Skills Development Agency and partners in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland to develop a fully operational credit-based system across all sectors.

Overseas Students

16. **Tom Brake:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will estimate the annual number of overseas students coming to study in the UK after 2006. [176005]

Alan Johnson: My Department has no plans to estimate the number of overseas students who may come to the UK to study in the future.

Deferred University Entry

17. **Mr. Rendel:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many young people applied for deferred entry to university in 2003–04. [176006]

Alan Johnson: Figures from the Universities and Colleges Admissions (UCAS) show that 18,930, or 12 per cent., of 18-year-olds who obtained a place on a full-time undergraduate course in autumn 2003, chose to defer entry.

Adult Education Spending

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what public funding has been spent on adult *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy in Blackpool North and Fleetwood in each of the last five years. [176146]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The estimated total spend on "Skills For Life"—the Government's strategy for literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners from pre-entry level up to and including level 2—and on Key Skills (essential skills of communication, application of number and information technology), from April 2001 to July 2003, in the Lancashire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area is set out in the table as follows:

£000

	Basic skills	*Key skills*
April 2001 to July 2001[1]	3,370	1,270
August 2001 to July 2002	6,577	1,857
August 2002 to July 2003	7,815	1,948

[1] The figures for April to July 2001 include costs incurred from August 2000 on learning aims continuing into April 2001.

From the information available to the LSC it has not been feasible to obtain estimates at constituency level or separate figures by subject without incurring disproportionate cost. Likewise it has not been feasible to obtain comparable figures for periods before April 2001 when the Skills for Life strategy was launched and the LSC was formed, but information shows it was considerably less than at present.

Adult Learning and Skills

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps he is taking to ensure that young people and their families are being prepared through the 13 to 19 curriculum for the effects of demographic changes to the workforce over the coming decade and possible skills mismatches. [175845]

Mr. Miliband: The Government set out their strategy for the 14–19 phase of education in their policy document, 14–19: "Opportunity and Excellence". They have asked the Working Group on 14–19 Reform to recommend how there might be greater coherence in vocational learning programmes for all young people in their 14–19 education and on a unified framework of qualifications suitable for all learners. The Group's interim report was published in February and its final report is expected in the Autumn. The Government have already taken action to bring work related and vocational education into the mainstream of the secondary system to help address skills needs. Among other measures: work related learning will become a statutory requirement for all at KS4 from September 2004; qualifications such as the GCSEs in vocational subjects have been introduced to extend the curriculum offer; and programmes such as "Increased Flexibility for 14–16 Year Olds" and "Young Apprenticeships" will provide off-site placements and experience of work for students wanting more applied learning. The Skills Strategy, published in July 2003, set out an over-arching vision for equipping individuals and employers with the

skills they need in order to increase productivity, increase personal returns and close the skills gaps with our international competitors.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how his Department is *(a)* balancing the targeted social welfare agenda and the skills agenda and *(b)* taking into account (i) the OECD review of career development, (ii) the inquiry by the Education and Skills Select Committee into skills strategy and (iii) changing workforce demography; and if he will make a statement. [175848]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In response to the hon. Member's first question, the Department is working closely with the Department for Work and Pensions to balance the targeted social welfare agenda and the skills agenda.

The Skills Strategy White Paper—"21st Century Skills: Realising Our Potential", published July 2003—invited the National Employer Panel to look at this specific issue. The Panel reported in February 2004 with a number of recommendations. We are taking these forward these recommendations working with DWP, the LSC and Jobcentre Plus. Building on this report, in the Budget, the Chancellor announced a New Deal for Skills. This will focus on the low skilled who are on benefits—both active and inactive—and help them acquire the skills they need for sustained employment.

In response to his second question, the Education and Skills Select Committee started its inquiry into skills in January focusing initially on 14 to 19 agenda; it is currently on-going and is due to continue after the summer recess. We await the conclusions of the Committee's work with interest.

The OECD report, "Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap" (published March 2004), highlighted some positive activity in the UK in relation to career guidance and good practice. We recognise that services such as the Connexions Service for young people, the work of Jobcentre Plus and the reform of IAG services for adults must take account of the demographic changes in the UK. I recognise that the demographic changes show that there will be an older workforce, and we must look to the integration of the skills and welfare agenda to both re-skill and up-skill older workers, and to support and encourage those people on benefits into work with appropriate training. That is why the New Deal for Skills agenda is so important.

Adult Skills

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will estimate the number of economically inactive adults without a level 2 qualification; and if he will make a statement. [174368]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 25 May 2004]:* According to the quarterly Labour Force Survey, in winter 2003/04 there were 2,862,000 economically inactive adults lacking a level 2 qualification (49.2 per cent. of an inactive population of 5,822,000).

As we said in our Skills Strategy White Paper, "21st Century Skills", we will create a new guarantee of free tuition for any adult without a good foundation of employability skills to get the training they need to achieve such a qualification at level 2. We intend that it will apply to those in the workforce or of working age—including the economically inactive who are seeking those employability skills—who do not already have a full level 2 qualification, and who commit to trying to achieve one. The entitlement will be trialled in two regions—the North East and the South East—from September 2004. Subject to experience in the first year, we will roll out the entitlement nationally from September 2005.

In the 2004 Budget the Chancellor announced a New Deal for Skills. This will focus on people with significant skills needs who are on benefits—both active and inactive—and help them acquire the skills they need for sustained employment.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will estimate the number of economically inactive adults with a level 3 qualification; and if he will make a statement. [174369]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 25 May 2004]:* According to the quarterly Labour Force Survey, in Winter 2003/04 there were 1,903,000 economically inactive adults with a level 3 qualification (or higher), representing 32.7 per cent. of an inactive population of 5,822,000.

We want to increase the number of people with level 3 qualifications that will enhance their employability. Working through Regional Skills Partnerships and Sector Skills Councils, priority skills needs will be identified so that learning undertaken at level 3 has greater impact for both individuals and employers as regional and sector skills priorities are addressed.

In the 2004 Budget the Chancellor announced a New Deal for Skills. This will focus on people with significant skills needs who are on benefits—both active and inactive—and help them acquire the skills they need for sustained employment.

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to maintain adult skills provision at *(a)* basic, *(b)* level 2 and *(c)* level 3 in the Worthing area. [175449]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Government outlined their commitment to improving adult skills in "21st Century Skills" published in July 2003 and has set challenging PSA targets for skills improvement in basic skills and at level 2.

Sussex Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is responsible for planning and funding adult skills provision in Worthing through the main further education college, Northbrook College, and other learning providers including Worthing College and West Sussex Adult Education Service. Northbrook College, in its three-year development plan, outlined plans to maintain learner numbers at entry level, level 1 and level 3, with an increase in learners at level 2.

Sussex LSC is working closely with local providers and partners, in order to ensure that the strategic area review delivers an improvement in the provision and that the needs of individuals and employers are being met effectively. Sussex LSC is also involved in the

national pilot for level 2 entitlement to deliver free provision and financial support to adults without level 2 qualifications.

In addition, Sussex LSC has established a Skills for Life Development Centre, in partnership with the South East England Development Agency to increase demand for, and improve, basic skills provision.

Asbestos

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 11 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1715W, on asbestos, what monitoring procedures are in place to ensure schools have identified and recorded the position of asbestos; and what information his Department collects centrally on the implementation of the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations. [175930]

Mr. Miliband: Responsibility for monitoring asbestos under the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002 rests with the owners of school premises. In the case of community schools, community special schools, voluntary controlled schools, maintained nursery schools and pupil referral units, this is the local education authority. With voluntary aided and foundation schools, it is the governing body. Any monitoring procedures in place would be co-ordinated by the local education authority.

The Department does not collect information centrally on the implementation of these Regulations.

Building Schools for the Future Initiative

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the Government's commitment, including private finance initiative credits, is for each successful wave one bid in the Building Schools for the Future initiative for each relevant fiscal year. [176257]

Mr. Miliband: I refer the hon. Member to response I have given him on 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 710W.

Bureaucracy

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* consultation documents, *(b)* regulations, *(c)* revised and corrected regulations, *(d)* guidance notes, *(e)* requests for statistical information and *(f)* letters from Ministers have been sent to (i) schools and (ii) local education authorities by his Department in each year from 1997–98 to 2003–04; what the cost to the Department was in each case; and how many required a response from (A) a local education authority, (B) a school and (C) a member of staff. [175918]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 25 May 2004]:* We strictly monitor and gate-keep the information that we automatically send to schools. However, we do not have the information segmented in the way requested.

The academic year 2002/03 saw a 50 per cent. reduction on the number of documents sent to all schools compared with the previous 2001/02 year. We will be reporting on the current academic year shortly.

Going forward, we have successfully piloted an on-line ordering system that will enable schools to choose what information they want from the Department and when. This will put schools in control of what they receive.

Careers Advice

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps he is taking to ensure that 13 to 19-year-olds in schools, colleges and in the workplace have access to impartial career advice and guidance which is informed by the changing labour markets. [175853]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Every 13 to 19-year-old in England has access to impartial careers advice from their local Connexions Partnership or, on-line, from Connexions Direct. Connexions Partnerships liaise with local employers and conduct labour market studies in order to help young people reach career decisions based on sound information about local and national labour market trends. Connexions also makes available national careers information products, which are developed in close collaboration with Sector Skills Councils to ensure they reflect employment trends and changing occupational requirements.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills who has been invited to serve on the end to end review of careers education and guidance in England; and what the timetable is. [175851]

Margaret Hodge: The review team is made up of officials from the Department. The team has consulted a wide range of individuals and organisations. In total around 350 people will have been consulted by the end of May, including staff and students at several schools and colleges, young people taking part in a Connexions Direct user survey, a spread of Connexions Partnerships and representatives from the following organisations: Aim Higher; Association of Colleges; Association of Learning Providers; Careers England; CBI; CfBT; Construction Industry Training Board; Disability Rights Commission; Equal Opportunities Commission; e-skills UK; Go Skills; Government Offices; Guidance Council; Guidance Enterprises Group; HM Treasury; Institute of Careers Guidance; Learning and Skills Council; Local Government Association; National Association for Gifted and Talented Youth; National Association of Careers and Guidance Teachers; National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations; National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling; National Union of Teachers; Ofsted; Qualifications and Curriculum Authority; Secondary Heads Association; Sector Skills Development Agency; Selly Oak Hospital; Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities; skillsformedia; Universities for the North East; University of Northumbria I expect the review to conclude at the end of June.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the future of the private sector in providing careers guidance for young people. [172675]

Margaret Hodge: The Department values the contribution made by the private sector in providing careers guidance for young people. However, it is the responsibility of Connexions Partnerships to decide on the most appropriate way to deliver services for young

people in their area. Connexions Partnerships are currently considering the most cost-effective means of delivering the service, and in some cases this may involve a change of structure. This does not necessarily mean that the position on sub-contracting to private providers changes. We have found an increasing number of areas are moving to a "lead body" model leaving private sector careers contracts in place.

Care Workers (Hygiene Training)

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many care workers working in private sector care homes were trained in basic hygiene through Learning and Skills Council funding in the last year for which figures are available. [175990]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information cannot be supplied in the time available. I shall write to my hon. Friend with the answer, in due course and place a copy of my letter in the House Library.

Child Care (Hull)

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many child care places have been created in Hull, North since 1997. [174791]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* The Department is unable to provide details of child care places for Hull, North. However, from April 1999 to March 2004 Kingston upon Hull local authority created 5,221 new child care places helping some 9,267 children. This shows an increase in the stock of child care places, taking into account turnover, of 3,909 helping some 6,938 children.

Connexions

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the level and impact of reductions in the 2004–05 Connexions budget upon each of the Connexions partnerships; what criteria were used in forming the decision to make the reductions; and if he will make a statement. [175850]

Margaret Hodge: It is too soon to assess the precise consequences of the reduction in VAT transitional funding for Connexions Partnerships but early indications are that the impact on the delivery of services to young people will be minimal. The key criterion used in forming this decision was to minimise any adverse impact on the front line services to young people.

Departmental Efficiency

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what his policy is for *(a)* increasing the productivity and *(b)* cutting the costs of (i) his Department and (ii) its agencies and non-departmental public bodies. [172191]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 148–49W.

Education Statistics (London)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils there were in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in Brent in each year since 1997. [172808]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: A table giving the requested pupil information for all Parliamentary Constituencies have been placed in the House of Commons Library. Further details on the 2004 provisional figures by local education authority can be found on http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsaatewav/DB/SFR/s000457/index.shtml

Graduates

Phil Sawford: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the first destination of first degree graduates was in each year since 1997; and how many and what percentage *(a)* found employment in the UK, *(b)* found employment overseas, *(c)* are undertaking further study, *(d)* are not available for employment, study or training and *(e)* are assumed to be unemployed. [173087]

Alan Johnson: The latest available information is taken from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) First Destination Supplement and is given in the table. Figures for 2002/03 graduates will be published in August 2004.

UK domiciled, full-time first degree graduates with known first destination

Activity[1]	*Year of graduation* 1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	2000/01	2001/02
Numbers					
Entering employment in the UK	115,200	116,290	112,250	114,905	114,165
Entering employment overseas	4,340	4,430	4,620	4,450	3,875
Further study/training	32,720	33,860	32,700	32,470	33,000
Not available	8,260	9,820	10,220	11,365	11,040
Seeking employment	12,150	11,805	10,970	13,225	14,295
Total of known first destination	172,660	176,205	170,750	176,415	176,390
Percentages					
Entering employment in the UK	67	66	66	65	65
Entering employment overseas	3	3	3	3	2
Further study/training	19	19	19	18	19
Not available	5	6	6	6	6
Seeking employment	7	7	6	7	8
Total of known first destination	100	100	100	100	100

[1] Based on the destinations of graduates six months after graduation.

Note:
Totals may not sum due to founding.

Source:
HESA

Headquarters Staff

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many staff were employed in the Department to work in the communications field, and what the total expenditure on communications for the Department was, broken down by *(a)* Government Information and Communication Service staff and *(b)* other staff, broken down by (i) press officers, (ii) special advisers and (iii) others, in (A) 1994–95, (B) 1996–97, (C) 1997–98 and (D) 2001–02. [168684]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Available information is set out in the following table.

	Number	*Cost (£)*
GICs staff excluding press officers		
1994–95	50	—
1996–97	50	—
1997–98	43	—
2001–02	39	1,004,255
GICs press officers		
1994–95	20.5	—
1996–97	19	—
1997–98	20.5	—
2001–02	23	1,265,626

There are no press officers from outside the Government Information and Communications Service (GICs). Figures on the number of other non-GICs communications staff and financial data prior to 2001–02 could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The Special Advisers' Code of Conduct sets out the sort of work a special adviser may undertake on behalf of their Minister. This includes communications activity. Details of the costs of special advisers are given on an annual basis. Information for the financial year 2003–04 will be published in due course.

Healthy Eating Schemes

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what *(a)* advice and *(b)* guidance he has issued to local education authorities regarding their implementation of healthy eating schemes. [176317]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: In April 2001 the Department introduced minimum nutritional standards for school lunches that prescribe the types of food to be available and the frequency of their availability.

To assist with the implementation of the standards, the Department has produced complementary guidance for schools and local education authorities entitled "Healthy School Lunches". The guidance provides examples of good catering practice and suggestions to encourage healthy eating.

Level 2 Qualifications

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many adults in work were studying for their second level 2 qualification in each year since 2001. [175985]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 26 May 2004]:* Data on the number of adults studying for their second level 2 qualification are not available.

Part-time Students

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many 16 to 19-year-olds were studying part-time in each year since 2001; and if he will make a statement. [175984]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 26 May 2004]:* The numbers of 16 to 18-year-olds participating in part-time education in England for end 2001 and end 2002 (the latest available provisional estimates) are shown in the table. The data shown in the table are snapshot information as at the end of the calendar years.

	Number of part-time students[1]
End 2001	114,600
End 2002[2]	108,000

[1] This comprises of those participating in part-time education as part of Government supported work based learning (WBL), employer funded training (EFT) and other education and training (OET).
[2] Provisional.

Pre-schools

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many registered pre-schools there are in the UK. [173412]

Margaret Hodge: My Department estimates that there were 10,100 pre-schools or playgroups in England in January 2003.

Information on early years education in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland is a matter for the Education Department of the Assembly for Wales, the Scottish Executive and the Department for Education for Northern Ireland respectively.

Provisional national estimates for January 2004 on provision for children under five in England will be published on 27 May in a Statistical Release "Provision for children under five years of age in England—January 2004", a copy of which is available on the Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

Press Officers

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many press officers were employed in his Department in each year from 1990–91 to 2003–04; what the total cost was in each year; and if he will make a statement. [162856]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The table as follows sets out number of press officers employed in the Department for Education and Skills and its predecessors. We are unable to provide information on the number of press officers employed by the Department from 1990–91 to 1995–96 without incurring disproportionate cost. Information for 1996–97 to 1998–99 is available from appendix 10 of the Sixth Report from the Select Committee on Public

Administration, entitled Government Information and Communication Service, published on 29 July 1998 (www.publications.parliament.uk).

	Number of Press Officers	Actual salaries spend (£)
1999–2000	28	1,110,589
2000–01	28	1,246,588
2001–02	23	1,265,626
2002–03	23	1,192,645
2003–04	18	1,352,041

School Choice

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many of the national cohort of students were admitted to their first choice secondary school in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by local education authority. [174864]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is not collected centrally.

School Meals (Stroud)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children received free school meals in the constituency of Stroud in each year since 1997 for which figures are available. [174835]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Tables giving requested free school meals information for all parliamentary constituencies have been placed in the House of Commons Library. Further details on the 2004 provisional figures on free school meals by local education authority can be found on http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000457/index.shtml.

Schools (Capital Investment)

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 710W, on schools (capital investment), whether all wave one plans will need to include provision for a city academy prior to approval by the Department. [175234]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* Academies—and new or reformed schools including academy features—should form a key part of Building Schools for the Future (BSF) plans, whether the replacement or improvement of failing or weaker schools, or the creation of new schools. The Government expect local projects to provide a proper evaluation of academy options; such reform is critical to demonstrate the expected impact on educational standards of large-scale capital investment. We also encourage local education authorities to engage directly with potential academy sponsors as part of the BSF preparation and evaluation.

Schools (Computers)

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on computers for schools in Blackpool North and Fleetwood in each of the last seven years. [176202]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department does not collect information on school spend on computers at constituency level. However, Blackpool North and Fleetwood is in Blackpool LEA and in the last seven years schools in Blackpool have benefited from the following funding through the Standards Fund grant for ICT (including match funding from the LEA):

	Allocation to Blackpool LEA (£)
1998–99	233,891
1999–2000	376,443
2000–01	471,538
2001–02	531,056
2002–03	750,176
2003–04	774,460
2004–05	1,021,894

Special Educational Needs

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 712W, on special educational needs, what steps he is taking to ensure that teachers who qualified more than five years ago have appropriate training to identify and to respond to the special needs of children in school settings. [174880]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 21 May 2004]:* All teachers, irrespective of when they qualified, are expected to identify their developmental needs through performance management arrangements, and to address identified needs, including improving their teaching skills in the area of special educational needs, by undertaking appropriate professional development.

SEN training needs can be identified by using the 'National SEN Specialist Standards' published by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) in December 1999, which covers the key outcomes, the professional knowledge and understanding, and skills and attributes required, and the key areas of their role and responsibilities. The TTA have also produced a related CD-ROM, 'Identifying your Training Needs for Teaching Pupils with SEN', released in February 2002.

All schools receive a School Development Grant which they are able to use to support improvements in any aspect of teaching and learning. Local authorities may retain a proportion of this grant, under certain conditions, to provide specific training and development for SEN.

How far a school provides for pupils with SEN will be assessed as part of the usual school inspection arrangements made by the Office for Standards in Education.

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on his policy on the inclusion of pupils with special needs in mainstream schools. [175997]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We are firmly committed to the principle of inclusion and an increasing proportion of children with special educational needs attend mainstream schools. Special schools will continue to have an important role in meeting need both in their own right and in partnership with local mainstream schools.

Work Permits

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what *(a)* representations he has received and *(b)* discussions he has had with representatives from the governments of (i) India, (ii) Jamaica, (iii) China, (iv) Russia, (v) South Africa and (vi) Zimbabwe about the issuing of work permits to workers from those countries to work in the UK education sector; and if he will make a statement. [175718]

Mr. Miliband: I have neither received any representations from, nor had any discussions with, these Governments in connection with work permits.

HEALTH

Care Homes

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 13 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 576–77W, on care homes, how many care homes were closed in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04, due to an anonymous complaint; and if he will make a statement. [175174]

Dr. Ladyman: I understand from the chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) that the information requested is not collected in the form requested. Care homes may close for a number of reasons, including as a result of enforcement action by CSCI or by the provider voluntarily deregistering the service. Complaints may only be one of a number of circumstances which lead to a home closing. It would not therefore be possible or accurate to ascribe reasons for home closure directly to complaints.

Drug Labelling

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made since the Drugs and Therapeutics Bulletin report of 2001 to ensure that all new drugs are labelled with a black triangle warning. [174476]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The black triangle scheme is intended to facilitate the intensive monitoring of new medicines for which there is relatively limited safety data available. A black triangle symbol is used in the product information to identify the medicines for which the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM) and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) request health professionals to report all suspected adverse reactions rather than serious reactions alone. This is a voluntary scheme and, while use of the symbol is not a legal requirement, it is expected that marketing authorisation holders (MAHs) will use the black triangle symbol where requested to do so by the MHRA.

Following the publication of a survey in Drugs and Therapeutics Bulletin in 2001 entitled, "Failings in treatment advice, SPCs and black triangles", the MHRA formally reviewed the use of the black triangle symbol on product information. Companies were requested to submit summaries of product characteristics (SPCs) and promotional material for their products under intensive monitoring and it was subsequently found that approximately 9 per cent. did not display the symbol on their material. Importantly, the review found that all black triangle products had the symbol routinely displayed in the British National Formulary (BNF) and the monthly index of medical specialities (MIMS). These publications are widely used by health professionals when prescribing medicines. This was due to active liaison between the MHRA and MIMS and the BNF. During the review, the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry was also contacted and undertook to inform new companies of the scheme.

As a routine measure, the advertising unit at the MHRA reviews advertisements for new products in a selection of key published journals, and the assessment includes checking to see if the black triangle symbol is displayed. In accordance with published criteria, the unit may also ask a company to submit all promotional material to the MHRA for pre-vetting. Any omission of the black triangle symbol is brought to the immediate attention of the company, who would be asked to re-submit an amended advertisement. In general, companies are found to comply with the scheme for incorporating the black triangle symbol on their promotional material.

Elderly Care Services

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of recipients of intermediate care services had mental health problems in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [175924]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collected centrally.

Health Food Industry

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reasons the Minister of Health responsible for consumer affairs declined the request of the Health Food Manufacturers' Association to meet to discuss issues facing the industry. [165490]

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what plans he has to meet representatives of the food supplements industry to discuss progress with the Food Supplements Directive; [171988]

(2) what plans he has to meet Commissioner Byrne to discuss the Food Supplements Directive. [171989]

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what recent discussions he has held on the impact of the European Food Supplements Directive on the food supplements industry; and what the results of the discussions were; [170580]

(2) what plans he has to meet *(a)* Commissioner Byrne and *(b)* food supplements industry representatives to discuss the impact of the Food Supplements Directive on the food supplements industry. [170581]

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will meet representatives of natural health food companies to discuss the Food Supplements Directive. [168456]

Sir Sydney Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he or the Minister for his Department will meet representatives of the health food industry on matters relating to the proposed EU Directive on vitamin and mineral supplements. [165466]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Directive 2002/46/EC on food supplements came into force on 12 July 2002. The Food Supplements Regulations England 2003, which implement the Directive in England, were laid before Parliament in June 2003 and the provisions are set to come into force on 1 August 2005. There is parallel legislation in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

In October 2003, I had a useful meeting with representatives of the health food industry to discuss their concerns over the potential impact of the Directive, particularly relating to the submission of safety dossiers to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and to the future setting of European maximum levels for vitamins and minerals in food supplements.

Since then there has been a constructive meeting, facilitated by the Food Standards Agency (FSA), between industry representatives and representatives of the EFSA to discuss safety dossiers.

In addition, I recently set out the Government's views on the setting of maximum limits to Commissioner David Byrne. The EFSA is continuing work on safe upper limits for intakes of vitamins and minerals begun by the Scientific Committee on Food. It is not expected to complete this work until Summer 2005 at the earliest. The Commission will not publish a proposal on European Union maximum limits until this work is complete. Commissioner Byrne and I agreed to talk again when the EFSA's advice has been published and, if appropriate, meet. In the meantime, officials continue to press the case for safety based maximum limits in all the relevant European forums. They are keeping in close contact with the Commission officials, who will in due course draft the proposal on EU maximum limits. I have asked for progress reports.

I am willing to meet food supplement industry representatives again. However, I have suggested to them that, before such a meeting takes place, it would be useful for industry technical advisors to meet FSA officials to discuss detailed technical issues relating to dossiers and then for the industry to gain experience of submitting such dossiers to the EFSA.

Home Care (Charges)

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* monitoring, *(b)* evaluation and *(c)* review of the new system of charges for home care he is carrying out. [173950]

Dr. Ladyman: We plan in due course to monitor and evaluate the impact of the guidance on "Fairer Charging Policies for Home Care".

Mental Health

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in England have *(a)* died and *(b)* been injured by hanging themselves from a ligature point in the suspended ceiling of an acute mental health unit between 1 September 2001 and 18 March 2004. [173481]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* This information is not collected centrally.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he will bring forward proposals setting out a timetable for pre-legislative scrutiny of the draft mental health bill. [175317]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A revised and completed Mental Health Bill will be brought forward for pre-legislative scrutiny in this session.

Ministerial Visits

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list visits made by each Minister in the Department between December 2003 and April 2004, broken down by *(a)* date, *(b)* constituency visited and *(c)* cost. [171567]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Between December 2003 and April 2004 departmental Ministers have undertaken 81 visits. The Department does not have information on constituencies visited or the cost of visits individually.

National Service Framework for Older People

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what sanctions will be taken against strategic health authorities that have not achieved the milestones in the national service framework for older people. [175537]

Dr. Ladyman: Planning for and implementing the majority of the milestones in the national service framework for older people is the direct responsibility of strategic health authorities (SHAs). Information is not collected centrally on progress with these. The milestones on intermediate care, stroke services, falls services and services for older adults with mental health problems, set out in the 2003–06 priorities and planning framework, are reflected in SHAs' local delivery plans (LDPs). The Department performance manages SHA service delivery against the range of agreed LDP targets through its quarterly monitoring process.

NHS Dentistry

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how he plans to measure the impact of the proposals in "Options for Change" for increasing the number of NHS dental registrations; and if he will make a statement; [174452]

(2) how progress on "Options for Change" will be monitored; and if he will make a statement. [174453]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The base contract and permanent personal dental services (PDS) contract will require a new national health service dentistry activity return, which is currently under development. This will provide information on patient numbers and dental activity under the new arrangements and will enable comparisons with previous trends.

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he will reply to the letter from Mr. Geoffrey Morgan of Milford-on-Sea regarding NHS dentistry of 26 February. [174630]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A reply was sent to Mr. Morgan on 5 April 2004.

Primary Health Care

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many primary health care staff work in the Coventry area. [176250]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is shown in the following table.

General medical practitioners[1], practice staff[2] employed by unrestricted principals and equivalents (UPEs)[3], and national health service hospital and community health services: primary healthcare nursing for Coventry Primary Care Trust (headcount).

	Number
General medical practitioners[1]	183
Practice staff[2]	611
of which:	
Practice nurses	132
HCHS primary healthcare nursing	492
of which:	
Health visitors	71
District nurses	43
Community psychiatry nurses	84
Community learning disabilities nurses	35
Other community services nurses[4]	259
Total	1,286

Notes:

[1] All practitioners include UPEs, restricted principals, assistants, GP registrars, salaried doctors (para 52 SFA), PMS other, GP retainers, flexible career scheme GPs and GP returners.

[2] Practice staff includes practice nurses, direct patient care, admin and clerical and other.

[3] UPEs include QMS unrestricted principals, PMS contracted GPs and PMS salaried GPs.

[4] Other community services nurses are nurses working in community services other than health visitors and district nurses.

Sources:

Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics

Public Bodies

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many times a year the Board of the National Patient Safety Agency is scheduled to meet; and when it last met. [175346]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The board of the National Patient Safety Agency is scheduled to meet in public every two months. The last meeting took place on 12 May 2004.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 30 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1354W, if he will list those bodies which are still in existence. [174534]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The following departmental task forces, ad hoc advisory groups and reviews are still in existence:

Adoption and permanence task force is now sponsored by the Department for Education and Skills.

Cancer task force.

Children's task force.

Coronary heart disease task force.

Mental health task force.

National health service modernisation board.

The scientific committee on tobacco and health/advisory committee on the misuse of drugs working group on cannabis and tobacco smoking.

National users panel of the community equipment services external reference group.

Interagency working group to develop a memorandum of understanding between the Department, the Police and the Health and Safety Executive.

NHS information technology task force.

Patient environment steering group.

Practice learning task force.

Work force task force.

Advisory committee for topic selection.

Advisory group for genetics research.

"Agenda for Change" central negotiating group.

Children's national service framework strategy group.

Expert group on mental health in prisons.

Implementation board for modernising NHS hospital medicines manufacturing.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how often the British Pharmacopoeia Commission is scheduled to convene; and on what date it last met. [175339]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The British Pharmacopoeia Commission is scheduled to meet four times per year. The date of its last meeting was 15 March 2004.

Public Service Agreements

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many of his Department's public service agreement targets for *(a)* 2000 and *(b)* 2002 have been superseded. [175311]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is too early to say what the 2004 public service agreement targets will be. The next set of targets are due to be announced by the Government in the summer.

Stroke

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people suffered a stroke in the last year in *(a)* Rugby and Kenilworth and *(b)* England. [174961]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is shown in the table.

Primary diagnosis (ICD-10 160–169) cerebrovascular diseases. Count of finished admission episodes for selected primary care trusts (PCTs) of residence and England national health service hospitals, 2002–03

Primary diagnosis code	Description	North Warwickshire PCT	Rugby PCT	England
160	Subarachnoid haemorrhage	20	14	
161	Intracerebral haemorrhage	20	17	
162	Other nontraumatic intracranial haemorrhage	23	*	
163	Cerebral infarction	63	71	
164	Stroke, not specified as haemorrhage or infarction	159	34	
165	Occlusion and stenosis of precerebral arteries, not resulting in cerebral infarction	*	8	
166	Occlusion and stenosis of cerebral arteries, not resulting in cerebral infarction	*	—	
167	Other cerebrovascular diseases	16	*	
168	Cerebrovascular disorders in diseases classified elsewhere	—	—	
169	Sequelae of cerebrovascular disease	—	—	
160–169	Cerebrovascular Diseases	317	156	1

Notes:

Finished admission episodes

A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one health care provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

Diagnosis (Primary Diagnosis)

The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (7 prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the Hospital Episodes Statistics (HES) data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital

Ungrossed Data

Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).

Low numbers

Due to reasons of confidentiality, figures between 1 and 5 at PCT level have been suppressed and replaced with * (an asterisk).

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health

DEFENCE

Chagos Islands

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether *(a)* Royal Military Police and *(b)* members of the Adjutant-General's Corps (Military Provost Staff) have been deployed on (i) Diego Garcia and (ii) other Chagos Islands since October 2001. [175481]

Mr. Hoon: There is one established Royal Military Police post within the Chagos Archipelagos on Diego Garcia. No members of the Adjutant General's Corps (Military Provost Staff) are deployed there.

Defence Medical Services

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the strength of the Defence Medical Services was in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 2000 and *(c)* 2003, broken down by (i) service, (ii) rank, (iii) specialisation and (iv) establishment. [169995]

Mr. Caplin: The strength of the Defence Medical Services by Service and specialism for each of the three years is broken down as follows. Figures for the Royal Navy and the RAF were provided by the respective Medical Director's General, and the information for the Army was provided by DASA (Army).

Royal Navy

Category	October 1997	2000	2003
Medical Officers	247	205	230
Nurses:	—	—	—
Officer	48	67	87
Other Ranks	196	197	301
Medical Support Officers	51	53	48
Medical Technicians (including ODPs):			
Officers	0	1	8
Other Ranks	96	97	80
Medical	607	678	594
Assistants/Combat Medical Technicians (other ranks)	—	—	—
Dental Officers	67	55	68
Dental Support Services:			
Officers	0	0	0
Other Ranks	104	102	114
Total	1416	1455	1630

Army

Category	October 1997	2000	2003
Other Officers (including Medical Officers and Medical Support Officers) (See note)	600	600	730
Nurses:			
Officer	250	280	290
Other Ranks	420	440	600
Medical Technicians (including ODPs)	280	260	260
Combat Medical Technicians (other ranks)	1430	1460	1630
Dental Officers	150	150	160
Dental Support Services (Officers and other ranks)	210	230	260
Total	3340	3420	3930

Royal Air Force

Category	October 1997	2000	2003
Medical Officers	239	187	185
Nurses:			
Officer	102	112	118
Other Ranks	192	215	346
Medical Support Officers	31	45	76
Medical Technicians (including ODPs):			
Officers	22	15	13
Other Ranks	125	107	127
Medical Assistants/Combat Medical Technicians (other ranks)	521	600	768
Dental Officers	87	72	74

Royal Air Force

Category	1997	October 2000	2003
Dental Support Services:			
Officers	0	0	3
Other Ranks	218	209	210
Total	1537	1562	1920

Notes:
1. Figures shown are broken down between officers and other ranks.
2. Historical data on the location of personnel is not held centrally, and would be available only at disproportionate cost.
3. The Army manpower data is rounded to the nearest 10. Available figures for 1997 are not broken down between Medical Officers and Medical Support Officers.
4. All figures include both trained and untrained personnel.

Departmental Executive Agencies

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list his Department's *(a)* executive agencies, *(b)* trading funds and *(c)* executive non-departmental public bodies for financial years (i) 2003–04 and (ii) 2004–05. [172122]

Mr. Caplin: In financial year 2003–04, the Ministry of Defence had the following defence agencies, trading funds and executive non-departmental public bodies:

(a) Defence agencies:

Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency
Army Personnel Centre
Army Training and Recruiting Agency
British Forces Post Office
Defence Analytical Services Agency
Defence Bills Agency
Defence Communication Services Agency
Defence Dental Agency
Defence Estates
Defence Geographic and Imagery Intelligence Agency
Defence Housing Executive
Defence Intelligence and Security Centre
Defence Medical Education and Training Agency
Defence Procurement Agency
Defence Storage and Distribution Agency
Defence Transport and Movements Agency
Defence Vetting Agency
Disposal Services Agency
Duke of York's Royal Military School
Medical Supplies Agency
Ministry of Defence Police
Naval Manning Agency
Naval Recruiting and Training Agency
Pay and Personnel Agency
Queen Victoria School
RAF Personnel Management Agency
RAF Training Group Defence Agency
Service Children's Education
Veterans Agency
Warship Support Agency

(b) Trading Fund agencies:

ABRO
Defence Aviation and Repair Agency
Defence Science and Technology Laboratory
Met Office
United Kingdom Hydrographic Office

(c) Executive non-departmental public bodies:

Fleet Air Arm Museum
National Army Museum
Oil and Pipelines Agency
RAF Museum
Royal Marines Museum
Royal Navy Submarine Museum
Royal Naval Museum

In financial year 2004–05, the Ministry of Defence trading fund and executive non-departmental public bodies remain the same. There has however been a reduction of four in the number of defence agencies. The three single service personnel agencies ceased to have agency status from 1 April 2004, as set out in my written statement of 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 24WS. The Defence Housing Executive merged with Defence Estates as set out in my written statement of 30 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 88–89WS. In addition, the Ministry of Defence Police has been renamed the Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Agency after taking on the Ministry of Defence Guard Service.

The revised list of defence agencies for 2004–05 is shown as follows.

(a) Defence agencies

Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency
Army Training and Recruiting Agency
British Forces Post Office
Defence Analytical Services Agency
Defence Bills Agency
Defence Communication Services Agency
Defence Dental Agency
Defence Estates
Defence Geographic and Imagery Intelligence Agency
Defence Intelligence and Security Centre
Defence Medical Education and Training Agency
Defence Procurement Agency
Defence Storage and Distribution Agency
Defence Transport and Movements Agency
Defence Vetting Agency
Disposal Services Agency
Duke of York's Royal Military School
Medical Supplies Agency
Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Agency
Naval Recruiting and Training Agency
Pay and Personnel Agency
Queen Victoria School
RAF Training Group Defence Agency
Service Children's Education
Veterans Agency
Warship Support Agency.

International Committee of the Red Cross

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what *(a)* instruction and *(b)* guidance his (i) officials and (ii) Ministers were following prior to the decision

not to make the February International Committee of the Red Cross report available to him as soon as it became available to his Department; [173571]

(2) what *(a)* written and *(b)* oral briefing was provided by officials in his Department to inform (i) him and (ii) his Ministers of the contents of the International Committee of the Red Cross report and actions taken (A) as a result of officials having read the report and (B) prior to the full report being made available to him. [173576]

Mr. Hoon: Ministers were made aware of those issues in the ICRC interim report relating to United Kingdom armed forces five months before they were made aware of the report. Ministers subsequently received an explanation of the handling of the full report over the weekend of 8–9 May 2004. The sequence of events is set out in my reply today to the hon. Member for Mid-Sussex (Mr. Soames).

Land Releases (Hampshire)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 22 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 662W on land releases (Hampshire), if he will make a statement on the consultation process that will follow announcements about land disposals. [170468]

Mr. Caplin: In Hampshire, as elsewhere, as soon as an opportunity to rationalise the estate emerges, we begin the consultation process with all concerned, including staff and local authorities, to inform identification of options (including alternative defence uses) and to ensure that all relevant factors, including sustainability issues, are taken into account when decisions are made.

In recognition of the high concentration of defence sites in the County, Defence Estates hold twice-yearly liaison meetings involving all the local authorities in Hampshire to discuss all relevant issues. The last meeting was on 18 March 2004.

In the case of disposals, it is our usual policy to work within the planning process led by local authorities. In addition all disposal sites are now put on the Register of Surplus Public Sector Assets, operated by English Partnerships, for 40 working days. Former owner and pre-emption rights are, of course, taken into account where appropriate. Sites are usually sold on the open market with the benefit of planning permission, and this will involve discussion with local planning authorities in regard to local or unitary plans, alternative uses that might be permitted and the views of the community. Listed and environmentally sensitive sites are dealt with under specific guidelines.

Missile Defence

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what representations he has *(a)* made to and *(b)* received from the United States on the UK's participation in the development of missile defence in the past six months; and if he will make a statement on British participation. [176373]

Mr. Hoon: I have neither made representations to, nor received any from, the United States on the subject of the United Kingdom participation in US plans for Missile Defence in the last six months. Missile Defence issues have been discussed in contacts with the US Defence Secretary and others. Officials also keep in close touch with the US Administration to monitor developments. On 5 February 2003, the Government announced that it had agreed to a US request for the upgrade of RAF Fylingdales to enable for missile defence purposes.

Iraq

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what reports he has received of Coalition forces in Iraq abusing *(a)* women and *(b)* children; and if he will make a statement. [172940]

Mr. Hoon: Amnesty International's report of 11 May contains an allegation regarding United Kingdom armed forces over the death of an Iraqi child. I am also aware of another allegation recently raised in a letter from Amnesty International, involving a 16-year-old Iraqi boy. The Royal Military Police had already initiated investigations into both these cases, and it would be inappropriate to comment further at this stage.

A report from Women Against Rape received on 17 May 2004 by the Ministry of Defence contains non-specific allegations and photographs of alleged rapes. The photographs have been scrutinised by the Royal Military Police and it has been confirmed that no UK armed forces personnel were involved.

I cannot comment on allegations relating to Coalition partners.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on how many occasions over the last 12 months the Secretary of State has seen reports by Amnesty International relating to the treatment by the Coalition forces of prisoners of war and other matters in Iraq. [173400]

Mr. Hoon *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* The Ministry of Defence receives a number of communications from Amnesty International, including letters from different officers and officials, letters received as a result of AI campaigns and reports. Some are dealt with by officials, others by Ministers.

Following a range of correspondence to the Ministry of Defence from Amnesty I wrote to Director Amnesty International United Kingdom on 24 July 2003. I received details of eight incidents relating to UK forces in a letter on 16 April. On 10 May I received a report entitled "Iraq—killings of civilians in Basra and Al-Amara" which included descriptions of the same incidents. I subsequently received a copy of Amnesty's 14 May letter to the Prime Minister which included descriptions of four further incidents.

We take all allegations of wrongdoing against the UK armed forces very seriously. Some of the incidents raised by Amnesty have been identified and are subject to investigation; others require further research. The Minister of State for the Armed Forces has written to Amnesty saying that we will send to them a comprehensive response to the Amnesty reports, when this work is complete.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on what date the International Committee of the Red Cross report on the treatment by Coalition forces of prisoners of war in Iraq was handed to the Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ); on what date the report was passed from PJHQ to the Department, and to whom; and on what date the report was passed to him. [173402]

Mr. Hoon *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* The International Committee of the Red Cross's Report on the Treatment by the Coalition Forces of Prisoners of War and other Protected Persons by the Geneva Conventions in Iraq during Arrest, Internment and Interrogation, dated 10 February 2004, was formally passed to Ambassador Bremer and Lt. Gen. Sanchez on 26 February. An advance copy was passed by an official working for the Coalition Provisional Authority to the offices of Sir Jeremy Greenstock and the Senior British Military Representative in Iraq on 12 February. The latter passed a copy of the report to Headquarters Multi-National Division (South East) on 13 February and to the Permanent Joint Headquarters on 16 February, and posted a copy to the Ministry of Defence that arrived on 27 February. A copy of the report was sent to my office on 7 May.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the written reply to the International Committee of the Red Cross report on the treatment by Coalition forces of prisoners of war in Iraq was made by his Department; and if he will place a copy in the Library. [173404]

Mr. Hoon *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) did not mention any requirement for a formal response in presenting their report of February 2004.

The report covered visits that had taken place between three and eleven months earlier and there were no specific cases for the United Kingdom that were new. A new report, specific to the UK, was expected at the time and it was decided to wait until this new report was received before formally responding to the ICRC.

Wind Farms

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he intends to object for operational flying reasons to the erection of a wind turbine at Shipdham in Norfolk. [176125]

Mr. Caplin: We are aware of a wind farm proposal for two wind turbines at Shipdham, Norfolk. The Ministry of Defence has not objected to the development.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Agenda for Change

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made towards meeting staffing targets set out in Agenda for Change, with particular reference to *(a)* nurses and *(b)* health visitors. [173587]

Angela Smith: Specific staffing targets are not part of Agenda for Change. Staffing is a matter for individual Health and Social Services Trusts taking into account factors such as service needs and available resources. However, the Department has a role in ensuring that sufficient suitably qualified staff are available to meet the needs of the service and to monitor workforce levels in Trusts. This will be done through workforce planning mechanisms, which provide an analysis of the current workforce and of current and future recruitment and retention issues. These encompass issues such as the number of staff required to meet service demands and address skill-mix options. These workforce plans will inform decisions on future student intake levels

Benefit Recipients

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many recipients of *(a)* sickness benefit, *(b)* incapacity benefit and *(c)* disability living allowance there were in Northern Ireland in the last three years for which figures are available. [168012]

Mr. Spellar: The information requested is shown in the following tables.

At 30 November	*Number of recipients*
Disability living allowance	
2001	142,984
2002	148,025
2003	155,295
Incapacity benefit	
2001	70,905
2002	71,771
2003	71,974

Sickness benefit was replaced by incapacity benefit in 1995 and unfortunately the figures requested are no longer available.

Disability Living Allowance

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many and what percentage of people in Northern Ireland are in receipt of disability living allowance. [175859]

Mr. Spellar: As of February 2004 there where 159,911 people in receipt of disability living allowance. This equates to 9.4 per cent. of the population of Northern Ireland and 10.8 per cent. of the population who would be eligible to claim i.e. those under 65.

Heart Transplants

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average length of waiting time between diagnosis and assessment of patients requiring heart transplant was in Northern Ireland in 2003. [176254]

Angela Smith: Four out of the seven patients who underwent initial review in Belfast, were listed for transplant and underwent residential assessment in the Freeman Hospital, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Individually

the time between their review and assessment was two months, less than three months, five months and six months respectively.

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken to reduce the length of time between diagnosis and assessment of patients requiring heart transplants in Northern Ireland. [176255]

Angela Smith: Heart transplants are not performed in Northern Ireland. Local patients travel to the Freeman Hospital in Newcastle-upon-Tyne for this operation. The timing of a cardiac transplant assessment for Northern Ireland patients is dependent upon the patient's clinical need, as determined by the referring consultant cardiologist in consultation with the transplant team from the Freeman Hospital. Non-urgent referrals are normally seen in the transplant assessment outreach clinic in Belfast City Hospital, which is attended by a consultant transplant physician and transplant co-ordinator three or four times a year. Urgent referrals can be assessed in the Freeman Hospital within days, depending upon the patient's clinical need.

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what provision is made for counselling of parents of children under 16 in Northern Ireland who are diagnosed as being in need of a heart transplant. [176256]

Angela Smith: Heart transplants for children under 16 are provided at two centres in the UK—the Freeman Hospital in Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Great Ormond Street hospital in London.

Counselling, support and education are provided at these centres for all children assessed as requiring a heart transplant. These services, which are provided by an experienced multi-disciplinary team of professionals, are also available to parents and carers.

Industrial Wage Rate

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average industrial wage in Northern Ireland is. [175919]

Mr. Gardiner: In all industries in Northern Ireland, average gross weekly earnings of all full-time adult employees was £404.50 at April 2003. The average gross weekly earnings by industry is as follows:

Industry	*Average gross weekly pay (£)*
Agriculture, hunting and forestry	273.60
Mining and quarrying	350.60
Manufacturing	374.30
Electricity, gas and water supply	596.30
Construction	372.00
Wholesale and retail trade	336.10
Hotels and restaurants	269.60
Transport, storage and communication	386.70
Financial intermediation	507.40
Real estate, renting and business activities	387.60
Public administration and defence, compulsory social security	451.60
Education	507.30
Health and social work	419.90
Other community social and personal activities	370.50
All industries	404.50

Invest Northern Ireland

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average financial assistance offered by Invest Northern Ireland to *(a)* inward investors and *(b)* indigenous investors was per job created in each of the last five years. [159745]

Mr. Gardiner: Comprehensive and consistent information for job creation over time is not available for the full client company base of Invest Northern Ireland. Data on jobs promoted (expected to be created) is available for projects secured between 1998–99 and 2002–03 together with the financial assistance offered to promote those jobs.

Previous evidence provided by IDB to the Northern Ireland Audit Office showed that approximately 70 per cent. of jobs promoted were created and a similar proportion of grant offered was actually paid.

The information provided in the tables does not reflect all job promotions as a result of Invest NI activity, but is restricted to those generally larger indigenous businesses and inward investors for which historical information on job promotions is currently available. The focus of much of Invest NI's activity is on capability building as opposed to capacity building with the aim of strengthening business competitiveness in Northern Ireland, which in turn will lead to an increase of wealth in the economy.

Jobs promoted by inward investors

Financial year	*Jobs promoted*	*Assistance offered for job promotions (£)*	*Cost per job promoted (£)*
1998–99	4,162	29,261,639	7,031
1999–2000	6,584	65,086,586	9,886
2000–01	5,506	40,305,849	7,320
2001–02	2,526	28,582,770	11,315
2002–03	1,033	8,873,866	8,590
Grand total	19,811	172,110,711	8,688

Jobs promoted by indigenous investors

Financial year	*Jobs promoted*	*Assistance offered for job promotions (£)*	*Cost per job promoted (£)*
1998–9	1,272	15,766,331	12,395
1999–2000	561	4,061,287	7,239
2000–01	2,090	14,851,008	7,106
2001–02	370	1,471,357	3,977
2002–03	1,661	20,340,041	12,246
Grand total	5,954	56,490,024	9,488

National Stadium

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when a decision is expected to be made on the timing and location of a national stadium for Northern Ireland. [175526]

Angela Smith: I made a announcement on 24 May 2004 outlining how the Stadium issue is to be taken forward. I have arranged for a copy to be sent to the hon. Gentleman and made available in the Library.

Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) if he will list the dates on which he has had meetings with the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland since his appointment as Secretary of State; [173266]

(2) if he will list the dates of meetings he has had with the Police Ombudsman since his appointment. [176962]

Mr. Paul Murphy: Since my appointment as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, I have met the Police Ombudsman informally on a number of occasions. I have had one formal meeting with her, on 28 May 2003, and intend holding a further one soon.

Police Service

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many full-time police reservists are deployed on *(a)* operational duties and *(b)* in critical support functions in each district command unit. [170551]

Mr. Pearson: The following breakdown shows the current deployment of members of the Full Time Reserve using classifications defined by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, as follows:

	District Command Units	*Headquarters and Regions*
Operational	1,424	47
Operational support	62	28
Organisational support	3	5
Total	1,489	80

A breakdown of the officers within each District Command Unit is illustrated as follows.

The HMIC classifications used are defined as follows:

Operational:

"Any member of staff, including covert staff, whose primary role (i.e. over 50 per cent. of their time) is directly to deliver the overarching aims of the Police Service. To 'directly deliver' the role must involve routine and immediate interface (either face to face or by telephone) with the public including covert operations. Staff in such roles can be considered as frontline service providers";

Operational Support:

"Any member of staff whose primary role is to support the delivery of the overarching aims of the police service".

Organisational Support:

"A member of staff whose primary role is to service the internal needs of the organisation".

DCU	*Operational*	*Operational support*	*Organisational support*	*Total*
Antrim	36	7	1	44
Ards	44	4	—	48
Armagh	65	—	1	66
Banbridge	22	1	—	23
Belfast East	109	4	—	113
Belfast North	66	7	—	73
Belfast South	96	5	—	101
Belfast West	132	6	—	138
Ballymena	27	1	—	28
Ballymoney	12	—	—	12
Carrickfergus	29	12	—	41
Coleraine	36	—	—	36
Cookstown	23	1	—	24
Craigavon	48	—	—	48
Castlereagh	55	1	—	56
Dungannon	43	1	—	44
Down	51	1	—	52
Fermanagh	60	2	—	62
Foyle	75	5	—	80
Larne	16	—	—	16
Limavady	22	—	—	22
Lisburn	76	1	—	77
Magherafelt	53	—	—	53
Moyle	10	—	—	10
Newtownabbey	23	—	—	23
North Down	63	—	—	63
Newry/Mourne	58	2	—	60
Omagh	29	—	1	30
Strabane	45	1	—	46
Total	1,424	62	3	1,489

Sexual Offences

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when consultation proposals on sexual offences in Northern Ireland will be issued, following the announcement of a review in October 2003. [175726]

Mr. Spellar: We have not yet completed our consideration of this issue.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken to ensure that children in Northern Ireland are afforded the same protection as those in England and Wales under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. [175693]

Mr. Spellar: The Sexual Offences Act 2003 was implemented on 1 May 2004. Of the 19 offences which extend directly to Northern Ireland in the Act, 9 of these relate specifically to offences against children. For example, the new offence of meeting a child following sexual grooming provides for a vital new level of protection for our children.

We have also taken the opportunity to extend to Northern Ireland the strengthened provisions which protect children, often particularly vulnerable children, who are in relationships of trust with adults.

The Act also creates new offences which specifically criminalise the abuse of children through prostitution and pornography.

The new offence of sexual activity in a public toilet also extends to Northern Ireland, and is an indication that this sort of behaviour, which is clearly inappropriate in a public toilet, will not be tolerated, particularly where children can be present.

These changes represent a significant improvement in the level of protection offered to children in Northern Ireland.

Water Cannon

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether it is his policy that public funds should bear the cost of financial liability for

injuries sustained through use of water cannon loaned by the Police Service of Northern Ireland to the Irish authorities. [176328]

Mr. Pearson: The loan of the water cannon was agreed directly between PSNI and An Garda Siochana. I have been advised by PSNI that the service level agreement between PSNI and An Garda Siochana for the loan of the water cannon includes a specific provision indemnifying PSNI against all proceedings, costs, liabilities and expenses whatsoever in relation to damage, loss, injury or death arising out of the use of water cannons while in the Republic of Ireland.